

Station 1—Jesus Prays in Gethsemane—Matthew 26:36-46

Jesus invited Peter, James and John to go with him to pray but they were unable to stay awake; they did not understand what was about to happen. Have there been times when Jesus invited you to stay with him and pray but your lack of understanding precluded you from being fully present?

Lord Jesus, help my lack of understanding; give me the desire and the strength to be fully present to you.

Station 2—Jesus is Tried and Condemned—Matthew 26:57-68, 27:1-2, 11-26

The chief priests and scribes (the religious elite of that day) did not understand or recognize who Jesus was; they feared he might lead a revolt which would threaten their control. When have you failed to recognize Jesus or failed to understand his invitation to you? Have you been fearful that his presence in your life might threaten your sense of place and control?

Great God, give me vision to recognize you, wisdom to understand your call to me. Free me from fear and unbelief.

Station 3—The Soldiers Mock Jesus—Mark 15:16-20

The Roman soldiers did not know or understand who Jesus was; they assumed he was just another rabble rousing Jew who was seeking to destroy the Empire and so they mocked him. Have there been times when you have found yourself with those who did not 'know or understand' who Jesus was; how did you respond? How difficult is it to go against the 'empire'?

God of power and might, help us understand the true meaning of 'empire' as you created and imagined it to be; give us courage to stand with you.

Station 4—Simon Carries the Cross/Jesus Speaks to the Women of Jerusalem—Luke 23:26-28

The scripture says that Simon was a man coming in from the country; we don't know if he was a follower of Jesus or simply a bystander yet he carried the cross for Jesus when his human body was too weak to carry it himself. Have you ever found yourself asked to carry the 'cross'? How did you respond?

God of grace, give us courage and strength to be fully present to the struggle, to accept the call to help you carry the cross.

Station 5—Jesus is Offered Gall—Matthew 27:33-34

The soldiers offered Jesus gall (a poisonous plant) mixed with vinegar to drink; in Psalm 69, the writer is offered poison and vinegar as a further humiliation when the psalmist was looking for comfort and compassion and found none. The soldiers have no compassion for Jesus and offer no comfort. Have you ever experienced a time of humiliation in the face of your commitment to Christ? Have you ever sought comfort and compassion and found none?

Compassionate God, give us courage in the face of humiliation; grant us your comfort and peace as we seek to stand firm in our commitment to you.

Station 6—Jesus is Crucified—Luke 23:33-34

In the face of the pain and agony of crucifixion, Jesus asks for forgiveness for the soldiers who have inflicted this pain. He understands that the Roman soldiers do not know or understand who he is. How would you respond to such lack of understanding? Would the strength of your faith and your beliefs allow you to seek their forgiveness?

God of forgiveness and mercy, give us a faith that is solid and firm, that gives us the grace to be forgiving and merciful as well.

Station 7—The Death of Jesus—Mark 15:33-37

Jesus quotes the first words of Psalm 22, a psalm of lament but also a psalm of praise and recognition of God and God's promises. Jesus knows the words of the entire psalm; in verse 19 "they divide my clothes among themselves, casting lots for my garments" and verse 25 "He did not hide His face from him; when he cried out to Him, He listened". When Jesus 'breathed his last', he knew that God had heard, God had listened. Have there been times in your life when you felt God had forsaken you, forgotten you? Were you able to trust in God's promises in the difficult times and places?

Loving God, remind us that you always listen, that you are always there and will fulfill your promises.

Station 8—The Resurrection of Jesus—Matthew 28:1-10

When the women go to see the tomb where Jesus had been placed, they meet an angel who shows them the empty tomb. On their way to tell the disciples, they encounter the risen Christ; they bow down and worship him. Have you encountered the risen Christ; what was that experience like? Were you awed, afraid, joyful; what was your response to Jesus?

God of new life, give us vision to see you, hearts and souls that recognize you and worship you.