

# **The Stations of the Cross For Migrants:**

(By Fr. Eric David Zegeer, D. Min.)

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**In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

***Then Jesus said to them ‘If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.’ Lk. 9:23***

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## **Opening Prayer:**

Most merciful and loving Savior, crucified and risen, we now walk these stations of your passion, death, resurrection alongside our migrant brothers and sisters suffering here and throughout the world who have been forced to share in your own sufferings by circumstances beyond their control. As we meditate on these stations and worship you, filled with gratitude for all that you have suffered for us, give us the courage and empathy to encounter and accompany our migrant brothers and sisters in their sufferings so as to respond to your divine teaching: “*I was a stranger and you welcomed me*” (Mt. 25:35) and “*Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me*” (Mt. 25:40). **Amen.**

**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CABRINI, PRAY FOR US!**

**ST. JOHN BAPTIST SCALABRINI, PRAY FOR US!**

**OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, PATRONESS OF THE AMERICAS, PRAY FOR US!**

## **First Station: Jesus is condemned to death**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

***And the crowd called out ‘Crucify him. Crucify him.’ Lk. 23:21***

Countless brothers and sisters are condemned to death because of poverty, hunger, religious persecution, violence, and oppressive political regimes—forced to migrate from their beloved homelands, separated from their families, in order to survive and provide a better future for their children. After finding a new country to call their home—a place of refuge, freedom, and safety for themselves and their children—only to be led away in chains, like Jesus, because of forced deportation.

## **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, you were scourged, crowned with thorns, and mockingly dressed in purple garments only to be condemned to death before the crowds for proclaiming the truth. Help us to never remain silent or indifferent in the face of injustice and suffering, but give us the courage act upon remembering that “love for the Lord, then, is one with love for the poor” (*Dilexi te*, #5). **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary. . . Glory be . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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## **Second Station: Jesus accepts his cross**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

***They took him, and he went out carrying the Cross himself, to a place called The Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. Jn. 19:1***

How heavy the cross of our brothers and sisters forced to migrate out of necessity! The many dangers they face along the way—vast deserts, raging seas, the lack of food, shelter, and water, criminal organizations seeking to rob, kidnap, force them into human slavery, dangerous train, bus, and river routes fraught with peril, only to be met with racism, xenophobia, exploitation, walls, barriers, and restrictive immigration policies. How close Christ must be to them as He carries his cross alongside them in this daily journey made by millions every day!

**Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, as we contemplate your carrying the cross while the crowds mocked and reviled you—casting stones and aspersions as you passed by—help us to see you in the migrants among us carrying their own crosses every day and to be the Church you have called us to be, that “welcomes, protects, promotes, and integrates.” “Where the world sees threats, help us to see children; where walls are built, help us to build bridges,” and to accompany all migrants as our brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved.” (*Dilexi te*, #75) **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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**Third Station: Jesus falls the first time**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*He was despised and rejected by humankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces, he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. Is. 53: 3-5*

The migrant walks for miles and miles under the blazing sun, often carrying their little children on their backs or in their arms—their stomachs are empty, their throats are parched, their shoes are torn and tattered, their legs wobble under the weight of it all. It’s too much and they feel they can’t go further, but they cannot stop to rest because it’s too dangerous—there is no shelter from the sun, nor light to walk through the dangerous jungles at night. They have to get up and keep going, rest is a luxury they cannot afford.

**Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, you fell as you carried your cross. Your body could not bear the weight and the agony. You were crushed to the ground underneath its weight. Give us the strength to be agents of change of all that crushes our migrant brothers and sisters: “doctrinal rigor without mercy” (*Dilexi te*, #48), “economic dictatorships that kill” (*Dilexi te*, #92), “ideologies that defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation” (*Dilexi te*, #92), all “social structures of sin within our society” (*Dilexi te*, #93), “structural causes of poverty” (*Dilexi te*, #94), indifference, selfishness, greed, and fear. Help us to always remember that “when the Church bends down to care for the poor, she assumes her highest posture.” (*Dilexi Te*, #79). **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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## **Fourth Station: Jesus meets his mother**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*And Simeon blessed them and said unto Mary his mother: 'Behold this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed and a sword will pierce our own soul, too.'* Lk. 2:34-35

Some of the most vulnerable migrants are women, young and old. They are often exploited in unmentionable ways, underpaid, overworked; and yet we place our greatest trust in them with our own children, our homes, and our food—they are nannies, domestic workers, and cooks. After all their sacrifices and hard work, too many become mothers torn from their children's arms as they are separated from their American born children and deported. They are daughters, sisters, and wives ripped from the protective and providential care of their fathers, brothers, and husbands—placed in chains and incarcerated—treated like dangerous criminals. They fill the pews of our churches with prayer, supplications, and tears—while holding our families and communities together. Can you see the face of Mary beholding her son, unable to embrace him as he passes by with the cross, in the faces of these women?

### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, how great must have been your agony to see your mother behold you in such humiliation and rejection; and yet, her gaze gave you strength to carry on and the comfort of knowing that you were not alone—you had the love of a mother every step of the way to Golgotha. Give your loving consolation to the countless children separated from the love of their mothers who have been deported. Help them to know that they are not alone, because we rise up to care, protect, provide, and nurture them as members of your church—the Mother of all! **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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## **Fifth Station: Simon helps Jesus carry his cross**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*Outside they found a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and forced him to carry the Cross. Mt. 27:32*

We celebrate and give thanks to God for the countless, unknown, peoples who provide food and water, shelter, pastoral care, spiritual support, Sacramental ministry, legal assistance, social advocacy, community organizing, and so much more on behalf of the migrant and the poor. They are the Simons of Cyrene today. May they always see Christ in those they serve as they help carry the burden of their brothers and sisters in need! On the day that God calls them home, may they hear these words of Jesus: "Well done, my good and faithful servant. Come, share your master's joy!" (Mt. 25:23)

### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, help us to "let ourselves be evangelized by the poor and acknowledge the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them" (*Dilexi te*, #102), as Simon experienced while he carried the cross of his Savior impoverished by his humanity, unable to carry the cross any further on his own. Jesus humbly allowed a sinner to carry his cross, while he walked besides him. Help us to know that we have much to learn from the poor and that choosing to live among them is one of the highest forms of evangelical life (*Dilexi te*, #101-102). **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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**Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*And I, for my innocence, I'll see your face, waking my joy in your presence. Ps. 16:15*

Fearless of the risks and consequences of breaking through the ranks of Roman soldiers lining the way of the cross, Veronica would not be deterred from showing some act of compassion and providing comfort to Jesus—his face covered in blood, dirt, and spit from the crowd. Such a small gesture would seem insignificant in light of the ultimate fate of Jesus; yet her heroic act was the last gentle touch he would experience in this life, amidst the violence of his own crucifixion—never to be forgotten! Never to be outdone in generosity, he leaves her with a permanent image of his divine face upon her veil.

**Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, make us as fearless and equally compassionate as Veronica before the plight of the migrant and the poor, regardless of how small our gestures may seem to be. May they see and feel in our loving gaze, our efforts to accompany and support them, and our simple prayers for them now—the gentle touch and compassionate face of Veronica who stopped everything to focus only on them—out of love for Jesus. May the look upon their faces and the dignity of their persons be permanently etched into our hearts and memories, forever. **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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**Seventh Station: Jesus falls the second time**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*All we, like sheep, had all gone astray, we have all turned to our own way,  
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Is. 53:6*

Jesus the immigrant, who was forced to flee in the middle of the night into Egypt, from the murderous intentions of Herod, falls for the second time (Mt. 2:13-15). Did he remember in that moment the exhaustion of Joseph and Mary as they walked through the night—forced to flee and live in a foreign land where they had no work, they couldn't speak the language, and had no friends or family to receive them? How many times did they fall and have to get up along *that* journey? Did their sacrifice then, to save him, give him the strength to get up again now? Jesus rises to continue to Golgotha, to be the sacrificial offering for the salvation of the world. He would not be deterred.

**Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, when we feel like giving up, help us to remember the sacrifice of Jesus relived in the sacrifice of so many others in our life; so that we can persevere in carrying our own crosses while helping to carry the cross of others along the way. May we never forget that “the more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin [and that] public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him” (CCC #2241).

May those we serve experience, through our actions, the words of St. Paul: “You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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### **Eighth Station: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*And there followed him a great multitude of people and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.’ Lk. 23:27-28*

How great is the cry and lament of so many migrant women for their children—for the children who were never born because of the dangers of their mother’s present life, those who are separated from their mother’s along their migration, those who died along the journey, and those who remain as citizens in their new country only to see their mothers taken back to a country they have never known—never knowing when or if they will see each other again. How can we weep for Jesus’ suffering if we do not weep for these women and their children?

#### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, teach us how to weep and lament with our Sorrowful mother, for all the sufferings you endured with and for the migrant and the poor. May we never lose hope, but have a heart filled with compassion, and compelled to action as we heed the Lord’s command to weep for ourselves and our children in need. May we always see in them an encounter with Jesus himself. **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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### **Ninth Station: Jesus falls the third time**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Mt. 11:28*

What inspired Jesus to keep getting up, every time he fell? Could it have been the call of his Father that Jesus echoed in Matthew’s gospel, promising his son rest? Too often we have stood by and simply watched as others fall around us. We stand together now, committed to help carry the burden, and to accompany all those who feel crushed by the weight of their circumstances. We will help them up and continue to walk by their side, responding to the Father’s call to each of us toward heaven, because saints are sinners who never stop trying. May we be relentless in our pursuit for genuine holiness, loving God and neighbor.

#### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, every time I fall, give me the strength to get up—motivated by your love for me that knows no limits. As you help me and give me strength, may I also do for others as you have done for me. **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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**Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of his garments**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*After they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Mt. 27:35-36*

The circumstances that our migrant brothers and sisters too often find themselves in, leave them stripped of their inherent human dignity—from our current immigration laws, xenophobia, human trafficking, unjust wages, lack of access to healthcare, indefinite or permanent separation from their loved ones across the border, racism, and a constant fear of deportation and separation from their children. Give us courage to work for justice so that all people in need can fulfill their basic human right to migrate and sustain their lives and the lives of their families (<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/immigration/catholic-teaching-on-immigration-and-the-movement-of-peoples>).

**Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, I have nothing to offer you that is of my own making, but my sin. Everything I have is your gift to me—every breathe, every heartbeat, every penny, every ability, and skill. May I use it all for your glory, in service to the Church—especially the poor—who have been stripped of their dignity like you. **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

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**Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the Cross**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*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. Lk. 23:33*

The rejection of our Savior became absolute as he was nailed, naked, to the cross, because of our sins. Pope Francis reminds us that “We can all agree on one thing: Migrants should not be in those seas and in those lethal deserts, and, unfortunately, they are there. It needs to be said clearly: There are those who systematically work by all means to drive away migrants, and this, when done knowingly and deliberately, is a grave sin. What kills migrants is our indifference and that attitude of rejection” (<https://www.usccb.org/news/2024/pope-driving-away-migrants-grave-sin>).

**Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, you were crucified between two criminals. Too often the migrant and the poor are treated as criminals by our society. You are crucified between them, as they cry out to you: “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom;” as you reply: “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” (Lk. 23:42-42). **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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### **Twelfth Station: Jesus dies on the Cross**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

**(REMAIN KNEELING FOR A MOMENT OF SILENCE)**

*When it was about the sixth hour there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in half. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice said ‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.’ And having said this he breathed his last breath.*

**Lk. 23:44-46**

Jesus gave everything to the Father, on the cross—unto his last dying breathe—for love of sinners and for the salvation of the world. There is no greater love than Christ Crucified! Pope Leo XVI reminds us that this “love breaks down every barrier, brings close those who were distant, unites strangers, and reconciles enemies. . . Love is above all a way of looking at life and a way of living it. A church that sets no limits to love, that knows no enemies to fight but only men and women to love, is the Church that the world needs today” (*Dilexi te* #120).

#### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, so many migrants have died with you, on the cross, during their journey in search of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. Their lives were lost to the sea, in the desert, or at the hands of violent gangs. We offer you this time of prayer for the repose of their souls, for they will not be forgotten. **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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### **Thirteenth Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*After this Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take the Body of Jesus: and Pilate gave permission. Then he came and took the Body of Jesus. Jn. 19:38*

“Do you wish to honor the body of Christ? Do not allow it to be despised in its members, that is, in the poor, who have no clothes to cover themselves. Do not honor Christ’s body here in church with silk fabrics, while outside you neglect it when it suffers from cold and nakedness... [The body of Christ on the altar] does not need cloaks, but pure souls; while the one outside needs much care. Let us therefore learn to think of and honor Christ as he wishes. For the most pleasing honor we can give to the one we want to venerate is that of doing what he himself desires, not what we devise... So you too, give him the honor he has commanded, and let the poor benefit from your riches. God does not need golden vessels, but golden souls.” (St. John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Matthaem*, 50, 3: PG 58, Paris 1862, 508)

#### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, as Joseph of Arimathea made sure you that you were given a proper burial, at his own expense, help us to remember that “not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. [For] the goods we possess are not ours, but theirs; [and] the demands of justice must

be satisfied first of all; [because] that which is already due in justice [can] not be offered as a gift of charity.” (CCC #2446). **Amen.**

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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### **Fourteenth Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*Joseph took the Body, wrapped it in clean linen and laid him in his new tomb which he had hewn in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. Mt. 27: 59-60*

“Jesus in the Gospel, he cried. He cried for his dead friend. He cried in his heart for the family that had lost its daughter. He cried when he saw the poor widow having to bury her son. And he was moved to tears, to compassion when he saw the multitude of crowds without a pastor. If you don’t learn how to cry, you cannot be good Christians . . . And when they pose this question to us, why children suffer, why this and that tragedy occurs in life, our response must either be silence or a word that is born of our tears. Be courageous. Don’t be frightened of crying. . . . Those we help, the infirm, the orphans—they have so much to offer us. Have I learned how to beg also for that? Or do I feel self-sufficient, and I am only going to offer something. You give and think that you have no need of anything. Do you know that you too are poor? Do you know your poverty and the need that you receive? Do you let yourselves be evangelized by those you serve, let them give to you?” (Pope Francis during an encounter with youth at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, January 18, 2015, <https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=23762>)

#### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus, teach us to cry with you. Soften our hardened hearts to the sufferings of others, and may our efforts to serve the poor and vulnerable be born from tears of compassion, empathy, and a right religious love for you.

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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### **Fifteenth Station: The Resurrection**

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you. Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

*“Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day. Lk. 24:5-7*

Injustice, suffering, and death will not have the last word. You are risen from the dead. May our lives bear witness to the glory and power of your resurrection; most especially in how we care for the poor, the widow, the alien, and the orphan; and for the most vulnerable and rejected in our society today. Long live Christ the King! VIVA CRISTO REY!

#### **Let us Pray:**

Lord Jesus Christ, grant that your Sacred Heart may continue to pour forth the streams of living water that can heal the hurt we have caused, strengthen our ability to love and serve others, and inspire us to journey

together towards a just, solidary, and fraternal world. Until the day when we will rejoice in celebrating together the banquet of the heavenly kingdom in the presence of the risen Lord, who harmonizes all our differences in the light that radiates perpetually from his open heart. **Amen.** (adapted from *Dilexit Nos* #220)

**Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .**

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen**

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**CLOSING PRAYER:**

BISHOP JORGE'S PRAYER ON IMMIGRATION HERE. . . .