Stations of the Cross: Ecological Way of the Cross

Introduction

During the Stations of the Cross, we retrace Christ's steps by enacting the biblical record of his Passion, with each station commemorating a stage in Christ's journey to crucifixion.
The Ecological Way of the Cross puts the suffering of Christ's Passion in our time by relating it to the suffering of the earth and the poor.

The First Station

Jesus is condemned to death.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
God of life, many of our sisters and brothers risked and lost their lives working to protect this beautiful world You created. We believe they have fallen asleep in You, Lord. May their sacrifice be remembered and honored by those they served. Amen.

The Second Station

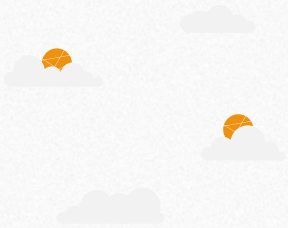
Jesus carries his cross.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Lord Jesus, just as You embraced the burden of our sins, we pray for those who will be forced to carry the burden of environmental disasters caused by our rampant development. We also pray for those who risk their lives to embrace the call of social and climate justice. Amen.

The Third Station

Jesus falls for the first time.



We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
We pray for our sisters and brothers hidden in the darkness of modern slavery, in factories and homes across the world, forced to work in inhumane conditions and deprived of their freedom. Help us to remember those who suffer for our unsustainable lifestyles and give us a change of heart so that this evil may be rooted from our world. Amen.

The Fourth Station

Jesus meets his mother.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Lord, by the sorrow You felt in meeting Your mother, we pray that we can meet with compassion our sister mother earth who sustains all life with air, food, and water. Amen.

The Fifth Station

Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his cross.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Lord, help us to recognize that we are our sisters' and brothers' keepers, and like Simon of Cyrene, help us to alleviate the suffering of those crushed by injustice, poverty, and violence. Amen.

The Sixth Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
We pray that we may see the face of Jesus in the faces of all those suffering from illness, particularly those suffering from the coronavirus and conditions exacerbated by climate change such as asthma and heat strokes. Like Veronica, help us to be a source of compassion and comfort. Amen.

The Seventh Station

Jesus falls a second time.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Lord, as You have fallen a second time, so do we fall to our indifferent consumerism. Help us, we pray, to be conscious of our purchasing decisions, to choose what is ethically and sustainably made, and to stand up for those who carry the heavy burden of unjust economic policies. Amen.

The Eight Station

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Like the women of Jerusalem, we weep for our children who will bear the brunt of our environmental destruction. God of life, help us to resist the culture of death that seeks only its own gain and to the detriment of all other living beings, including those that are yet to live. Amen.

The Ninth Station

Jesus falls a third time.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Lord, the weight of the cross caused You to fall a third time. We, too, daunted by unbridled exploitation, fall to anguish and frustration. Give us the strength to rise again and again in our fight for social and climate justice. Amen.

The Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of his clothes.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Jesus, You were stripped of Your clothing and dignity. So, too, the earth is stripped of its minerals and nutrient rich topsoil. Help us to seek and develop a just transition to renewable forms of energy and to restrain our consumption so that the earth may be restored to its glorious bounty. Amen.

The Eleventh Station

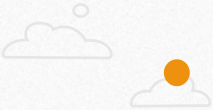
Jesus is nailed to the cross.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Lord Jesus, our misguided models of progress have blinded us to the wonder and sacred destiny of Your creation. Conflict over natural resources are the nails with which we crucify You over and over again. Forgive us our greed and awaken Your abiding presence in us. Amen.

The Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the cross.



We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Jesus, by dying on the cross You surrender Your will to the Father so that we may have life. Help us, we pray, to surrender our indifference to the plight of people displaced from their homes by climate-induced floods, famine, and war. Amen.

The Thirteenth Station

Jesus is taken down from the cross.

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

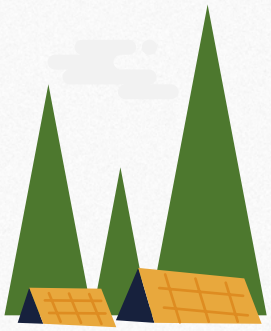
Prayer
Lord, even as we witness the extinction of entire species, help us to hold on to our faith, hope, and love. Just as Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus stepped up to care for Your lifeless body, give us the courage to be a voice for the unheard. Use us as instruments of peace for all creation. Amen.

The Fourteenth Station

We adore You, oh Christ, and we bless You!
Because by Your holy cross, You have redeemed the world.

Prayer
Creator of all things, to You nothing is impossible; to You all are beautiful and precious. Help us to see creation as You do. Help us to lay aside our differences and embrace each other as sisters and brothers. Amen.

Concluding Prayer



Br. Benedict Ayodi, OFM Cap. LSM Africa Program Manager. Nairobi, Kenya.

Lord Jesus, open our eyes and hearts to Your passion and death still going on around us. Help us to see that You are condemned to death again in the extinction of species, that the weight of the cross You still carry is our consumerism and throwaway culture; that You are still dying with the victims of extreme weather, war, conflict, and our indifference.

As Your passion continues throughout history and the world, give us the confidence and courage to be like those who comforted You on Your way to the cross – Veronica, Simon of Cyrene, Joseph of Arimathea, and Your most Blessed Mother.