

Stations of the Cross



Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish

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These Stations of the Cross follow the method of St. Alphonsus de' Liguori (1696-1787), Founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, Bishop of Sant'Agata dei Goti and Doctor of the Church. This was the most common form of this devotion to be used prior to about 1970.

History of the Stations

Since Lent is a penitential season of preparation for Easter, the Stations of the Cross, which follow the path of Christ from Pontius Pilate's prætorium to Christ's tomb, have been a popular devotion in parishes. In the sixteenth century, this route was commonly called the *Via Dolorosa* (Sorrowful Way) or simply Way of the Cross or Stations of the Cross.

In 1742, Pope Benedict XIV exhorted all priests to enrich their churches with the Stations of the Cross, which must include fourteen crosses and are usually accompanied by pictures or images of each particular Station. The popularity of the devotion was also encouraged by preachers such as St. Leonard Casanova (1676-1751) of Porto Maurizio, Italy, who reportedly erected over six hundred sets of Stations throughout Italy.

Where Stations are erected in accordance with the law, a plenary indulgence is granted to those who follow the devotion piously, actually moving from Station to Station while meditating on the Passion and death of our Lord (*Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, “Normæ et Concessionones”, 2nd edn., 1968. Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana [1968]; No. 63, p. 24).

Those who are impeded from visiting a church may gain the same indulgence by piously reading and meditating on the Passion and death of our Lord for one-half hour .

(Adapted from “HOW DID THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS BEGIN?”
by Fr. William Saunders. Downloaded from the E.W.T.N. website)

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

At the entry of the procession, a chorister or the choir may begin chanting the *Vexilla Regis Prodeunt* (p.18).

INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS IN THE SANCTUARY

Signum ✠ Crucis

O Jesus, our adorable Saviour, behold us prostrate at Thy feet, imploring Thy mercy for ourselves and for the souls of all the faithful departed. Vouchsafe to apply to us the infinite merits of Thy Passion, on which we are now about to meditate. Grant that, while we trace this path of sighs and tears, our hearts may be so touched with contrition and repentance that we may be ready to embrace with joy all the crosses, sufferings and humiliations of this our life and pilgrimage.

Priest: Thou ✠ shalt open my lips, O Lord

Assistants: And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.

Priest: O ✠ God, come to my assistance.

Assistants: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Priest (bowing with all others):

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost,

Assistants: As it was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Priest: Let us pray.

O Jesus Christ, my Lord, with what great love didst Thou pass over the painful road which led Thee to death; and I, how often have I abandoned Thee! But now I love Thee with my whole soul, and because I love Thee, I am sincerely sorry for having offended Thee. My Jesus, pardon me, and permit me to accompany Thee in this journey. Thou art going to die for love of me, and it is my wish also, O my dearest Redeemer, to die for love of Thee. O yes, my Jesus, in Thy love I wish to live, in Thy love I wish to die.

*As the ministers leave the sanctuary,
the choir sings Verse 1 of the Stabat Mater.*

1 Stabat Mater dolorosa	At the Cross her Station keeping,
Juxta Crucem lacrymosa,	Stood the mournful mother, weeping,
Dum pendebat Filius.	Where her Son, extended, hung.

FIRST STATION

Jesus is condemned to death.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.



*The Priest says the Meditation silently and slowly whilst standing,
and then he pauses for silent contemplation at the Station.*

Silent Meditation

Consider how Jesus, after having been scourged and crowned with thorns, was unjustly condemned by Pilate to die on the Cross.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My loving Jesus, it was not Pilate; no, it was my sins that condemned Thee to die. I beseech Thee, by the merits of this sorrowful journey, to assist my soul in her journey towards eternity. I love Thee, my beloved Jesus; I love Thee more than myself: I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through
the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

- 2 Cuius animam gementem, Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
Constristatam et dolentem All His bitter anguish bearing,
Pertransivit gladius. Now at length the sword has passed.

SECOND STATION

Jesus takes up His Cross.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider how Jesus, in making this journey with the Cross on His shoulders, thought of us and offered for us to His Father the death He was about to undergo.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My most beloved Jesus! I embrace all the tribulations Thou hast destined for me until death. I beseech Thee, by the merits of the pain Thou didst suffer in carrying Thy Cross, to give me the necessary help to carry mine with perfect patience and resignation. I love Thee, Jesus, my love, above all things; I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

3 O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta,
Mater unigeniti!

O how sad and sorrowladen
Was that ever-blessed maiden,
Mother of the all-holy One.



THIRD STATION

Jesus falls the first time beneath His Cross.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider this first fall of Jesus under His Cross. His flesh was torn by the scourges, His head crowned with thorns, and He had lost a great quantity of blood. He was so weakened He could scarcely walk, and yet He had to carry this great load upon His shoulders. The soldiers struck Him rudely, and thus He fell several times.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My Jesus, it is the weight, not of the Cross, but of my sins, which has made Thee suffer so much pain. Ah, by the merits of this first fall, deliver me from the misfortune of falling into mortal sin. I love Thee, O my Jesus; I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

4	Quae mœrebat et dolebat,	How she mourned with bitter grieving
	Pia Mater, dum videbat	Tender mother, thus perceiving
	Nati pœnas inclyti.	Torments of her glorious Son.



FOURTH STATION

Jesus meets His Mother.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider the meeting of the Son and the Mother, which took place on this journey. Their looks became like so many arrows to wound those hearts which loved each other so tenderly.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My sweet Jesus, by the sorrow Thou didst experience in this meeting, grant me the grace of a truly devoted love for Thy most holy mother. And thou, my Queen, who wast overwhelmed with sorrow, obtain for me, by Thy intercession, a continual and tender remembrance of the Passion of Thy Son. I love Thee, Jesus, my love, above all things; I repent of ever having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

5	Quis est homo qui non fleret,	Who the man his tears withholdeth
	Matrem Christi si videret	When Christ's mother he beholdeth
	In tanto supplicio?	In her martyrdom profound?



FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene
helps Jesus to carry His Cross.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider how the Jews, seeing that at each step Jesus was on the point of expiring, and fearing He would die on the way, whereas they wished Him to die the ignominious death of the Cross, constrained Simon the Cyrenæan to carry the Cross behind our Lord.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My most beloved Jesus, by Thy grace, I will not refuse to carry the Cross; I accept it, I embrace it. I accept in particular the death Thou hast destined for me, with all the pains which may accompany it; I unite it to Thy death, I offer it to Thee. Thou hast died for love of me; I will die for love of Thee. Help me by Thy grace. I love Thee, Jesus, my love, above all things; I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through
the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

6	Quis non posset contristari	Who not with compassion stated
	Christi Matrem contemplari	Hath that mother contemplated
	Dolentem cum Filio?	With her Son in sorrow bound?



SIXTH STATION

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider how the holy woman named Veronica, seeing Jesus so ill-used, and His face bathed in sweat and blood, presented Him with a towel, with which He wiped His adorable face, leaving on it the impression of His holy countenance.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My most beloved Jesus!, Thy face was beautiful before but, in this journey, it has lost all Its beauty, and wounds and blood have disfigured Im. Alas! My soul also was once beautiful, when it received Thy grace in Baptism; but I have disfigured it since by my sins. Thou alone, my Redeemer, canst restore it to its former beauty. Do this by Thy Passion, O Jesus. I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

7 Pro peccatis suæ gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis,
Et flagellis subditum.

For His people's sins in anguish
She beheld her Jesus languish
By the blood-stained lashes rent.



SEVENTH STATION

Jesus falls a second time.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider the second fall of Jesus under the Cross; a fall which renews the pain of all the wounds of His head and members.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My most sweet Jesus, how many times hast Thou pardoned me, and how many times have I fallen again, and begun again to offend Thee? Oh!, by the merits of this second fall, give me the necessary help to persevere in Thy grace until death. Grant that in all temptations which assail me, I may always commend myself to Thee. I love Thee, Jesus, my love, above all things; I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

8	Vidit suum dulcem Natum	Saw her sweet Son, for His nation,
	Moriendo desolatum,	Saw Him hang in desolation,
	Dum emisit spiritum.	'Til His Spirit forth He sent.



EIGHTH STATION

Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

℟ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider how these women wept with compassion at seeing Jesus in such a pitiable state, streaming with blood as He walked along. “My children,” said He, “weep not for Me but for yourselves and for your children”.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My Jesus, laden with sorrows!, I weep for the offences I have committed against Thee, because of the pains they have deserved, and still more because of the displeasure they have caused Thee, Who hast loved me so much. It is Thy love more than the fear of Hell which causes me to weep for my sins. My Jesus! I love Thee more than myself: I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

9 Eja Mater, fons amoris
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

O thou mother!, fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make me feel to mourn with thee.



NINTH STATION

Jesus falls the third time.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider the third fall of Jesus Christ. His weakness was extreme, and the cruelty of his executioners excessive, who tried to hasten His steps when He could scarcely move.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: Ah, mine outraged Jesus, by the merits of the weakness Thou didst suffer in going to Calvary, give me strength sufficient to conquer all human respect, and all my wicked passions, which have led me to despise Thy friendship. I love Thee, Jesus, my love, above all things; I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

10 Fac, ut ardeat cor meum	Make me feel as thou hast felt:
In amando Christum Deum	Make my soul to glow and melt
Ut sibi complacem.	With the love of Christ my God!



TENTH STATION

Jesus is stripped of His garments
and given gall to drink.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider the violence with which Jesus was stripped by the executioners. As His inner garments adhered to His torn flesh, they dragged them off so roughly that the skin came with them. Compassionate Thy Saviour thus cruelly treated.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My most innocent Jesus!, by the merits of the torments Thou hast felt, help me to strip myself of all affection to things of earth, that I may place all my love in Thee, Who art so worthy of my love. I love Thee, O Jesus! above all things; I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

11 Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide

Holy mother, grant my craving:
Deep within my heart engraving
Wounds of Jesus crucified.



ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

℟ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider how Jesus, having been placed upon the Cross, extended His hands, and offered to His Eternal Father the Sacrifice of His life for our salvation. Those barbarians fastened Him with nails, and then, securing the Cross, allowed Him to die with anguish on this infamous gibbet.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: My Jesus, loaded with contempt, nail my heart to Thy feet, that it may ever remain there, to love Thee, and never quit Thee again. I love Thee more than myself; I repent with my whole heart of having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

12 Tui Nati vulnerati

Tam dignati pro me pati

Pœnas mecum divide.

Let me share with thee His pain

Who for all our sins was slain

Who for me to suffer deigned.



TWELFTH STATION

Jesus dies on the Cross.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

All kneel and remain kneeling until
the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

Silent Meditation

Consider how Jesus, after three hours' agony on the Cross, being consumed with anguish, abandoned Himself to the weight of His body, bowed His head and died.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: O my dying Jesus!, I kiss devoutly the Cross on which Thou didst die for love of me. I have merited by my sins to die a miserable death, but Thy death is my hope. Ah!, by the merits of Thy death, give me grace to die embracing Thy feet, and burning with love for Thee. I commit my soul into Thy hands. I love Thee, O Jesus! above all things; I repent of ever having offended Thee. Permit not that I ever offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through
the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

All rise while the choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

13	Fac me tecum pie flere, Crucifixo condolere, Donec ego vixero.	Let me mingle tears with thee, Mourning Him Who mourned for me Long as life shall yet endure.
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THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is taken down from the Cross and laid in Mary's arms.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

✠ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider how, after our Lord had expired, two of His disciples, Joseph and Nicodemus, took Him down from the Cross, and placed Him in the arms of His afflicted Mother, who received Him with unutterable tenderness and pressed Him to her bosom.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: O Mother of Sorrow, for the love of this Son, accept me for Thy servant, and pray for me. And Thou, my Redeemer, since Thou hast died for me, permit me to love Thee; for I wish but Thee, and nothing more. I love Thee, my Jesus, above all things; I repent of ever having offended Thee. Never permit me to offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir sings the next verse of the Stabat Mater.

14 Juxta Crucem tecum stare,
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero.

By the Cross with thee to stay,
There with thee to weep and pray,
Such I ask thee to procure.



FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is laid in the tomb.

All genuflect:

✠ We adore Thee, O Christ,
and we bless Thee

All rise:

℞ Because, by Thy Holy Cross,
Thou hast redeemed the world.

Silent Meditation

Consider how the disciples carried the body of Jesus to bury it, accompanied by His holy Mother, who arranged it in the sepulchre with her own hands. They then closed the tomb and all withdrew.

Prayer of Contrition (said aloud)

Priest: Ah, my buried Jesus!, I kiss the stone that enclosed Thee. But Thou didst rise again the third day. I beseech Thee, by Thy Resurrection, to make me rise in glory with Thee at the last day, to be always united with Thee in Heaven, to praise Thee and love Thee forever. O Jesus!, I love Thee and I repent of ever having offended Thee. Permit not that I ever offend Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always; and then do with me what Thou wilt.

All kneel to pray in the vernacular one Pater, one Ave and one Glory.

Continuing:

Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Response: Have mercy on us.

Priest: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Response: Amen.

The choir chants the last two verses of the Stabat Mater.

15	Christe, cum sit hinc exire, Da, per Matrem, me venire Ad palmam victoriæ.	Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence, Be Thy mother my defence, With the palm of victory;
16	Quando corpus morietur, Fac, ut animæ donetur Paradisi gloria. Amen.	When to dust my dust returneth, Grant a soul that to Thee yearneth, In Thy paradise a place. Amen.

After the last Station, the priest and ministers kneel at the chancel step and all pray together one *Pater*, one *Ave* and one Glory for the intentions of the Holy Father to gain a **plenary indulgence** for those who are properly disposed for it.

The Enchiridion of Indulgences

#63. Exercise of the Way of the Cross (*Via Crucis exercitium*)

A *plenary indulgence* is granted to the faithful who make the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross.

In the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross, we recall anew the sufferings which the divine Redeemer endured while going from the prætorium of Pilate, where He was condemned to death, to the mount of Calvary, where He died on the Cross for our salvation.

The gaining of the plenary indulgence is regulated by the following norms:

1. The pious exercise must be made before Stations of the Way of the Cross which are legitimately erected.
2. For the erection of the Way of the Cross, fourteen crosses are required, to which it is customary to add fourteen pictures or images to represent the Stations of Jerusalem.
3. According to the more common practice, the pious exercise consists of fourteen pious readings, to which some vocal prayers are added. However, nothing more is required than a pious meditation on the Passion and death of the Lord, which need not be a particular consideration of the individual mysteries of the Stations.
4. A movement from one Station to the next is required.

But if the pious exercise be made publicly and if it not be possible for all taking part to go in an orderly way from Station to Station, it suffices if at least the one conducting the exercise goes from Station to Station, the others remaining in their places.

Those who are impeded can gain the same indulgence if they spend at least one half hour in pious reading and meditation on the Passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Note on the Private Recitation of the Stations:

A traditional way to say the Stations privately is to follow the foregoing directions but, as an option, to substitute for the verses of the *Stabat Mater* the following stanza, which can be memorised and used easily to separate each pair of Stations:

O Jesus, Who for love of me,
Didst bear Thy Cross to Calvary,
In Thy sweet mercy grant to me,
To suffer and to die for Thee.

Vexilla Regis Prodeunt

Vexilla Regis, one of the greatest hymns of the Roman Liturgy, was written by Venantius Fortunatus, who lived between 530 and 609. He wrote it in honour of the arrival of a large relic of the True Cross which had been sent to Queen Radegunda by the Emperor Justin II and his Empress Sophia. Queen Radegunda, living in a convent she had built near Poitiers, was seeking out relics for the church there. To celebrate the arrival of the relic, the Queen requested Fortunatus to write a hymn for the procession of the relic to the church in 569. The hymn is traditionally sung at Vespers from Passion Sunday to Holy Thursday and on the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross. The last two verses, which form the concluding doxology, were not written by Fortunatus, but were penned by a later poet.

Vexilla Regis Prodeunt

(Abroad the Regal Banners fly)

<http://www.catholictradition.org/Eucharist/vexilla-regis.htm>

1. Vexilla Regis prodeunt:
Fulget Crucis mysterium,
Qua vita mortem pertulit,
Et morte vitam protulit.

2. Quae vulnerata lanceae
Mucrone diro, crimum
Ut nos lavaret sordibus,
Manavit und(a) et sanguine.

3. Impleta sunt quae concinit
David fideli carmine,
Dicendo nationibus:
Regnavit a ligno Deus.

4. Arbor decor(a) et fulgida,
Ornata Regis purpura,
Electa digno stipite
Tam sancta membra tangere.

5. Beata, cuius brachiis
Pret(i)um pendit sæculi:
Statera facta corporis,
Tulitque prædam tartari.

*Omit this stanza out of
Septuagesima and Lent.*

6. O CRUX AVE, SPES UNICA,
Hoc Passionis tempore
Piis adauge gratiam,
Reisque dele crimina.

7. Te, fons salutis Trinitas,
Collaudet omnis spiritus:
Quibus Crucis victoriam
Largiris, adde præmium.
Amen.

1. Abroad the Regal Banners fly,
Now shines the Cross's mystery;
Upon it Life did death endure,
And yet by death did life procure

2. Who, wounded with a direful spear,
Did, purposely to wash us clear
From stain of sin, pour out a flood
Of precious Water mixed with Blood.

3. That which the Prophet-King of old
Hath in mysterious verse foretold,
Is now accomplished, whilst we see
God ruling nations from a Tree.

4. O lovely and refulgent Tree,
Adorned with purpled majesty;
Culled from a worthy stock, to bear
Those Limbs which sanctified were.

5. Blest Tree, whose happy branches bore
The wealth that did the world restore;
The beam that did that Body weigh
Which raised up Hell's expected prey.

*Omit this stanza out of
Septuagesima and Lent.*

6. Hail, Cross, of hopes the most sublime!
Now in this mournful Passion time,
grant to the just increase of grace,
and every sinner's crimes efface.

7. Blest Trinity, salvation's spring,
May every soul Thy praises sing;
To those Thou grantest conquest by
The holy Cross, rewards apply.
Amen.



O Sacred Head Surrounded

<http://www.catholictradition.org/Christ/sacred-head.htm>

O Sacred Head surrounded
By crown of piercing thorn!
O bleeding Head, so wounded,
Reviled and put to scorn!
Death's pallid hue comes o'er Thee,
The glow of life decays,
Yet angel hosts adore Thee
And tremble as they gaze.
I see Thy strength and vigour
All fading in the strife,
And death, with cruel rigour,
Bereaving Thee of life;
O agony and dying!
O love to sinners free!
Jesus, all grace supplying,
O turn Thy face on me!
In this Thy bitter Passion,
Good Shepherd, think of me,
With Thy most sweet compassion,
Unworthy though I be;
Beneath Thy Cross abiding,
Forever would I rest,
In Thy dear love confiding,
And with Thy presence blest.

*Saint Bernard of Clairvaux [1090-1153]
Setting of Johann Sebastian Bach [1685-1750]*

Stabat Mater Dolorosa

(At the Cross her Station keeping)

Stabat Mater Dolorosa is considered one of the seven greatest Latin hymns of all time. It is based upon the prophecy of Simeon that a sword was to pierce the heart of His mother, Mary (St. Luke 2. 35). The hymn originated in the thirteenth century during the peak of Franciscan devotion to the crucified Jesus and has been attributed to Pope Innocent III (d. 1216), St. Bonaventure, or more commonly, Jacopone da Todi (1230-1306), who is considered by most to be the real author.

The hymn is often associated with the Stations of the Cross. In 1727, it was prescribed as a Sequence for the Mass of the Seven Sorrows of Mary (15th September) where it is still used today. In addition to this Mass, the hymn is also used for this memorial for the Divine Office at Lauds and at Vespers. There is a mirror image to this hymn, [*Stabat Mater Speciosa*](#), which echoes the joy of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the birth of Jesus.

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| 1 | Stabat Mater dolorosa
Juxta Crucem lacrymosa,
Dum pendebat Filius. | At the Cross her Station keeping,
Stood the mournful mother, weeping,
Where her Son, extended, hung. |
| 2 | Cuius animam gementem,
Constristatam et dolentem
Pertransivit gladius. | Through her heart, His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed. |
| 3 | O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta,
Mater unigeniti! | O how sad and sorrowladen
Was that ever-blessed maiden,
Mother of the all-holy One. |
| 4 | Quae mœrebat et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati pœnas inclyti. | How she mourned with bitter grieving
Tender mother, thus perceiving
Torments of her glorious Son. |
| 5 | Quis est homo qui non fleret,
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio? | Who the man his tears withholdeth
When Christ's mother he beholdeth
In her martyrdom profound? |
| 6 | Quis non posset contristari
Christi Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio? | Who not with compassion stated
Hath that mother contemplated
With her Son in sorrow bound? |

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|----|--|--|
| 7 | Pro peccatis suæ gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis,
Et flagellis subditum. | For His people's sins in anguish
She beheld her Jesus languish
By the blood-stained lashes rent. |
| 8 | Vidit suum dulcem Natum
Moriendo desolatum,
Dum emisit spiritum. | Saw her sweet Son, for His nation,
Saw Him hang in desolation,
'Til His Spirit forth He sent. |
| 9 | Eja, Mater, fons amoris
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam. | O thou mother!, fount of love!
Touch my spirit from above,
Make me feel to mourn with thee. |
| 10 | Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum
Ut sibi compleceam. | Make me feel as thou hast felt:
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ my God! |
| 11 | Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide. | Holy Mother, grant my craving:
Deep within my heart engraving
Wounds of Jesus crucified. |
| 12 | Tui Nati vulnerati,
Tam dignati pro me pati,
Pœnas mecum divide. | Let me share with thee His pain
Who for all our sins was slain
Who for me to suffer deigned. |
| 13 | Fac me tecum pie flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero. | Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourned for me
Long as life shall yet endure. |
| 14 | Juxta Crucem tecum stare,
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero. | By the Cross with thee to stay,
There with thee to weep and pray,
Such I ask thee to procure. |
| 15 | Christe, cum sit hinc exire,
Da, per Matrem, me venire
Ad palmam victoriæ. | Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,
Be Thy mother my defence,
With the palm of victory; |
| 16 | Quando corpus morietur,
Fac ut animæ donetur
Paradisi gloria. Amen. | When to dust my dust returneth,
Grant a soul that to Thee yearneth,
In Thy paradise a place. Amen. |