

First Station: "Jesus Prays Alone" — Luke 22:39-44

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.' Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.' [Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.]]

Write down on a piece of paper something in your life that you wanted that wasn't the will of God and didn't necessarily happen. After writing it down, pray "Not my will but yours be done" and shred the paper.

Second Station: "Jesus Is Arrested" — Matthew 26:47-56

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.' At once he came up to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' and kissed him. Jesus said to him, 'Friend, do what you are here to do.' Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?' At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Response? Sometimes we try to defend our faith with swords, with violence. Instead of taking up a sword, let us sow seeds of peace by going on social media and posting something encouraging that will bring peace to those who read it.

Third Station: "Pilate Tries Jesus" — Matthew 27:11-14

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' Jesus said, 'You say so.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?' But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Response? Take moment and pray for the last person who accused you of doing something wrong- a family member, friend, or more than likely a congregant. As you pray for that person, take a piece of tape as a reminder that sometimes we need to remain

silent and listen rather than defending ourselves.

Fourth Station: "Pilate Sentences Jesus" — Matthew 27:15-24

Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?' For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, 'Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.' Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' And they said, 'Barabbas.' Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!' Then he asked, 'Why, what evil has he done?' But they shouted all the more, 'Let him be crucified!' So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.'

Response: Pilate washed his hands, but he was still the one who made the decision that Jesus be crucified. As you dip your hands in the water and attempt to wash away any responsibility you have for decisions you have made, think about peer pressure, how the cries of the crowd, the cries of society have led you to make poor choices.

Fifth Station: "Jesus Wears a Crown" — Mark 15:16-20a-

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Response- Pilate was trying to make fun of Jesus and show that he was a pathetic King of the Jews. As you look at or form and shape a crown of thorns, think of how Christians around the world are mocked, pierced, and persecuted for their faith in Jesus. Read this article <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2018/january/top-50-christian-persecution-open-doors-world-watch-list.html> and commit to praying for those Christians who are being persecuted in their country.

Sixth Station: "Simon Carries the Cross" — Luke 23:26

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.

Response- Crosses in Biblical times could weight 75-125 pounds. Pick up the heaviest thing you can find in your house and imagine you are carrying a cross. Would you be willing to carry the cross for Jesus? Are you willing to continue carrying on the message and ministry of Jesus?

Seventh Station: "Jesus Is Crucified" — Luke 23:33-34

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.']] And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

Response- Roll some dice as if you were the guards dividing up Jesus' clothes. They weren't concerned with Jesus' life, they were concerned with Jesus' stuff. What matters more to you- the lives of others or the things you own? As you roll the dice, challenge yourself to do what the paper says...

Roll a 1- Pray the "Shema" in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and be reminded that the Lord our God is one:

Roll a 2- Pick two people in your life that you are grateful for and write them a letter or text them a note of thanks

Roll a 3- Write down 3 things you are thankful for that are not material items

Roll a 4- Think about what it means to live "4" others and write down 4 ways you can help someone else this week

Roll a 5- Find 5 things that you own that you could give away to help others

Roll a 6- Spend 60 minutes today away from technology and spending time with God or your family instead.

Eighth Station: "Criminals Speak to Jesus" — Luke 23:39-43

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

Response- Do you have a hard time asking for, receiving, or maybe even *showing* forgiveness in your own life, like these thieves? Take a moment for your own silent confession and then light a votive candle, reminding yourself that the light of Christ still

burns within you.

Ninth Station: "Jesus Dies on the Cross" — Luke 23:44-48-

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.' Having said this, he breathed his last.

Response: When Jesus died, the curtain of the temple was torn in two. The curtain separated the Holy of Holies (where God's spirit lived) from the Jewish people. With the death of Christ, there was no longer any separation, any curtain between God and humanity. Tear a piece of cloth and know that nothing stands in the way of you having a relationship with God. Jesus has torn open the doors for you to enter in!

Tenth Station: "Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb" — John 19:38-42

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Response: Find some lotion or essential oils in your house and rub the mixture into your hands and think about how Nicodemus and the women felt as they prepared Jesus' body for burial. Think about their despair, their pain, their confusion.