STATIONS OF THE CROSS
At St. Francis de Sales Philadelphia

Our church was completed in 1911, with this set of mosaic Stations of the Cross by Mayer & Co, -- identical to those Reverend Crane had installed at St. Malachy just a few years before! Lacking a good modern version, they are accompanied here with a 1924 Key of Heaven text donated to the Parish archives by a parishioner. This book has a 1931 inscription by Reverend William Canney who grew up in the parish, became a priest, assisted at the parish from 1924 to 1934 and died of tuberculosis in 1937 (his story is posted in the History Mystery archive). The writing is more formal than we expect today, and pre-Vatican II, but those who prayed using this text had recently survived the 1918 Influenza epidemic, providing a link to our history!
O Jesus, my adorable Saviour, behold me here, prostrate, imploring thy mercy for myself, and for the souls of all the faithful departed. Vouchsafe to apply to me the infinite merits of thy passion, on which I am now about to meditate. Grant that while I trace this path of sighs and tears, my heart may be so touched with contrition and repentance that I may be ready to embrace with joy all the sufferings and humiliations of this life and pilgrimage.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord.
And my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
O God, come to my assistance.
O Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory be, etc.
As it was, etc.
First Station.

Jesus is condemned to death.

I adore Thee, O Christ, and bless Thee.
Because by Thy holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world.

This versicle and response are repeated before each Station.

Leaving the house of Caiphas, where He had been blasphemed, and the house of Herod, where He had been mocked, Jesus is dragged before Pilate, His back torn with scourges, His head crowned with thorns; and He, Who on the last day will judge the living and the dead, is himself condemned to a disgraceful death.

Prayer.

It was for me Thou didst suffer, O blessed Jesus; it was for my sins that Thou wast condemned to die. Grant that I may detest them, and by this repentance obtain Thy mercy and pardon.

Act of Contrition, Pater..., Ave...
Second Station.

Jesus receives the cross.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.
A heavy cross is laid upon the bruised shoulders of Jesus. He receives it with meekness, nay, with a secret joy, for it is the instrument with which He is to redeem the world.

Prayer.

O Jesus! grant me, by virtue of Thy Cross, to embrace with meekness and cheerful submission the difficulties of my state, and to be ever ready to take up my cross and follow Thee.

Act of Contrition, Pater... Ave...
Third Station.
Jesus falls the first time under the weight of the cross.
I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.
Prostrate under the weight of the cross, Jesus slowly sets forth on the way to Calvary, amidst the mockeries and insults of the crowd. His agony in the garden

Prayer.
O Jesus! Who for my sins didst bear the heavy burden of the cross, and didst fall under its weight, may the thoughts of Thy sufferings make me watchful over myself, and save me from any grievous fall into sin.

Act of Contrition, Pater..., Ave...,
Fourth Station.
Jesus met by His Blessed Mother.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.
Still burdened with His cross and wounds yet more by His fall, Jesus proceeds on His way. He is met by His Mother. What a meeting must that have been! What a sword of anguish must have pierced that Mother's heart!

Prayer.

O Jesus! by the compassion which Thou didst feel for Thy Mother, have compassion on me, and give me a share in her intercession. O Mary, afflicted Mother! intercede for me, that, through the sufferings of thy Son, I may be delivered from the wrath to come.

Act of Contrition. Pater..., Ave...
Fifth Station.

The Cross is laid upon Simon of Cyrene.

I adore Thee, etc.

Because, etc.

As the strength of Jesus fails, and He is unable to proceed, the executioners seize and compel Simon of Cyrene to carry the cross.

O Lord Jesus! may it be my privilege also to bear Thy cross; may I glory in nothing else; by it may the world be crucified unto me, and I unto the world; may I never shrink from suffering, but rather rejoice if I be counted worthy to suffer for Thy Name's sake.

Act of Contrition. Pater..., Ave,...
Sixth Station.

THE FACE OF JESUS IS WIPED BY VERONICA.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.

As Jesus proceeds on the way, covered with the sweat of death, a woman, moved with compassion, makes her way through the crowd, and wipes his face with a handkerchief. As a reward of her piety, the impression of His sacred countenance is miraculously imprinted upon the handkerchief.

Prayer.

O Jesus! may the contemplation of Thy sufferings move me to hate my sins, and kindle in my heart more fervent love to Thee. May Thine image be engraven on my mind until I am transformed into Thy likeness.

Act of Contrition, Pater.... Ave....
JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME
Seventh Station.

Jesus falls the second time.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.

The pain of His wounds and the loss of His Blood increasing at every step of His way, again His strength fails him, and Jesus falls to the ground a second time.

Prayer.

O Jesus! falling again under the burden of my sins, how often have I grieved Thee! Oh, may I rather die than ever offend Thee again.

Act of Contrition, Pater.... Ave....
Eighth Station.

THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM MOURN FOR OUR LORD.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.

At the sight of the sufferings of Jesus, some holy women in the crowd were so touched with sympathy, that they openly bewailed and lamented him.

Jesus turned to them, and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, I mourn, and will mourn, both for Thee and for myself; for thy sufferings, and for my sins, which caused them. Oh, teach me so to mourn that I may be comforted, and escape those dreadful judgments prepared for all who reject or neglect Thee in this life.

Act of Contrition, Pater..., Ave...
Jesus Falls a Third Time
Ninth Station.

Jesus falls the third time under the cross.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.

Jesus had now arrived almost at the summit of Calvary; but before He reached the spot where He was to be crucified, His strength again fails Him, and He falls for the third time, to be again dragged up and goaded onward by the brutal soldiery.

Prayer.

Lord Jesus! I entreat Thee, by the merits of Thy third painful fall, to pardon my frequent relapses and my long continuance in sin; and may the thought of Thy sufferings make me hate my sins more and more.

Act of Contrition, Pater..., Ave,...
Tenth Station.

Jesus is stripped of His garments.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.

Arrived at last at the place of sacrifice, they prepare to crucify Him. His garments are torn from His bleeding Body, and He, the Holy of Holies, stands exposed to the vulgar gaze of the rude and scoffing multitude.

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Thou didst endure this shame for my shameful deeds. Strip me, I beseech Thee, of all false shame, conceit, and pride; and make me so to humble myself voluntarily in this life, that I may escape the everlasting ignominy in the world to come.

Act of Contrition, Pater, Ave...
Eleventh Station.

Jesus is nailed to the cross.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.

The cross is laid upon the ground, and Jesus is stretched upon His bed of death. At one and the same time He offers His bruised limbs to His heavenly Father, in behalf of sinful man, and to His fierce executioners to be nailed to the disgraceful wood. The blows are struck and the blood gushes forth.

Prayer.

O Jesus! nailed to the cross, fasten my heart there also, that it may be united to Thee until death; strike me with its fatal blow, and with my last breath I shall have yielded my soul to Thee. *

Act of Contrition, Pater.... Ave....
Twelfth Station.

Jesus dies upon the cross.

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.

For three hours Jesus hung upon His transfixed hands; His Blood ran in streams down His Body, and bedewed the ground; and in the midst of excruciating sufferings, He has pardoned

His murderers, promised the bliss of paradise to the penitent thief, and committed His blessed Mother and beloved disciples to each other’s care. All is now consummated; and meekly bowing His head, He dies.

Prayer.

O Jesus! I devoutly venerate that honored Cross upon which Thou didst love me ever unto death. In that death I place all my confidence. Henceforth let me live only for Thee; and when dying, let me die loving only Thee.

Act of Contrition, Pater..., Ave...
**Thirteenth Station.**

**Jesus is laid in the arms of his mother.**

I adore Thee, etc.
Because, etc.
The multitude have left the heights of Calvary, and none remain save the beloved disciple and the holy women, who, at the foot of the cross, are striving to stem the grief of Christ’s inconsolable Mother. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take the Body of her divine Son from the cross, and deposit it in her arms.

**Prayer.**

O Mary, Mother of Jesus, whose grief was boundless as an ocean that hath no limits, give me a share in thy sorrow over the sufferings of thy Son, and have compassion on my infirmities. Accept me, with the beloved disciple, as thy child. Show thyself a mother unto us; and may thy divine Son, through thee, receive our prayers.

Act of Contrition, Pater... Ave...
Prayer.

I too, O God, will descend into the grave whenever it shall please Thee, as it shall please Thee, and wheresoever it shall please Thee. Let Thy just degrees be fulfilled; let my sinful body return to its parent dust; but do Thou, in Thy great mercy, receive my immortal soul; and when my body has risen, place it likewise in Thy kingdom, that I may love and bless Thee for ever and ever. Amen.

Act of Contrition, Pater... Ave...
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