

# The Way of the Cross - Via Crucis

## The Way of Sorrows - Via Dolorosa

Stations of the Cross (or Way of the Cross; in Latin, Via Crucis; also called the Via Dolorosa or Way of Sorrows, or simply, The Way) refers to the depiction of the Passion (Suffering and Love) of Jesus.

The Stations of the Cross originated in pilgrimages to Jerusalem. In the Roman Catholic tradition, the meditation *is often performed in a spirit of reparation for the sufferings and insults that Jesus endured during His Passion*. This is a horrible guilt inducing understanding that is focused on the external – the suffering of some historical and largely mythical story, that misses the meaning of the story. I will include all the stations, both the traditional and the scriptural so that as you do this walking meditation with a series of stations in any church you will have guidance with which ever representation is there. Pope John Paul II referred to Acts of Reparation as the "unceasing effort to stand beside the endless crosses on which the Son of God continues to be crucified." While this is an acknowledgement of all humans as children of God and an encouragement for social justice and good works, the focus is still primarily external on others instead of internal and focused on our own path first.

### Traditional form

Has part of your life been a way of sorrow and difficulty? What made it so hard? What beliefs and feelings did you have? What dualistic thoughts have you been carrying around that have bent you over with shame and fear?

**Jesus is Condemned to Die** - and so too are we condemned to die in order to find new life in the soul? To what have you committed to dying to? When do you think you agree yourself to die? What heresies have you lived by?

**Jesus is Made to Bear His Cross** - what cross have you born - what dualities have weighted you down?

**Jesus Falls the First Time** - have these dualities made you fall - to your knees in shame

**Jesus Meets His Mother** - when did you first catch a glimpse of the generative energy of your own Soul?

**Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross** - what/who has helped you on the way?

**Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face** - who do you think Veronica represents? What does this have to do with projection, mirror images? How have you projected the face of the divine feminine within?

**Jesus Falls the Second Time** - have you repeated the same mistake and had the same consequences? Have you been patient with yourself or condemnatory? Have you accepted or judged?

**Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem** - who do you think the women represent - the women of the Holy City?

**Jesus Falls the Third Time** - What do you think the number 3 means - how many other 3's are there in scripture?

**Jesus is Stripped** - have you been stripped? What outer garments have protected you? How have you covered up/defended/pretended/played and hidden behind roles?

**Jesus is Nailed to the Cross** - have you ever felt stuck, double bound, trapped, helpless, hopeless by your own inner dialogue of condemnation and judgment?

**Jesus Dies on the Cross** - in this place, only death to the judgments can get you off the cross - have you learnt acceptance, compassion, gentleness, kindness with yourself? Or have you returned to defenses of fantasy, denial, addiction...Have you been able to relax and surrender into dying to the ego?

**Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross** - have you felt the deathly exhaustion after a long inner struggle and final surrender?

**Jesus is Laid in the Tomb** - how is the tomb and the womb a similar place? Is birth and death really the same place? How have you experienced LIFE on either side of this doorway?

## Present form condoned by the Vatican and instituted by Pope John Paul II

1. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane
2. Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested
3. Jesus is condemned by the Sanhedrin
4. Jesus is denied by Peter
5. Jesus is judged by Pilate
6. Jesus is scourged and crowned with thorns
7. Jesus takes up his cross
8. Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene to carry his cross
9. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem
10. Jesus is crucified
11. Jesus promises his kingdom to the repentant thief
12. Jesus entrusts Mary and John to each other
13. Jesus dies on the cross
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb

Some dynamics and symbols to work with:

Inner betrayal and loyalty  
Surrender and Defense  
Denial and Acceptance  
Judgment and Compassion  
Responsibility and Dependency  
Living and Dying  
Internal and external focus and relationship -  
Conformity and Rebelliousness  
Social Justice and Inner Justice  
Embracing and Rejecting  
Sacrifice and Self Protection  
Shame and Love  
Courage and Avoidance

Some symbols to work with:

The cross, the numbers that appear in the story, seed and fruit, the tomb, the personalities of the characters, the garden, the hill of Gogotha,

*A grain of wheat remains a solitary grain unless it falls into the ground and dies;  
but if it dies, it bears a rich harvest  
~Jesus*