



**Mennonite
Church
Canada**

Resource Centre

From our Churches

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Journey to the Cross

Stations of the Cross

Instructions:

Jesus walked through the villages and countryside of Palestine. He walked among the people, offering the good news of the Kingdom and the healing touch of his love. Finally, Jesus walked from the Garden of Gethsemane to the Cross on Calvary. You are invited to walk with Jesus on the journey to the cross on _____. (date)

How will it happen? We won't be sitting in pews in the sanctuary for this service. We will gather in the foyer, then move as a group through the church, pausing at fourteen different "stations" for a brief experience of worship. Each station will commemorate one event that happened as Jesus journeyed to the cross. We will carry candles, and will walk in silence from one station to the next. Jesus' mother Mary will walk with us, telling us what is happening to Jesus. Each time we stop, Mary will relate what is happening to Jesus, there will be something visual for us to focus on, and we will hear a reading.

You have indicated that you would like to help with one of the stations.

Your station is: _____

Theme: _____

Place: _____

What do you need to do?:

- 1. Prepare something for us to look at, at your station. It could be a picture, a collage, a still life arrangement on a table, a "human sculpture" or pantomime, a large prop, etc. Make sure it's big enough for a group to see.*
- 2. Prepare to read the reading at your station (see attached page).*

Find attached a summary of all the stations, and the materials for yours. Thanks for your part in bringing Jesus' journey to life.

Station 1

Jesus is Condemned to Die

theme: judging others

visual image: Vickers portrait of Christ

Mary: It was early Friday morning when I saw my son. That was the first glimpse I had of him since they took him away. His bruised and bleeding skin sent a sword of pain deep into my heart and tears down my cheeks. Then Pilate, from his chair of judgment, asked the crowd why they wanted my son executed. All around me they shouted. "Crucify him!" I wanted to plead with them to stop. I stood by and cried silently.

Reading: Richard Furey, "First Station," *Mary's Way of the Cross*, Twenty-Third Publications.

Station 2

Jesus takes his cross

theme: confessing the wrongs we have done

visual image: _____

Mary: Regaining a little strength. I walked with the crowds to the entrance of the square. A door flew open and my son stumbled out, the guards laughing behind him. Two men dragged over a heavy wooden cross and dropped it on his shoulders. They shoved him down the road. My pain for him was unbearable. I wanted to take the cross from him and carry it myself.

Reading: Richard Furey, "Second Station," *Mary's Way of the Cross*, Twenty-Third Publications.

Station 3

Jesus falls the first time

theme: innocent suffering

visual image: picture of refugee child

Mary: I followed close behind my son as he stumbled toward Calvary. Nothing had ever hurt me more than to see him in such pain. I saw the cross digging into his shoulders. My heart dropped when I saw him fall face to the ground, the heavy cross landing squarely on his back. For a moment I thought my beloved son was dead. Now, my whole body began to tremble. Then the guards kicked him. He rose slowly and began to walk again, yet they still whipped him. I wanted to protect him with my own body. But I knew this had to be, so I walked on and wept silently.

Reading: Henri Nouwen, *Walk With Jesus: Stations of the Cross*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, pp. 21-23, (selections).

Station 4

Jesus meets his grieving mother

theme: courage

visual image: _____

Mary: I had managed to break through the crowd and was walking side by side with my son. I called to him through the shouting voices. He stopped. Our eyes met, mine full of tears of anguish, his full of pain and confusion. I felt helpless: then his eyes said to me, "Courage! There is a purpose for this." As he stumbled on, I knew he was right.

Reading: Richard Furey, "Fourth Station," *Mary's Way of the Cross*, Twenty-Third Publications.

Station 5

Simon helps Jesus carry his cross

theme: carrying another's burden

visual image: _____

Mary: I could now see almost complete helplessness on the face of my son as he tried to carry his heavy load. Each step looked as if it would be his last. I felt his every pain in my heart and I wanted the whole thing to end. Then I noticed some commotion near Jesus. The guards had pulled a protesting man from the crowd. They forced him to pick up the back of the cross to help lighten my son's load. Why? Why did this have to be?

Reading: Henri Nouwen, *Seeds of Hope: a Henri Nouwen Reader*, Toronto: Bantam Books, pp. 123-124, (selections).

Station 6

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

theme: loneliness and separation

visual image: collage of black & white portraits

Mary: As I continued close by Jesus, a woman pushed past the guards, took off her Veil and began to wipe my son's sweating, bloody face. The guards immediately pulled her back. Her face seemed to say, "Why are you doing this to him? Why must you take him away?"

Reading: Henri Nouwen, *Walk With Jesus: Stations of the Cross*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, pp. 39-41 (selections)

Station 7
Jesus falls the second time

theme: doubt

visual image: _____

Mary: Again my son fell, and again my grief was overwhelming at the thought that, he might die. I started to move toward him, but the soldiers prevented me. He rose and stumbled ahead slowly. Seeing my son fall, get up again, and continue on, was bitter anguish to me. Where was God?

Reading: Vienna Cobb Anderson, *Prayers of our Hearts in Word and Action*, NY: Crossword Pub. Co, p. 101.

Station 8
Jesus speaks to the women

theme: blindness

visual image: _____

Mary: I was walking a few steps behind Jesus when I saw him stop. Some women were there crying for him and pitying him. He told them not to shed tears for him. They had the opportunity to accept him as the messiah; like many others, they rejected him instead. He told them, "Do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children." But they didn't see.

Reading: HWB 569

Station 9
Jesus falls the third time

theme: helping others

visual image: _____

Mary: This fall of Jesus was agony to me. Not only had he fallen on the rocky ground again, but now he was almost at the top of the hill of crucifixion. The soldiers screamed at him and abused him, almost dragging him the last few steps. My heart pounded as I imagined what they would do to him next.

Reading: Richard Furey, "Ninth Station," *Mary's Way of the Cross*, Twenty-Third Publications.

Station 10
Jesus is stripped of his garments

theme: losing everything

visual image: _____

Mary: With my son finally relieved of the weight of the cross, I thought he would have a chance to rest. But the guards immediately started to rip his clothes off his blood-clotted skin. The sight of my son in such pain was unbearable. There was nothing left to lose.

Reading: Henri Nouwen, *Walk With Jesus: Stations of the Cross*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, p. 63.

Station 11
Jesus is nailed to the cross

theme: despair

visual image: _____

Mary: As they threw Jesus on the cross, he willingly allowed himself to be nailed. As they punctured his hands and his feet I felt the pain in my heart. Then they lifted up the cross. There he was, my son, whom I love so much, being scorned as he struggled for the last few moments of earthly life.

Reading: Vienna Cobb Anderson, *Prayers of our Hearts in Word and Action*, NY: Crossroad Pub. Co., p. 114.

Station 12
Jesus dies on the cross

theme: suffering love

visual image: _____

Mary: What greater pain is there for a mother than to see her child die right before her eyes? I, who had brought this savior into the world and watched him grow, stood helplessly beneath his cross as he lowered his head and died. His earthly anguish was finished, but mine was greater than ever.

Reading: John 15:12, 13

Station 13

Jesus is taken from the cross

theme: faith in the dark times

visual image: _____

Mary: The crowd had gone; the noise had stopped. I stood quietly with one of Jesus' friends and looked up at the dead body of our savior, my son. Then two men took the body from the cross and placed it in my arms. A deep sorrow engulfed my being. Yet, I also felt deep joy. Life had ended cruelly for my son, but it had also brought life to all of us. I knew this had to be.

Reading: "Faith," by Lel Marie De La Garza, *With*, Apr/May '94, p. 22

Station 14

Jesus is place in the tomb

theme: waiting

visual image: graveyard

Mary: We brought Jesus' body to a tomb and I arranged it there myself, silently weeping, silently rejoicing. I took one more look at my loving son, and then walked out. They closed the tomb and before I left, I thought, I will wait. I will wait in the darkness. I will wait in faith.