

Stations of the Cross for a Wounded World

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Preparatory Reflection and Prayer

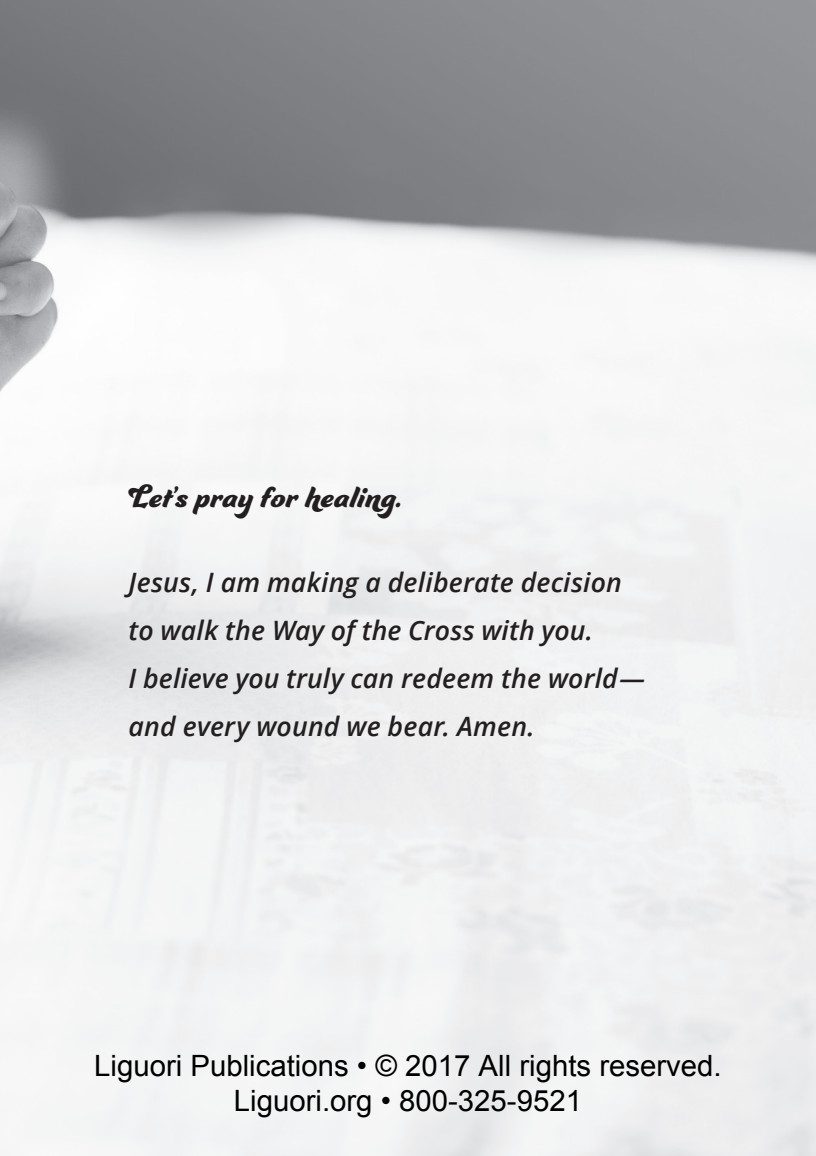
Reflect on your life. When have you been hurt or traumatized by another person or by something you witnessed?

Think of this experience and all that came after it. As you pray these Stations of the Cross, offer up your pain to the wounds of Christ and believe in the transfiguration and redemption of your most difficult experiences.

Perhaps you suffered a terrible loss and still mourn it deeply. Maybe you are an armed-services veteran with memories of war that haunt you in ways nobody can imagine. You may have suffered trauma through an accident or prolonged illness. Perhaps you were wrongfully accused or shunned by those who should love you most. Maybe you feel abandoned, traumatized by violence, or devastated by the loss of a child, born or unborn. You may continue to experience the aftershocks of the event, even decades later, as you sort through memories of violation and violence, humiliation and horror, tragedy and turmoil.



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Let's pray for healing.

*Jesus, I am making a deliberate decision
to walk the Way of the Cross with you.
I believe you truly can redeem the world—
and every wound we bear. Amen.*

The First Station

Jesus is condemned to death.

Leader: *We adore you, oh Christ,
and we bless you (genuflect).*

People: *Because by your holy cross,
you have redeemed the world (rise).*

Leader: Think of Jesus in the moment he is condemned to death on a cross for the sins of the world. He bows his head and accepts the verdict, knowing what will come as a result of the sentence. Every suffering he would endure from this moment forward was for you. Each station is a moment in which the suffering Lord reaches out to a broken world and invites every person who has been wounded to discover the path that leads to redemption. Perhaps you have suffered at the hands of someone in authority, perhaps even someone you trusted. Maybe you have been accused of things you did not do or witnessed tragic events in the lives of those who did not deserve them. You have a story, a wound, a traumatic event.

People: Oh Lord, as I consider the offense I experienced, help me to offer it up to you. That moment changed everything. In many ways, I feel condemned by the experience. That violation and the struggle that followed is not the end of my story. Help me to give my deepest hurts to you and to see the love in your eyes as I recognize that you take all of my sorrow into your most Sacred Heart. I trust that you are beginning a work of redemption right here, right now. And I give my yes to that holy work.



Matthew 26:65–70

The Second Station

Jesus bears his cross.

Leader: *We adore you, oh Christ,
and we bless you (genuflect).*

People: *Because by your holy cross,
you have redeemed the world (rise).*

Leader: Think of Jesus as he adjusts his body under the weight of the cross, trying to stand and take a step forward. Imagine him looking into the future and seeing you clearly, with your own cross laid upon your shoulders. Imagine that he sees you even as he picks up the cross and intercedes in this moment for you. He has come to help you bear the burden that has nearly crushed you under its weight.

People: Oh Lord, help me to make a deliberate decision to turn to you each time I remember what happened to me. Give me strength to trust that you walk with me and to believe that you have been walking with me all along. In the moment you said yes to bearing your cross, you said yes to walking with me as I bear my cross. By willingly becoming our suffering Lord, you changed my cross from something I cannot control into an offering that I can lay at your feet. I do that now. I feel the weight of my burden and am surprised that you would want it, that you have always wanted me to give it to you.



John 19:16-17

*Give me strength to trust
that you walk with me
and to believe
that you have been
walking with me all along.
In the moment you said yes
to bearing your cross,
you said yes to walking with me
as I bear my cross.*

