

Newsletter  
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# Armata Bianca The White Army

Director: Dr. Sheila Kuzmic  
Editor: Catherine Martineau

## The Stations of the Cross (also known as The Way of the Cross)

We all met downstairs in the side kitchen of St. Pius X Church for a snack. Dr. Sheila gave all the children a snack of breadsticks and water to help understand that at this time of Lent, we can fast on bread and water and offer it up. The Israelites fed on Manna which was like bread when they were journeying to the promised land. We don't eat meat during Lent on Ash Wednesday and on Fridays, including Good Friday. Those are the strict fasting days. If you purposely eat meat on those days, it is a sin. Why are we fasting? Jesus, I'm so hungry right now and I'm hurting. I want to fill my hunger with You. Every time you have a craving for something you give up for Lent, say "Jesus, I receive you. Come and dwell in me to fill that emptiness and void with You." And it will happen. Dr. Sheila asked if anyone decided to give up something for Lent. Some of the children shared their ideas. One boy said he has given up t.v. or video games for Fridays and Saturdays and the rest of the week he is giving up desert. Dr. Sheila said that was a lot he is giving up. One boy said he is trying to go to Mass everyday. Dr. Sheila said that is a beautiful thing because when you receive Jesus everyday during Lent, you are filling yourself with the real presence of Jesus. That makes Jesus very happy to want to be received. Another boy said that he will try to go to Confession more often. Dr. Sheila said that is something that Jesus requires during Lent, to repent and turn back to God. One girl said that she is giving up gum which she likes very much and is also reading some of the Bible every night. Dr. Sheila said that the Bible is the living Word of God, and when we read the Bible we are reading God's Word. It is best to fill your head with God's words and not all that other stuff. That's how God speaks to us everyday when you read the Bible. Dr. Sheila said that the three things we are supposed to do during Lent are: **pray-everyday**, even more then what you did before Lent; **fasting**-can be with food or things that you enjoy, if you can't go to Church everyday you can do a Spiritual Communion; **almsgiving-tithing** or giving 10% of your income to the Parish, you can give your time to someone, you can visit someone in the hospital or nursing home, you could bake cookies for friends or elderly people, you can be kind to the people you don't like, you can make friends with someone that you maybe really don't like in your class, you can do an extra act of kindness, corporal works of mercy, you can help your mother by giving your time to help clean parts of the house. When you die you can't take your money to Heaven. If you spend your whole life becoming rich and not bothering to help anyone, what good is it? Then when you die, what a waste! Store your treasure in Heaven. Mother Theresa had only the clothes that she wore and her rosary beads. If you have hands and feet you can be Christ to others. God decides when we come home. Death is nothing to be afraid of if you are living a good life. Death means new life. We as Catholics and Christians believe in new life in the Resurrection. That is what the season of Lent is all about. We are going to die to ourselves and our passions and everything that we want. We are called to serve whether it is Lent or not. We are here to know God, to love God and to serve God. Jesus came to serve and not to be served. Who ever is first on Earth will be last in Heaven. If Jesus himself came to serve and die for each of us, can't we

give up a few things during forty days? We can handle that and we pray for grace. Forgiving others who have hurt you and being kind to your enemy are examples of Christ. Jesus says if you get hit on the cheek, offer your other cheek. Eventually love and kindness will concur. The best way to treat a mean bully is to be kind. Kindness and love is the remedy for everything. Look at what Jesus did, when Pontius Pilate called Jesus up and he was bound up with his hands and tied and had the crown of thorns. Pontius Pilate said to Jesus, do you know that I have the power to release you or have you crucified? Jesus said, you have no power over Me, I'm not from this world. This infuriated Pilate. When Jesus came back all scourged and beat up, Pilate looked at him – was drawn to him and had thoughts of mercy for Jesus. He asked why would this man choose to allow himself to be scourged, beaten? There must be something special about this man. So Jesus teaches us something about suffering.

Next, Dr. Sheila picked up a framed picture to show us. It is a picture of the passion of Jesus. He is wearing a crown of thorns and showing his sacred heart. This is her favorite painting and image of Jesus. He is showing us his beautiful, sorrowful heart with tears on his face. He is saying to each one of us, I loved all of you so much that I was willing to die for you and suffer for you. When you meditate on this picture he is also saying, won't you love me too?



**For God So Loved the World**

Jesus said that He would die for just one of us if He had to do it all over again. If there was just one person left on the Earth, He would go through His whole passion all over again just for one soul. That is how much Jesus loves us. Only through the Bible scriptures of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John do we know about the passion of Jesus. We don't know what Jesus really suffered in His heart. He suffered in his humanity, in his body, but He also suffered even more in His heart because He had to become sin. Jesus had to feel every one of our sins of every person that has ever been created from the beginning of time to the end of the world. Jesus had to feel all the sins in His heart and in His body. It's very hard for all of us to imagine what that is like. You know how we get mad at our best friends when they get mad at us and say mean things, and we get really mad and sad. Well, look at what Jesus had to deal with. He had to become sin for everybody's sins. He had to die, so His heart was falling to pieces. Do you know who else suffered? Our Lady suffered as well. Can you imagine what she went through? She stood and watched her only Son die and suffer on the cross. She never yelled out at anyone. Then at the very end, when they took Jesus' body down from the cross, Mary held Him. She saw her Son with all of these wounds and blood. Imagine your mother having to hold you in the same way with all those wounds and after watching you being crucified on a cross. Don't you think that broke Mary's heart to have to go through that? Dr. Sheila and Ms. Cathy are moms who would feel the same

way, to think that if we ever had to hold our children like that it would surely break our hearts. So Mary's heart is like Jesus' heart because Mary was born without sin and she felt everything that Jesus felt. That's why we call her the mediatrix and advocate. She was suffering along with her Son silently. She knew that she had to suffer. Remember the prophesy and how Mary was told at the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple by Simeon-a sword will pierce your heart. The sword of seeing her one and only Son who was God, suffer and die a horrible death. So when we think of Our Blessed Lady and Jesus, they both have the same heart. Who does Jesus' heart come from? Mary's heart. He was born in her flesh. So Mary's heart and Jesus' heart are two hearts in one. When your mother had you in her womb, she helped form your flesh. So everything that Jesus felt, Mary felt but in a different quiet way and she suffered silently.

Today, instead of saying the Rosary, Dr. Sheila wanted to teach the children about the Stations of the Cross. A lot of Catholics do not come to Stations of the Cross and they should, especially during Lent. **Do you know that there are 14 promises for those who say the Stations of the Cross, similar to the 15 promises for those who say the Rosary?** The Stations of the Cross came from the Passion of Jesus. When we say the Stations of the Cross we walk with Jesus fourteen points along the way where we meditate on the Passion of Jesus. The Church uses 14 stations, the 15<sup>th</sup> station would be the Resurrection, but there are 14 places of suffering. You will receive a plenary indulgence for praying and meditating on the Stations of the Cross. During Lent, in order to receive a plenary indulgence you have to make the visit to the Church. An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin depending on the will of God. The faithful can gain indulgences for themselves or apply them to the dead. Immaculate Conception Church has the Stations of the Cross at 6:30pm on Fridays and St. Pius X Church has the Stations of the Cross right after Benediction on Tuesdays. All Catholic churches do the Stations of the Cross. Dr. Sheila told the children that before they leave today, she is going to give them a children's version of the Stations of the Cross that they can take home with them. They can ask their parents any time during Lent to visit the Church and do the Stations of the Cross along the way. Years ago when Jesus died, many Pilgrims after His death, once

they realized that this was Jesus Christ who was crucified, came to Jerusalem. Here they walked the Way of the Cross. It is called Via Dolorosa (Road of Suffering). If you go to Jerusalem and the Holy Land today it begins at the place where Pontius Pilate condemned Jesus. It takes you through to the final place where He was crucified and rose from the dead, which is the Holy Sepulchre (the burial tomb). The Stations were originally performed many centuries ago by Christian pilgrims who visited the Holy Land and the sites of Jesus' Passion. Promotion of the devotion to the Stations began in earnest with the Franciscans, who were given custody of the Holy Places in the Holy Land in the 1300s. Countless Catholics have all enriched their spiritual lives with this powerful devotion. The Stations of the Cross, also called The Way of the Cross, is a devotion to the passion of Christ consisting of prayers and meditations on fourteen occurrences that were experienced by Christ on His way to the crucifixion. During the time of the crusades (1095-1270), it became popular for pilgrims in the Holy Land to walk in the footsteps of Jesus to Calvary. After the Moslems recaptured the Holy Land, pilgrimages were too dangerous. As a result, the Stations of the Cross became a popular substitute pilgrimage throughout Europe. The Stations represented critical events from Scripture or tradition of Jesus' journey to Calvary. Originally done only outdoors, the Stations were allowed inside churches in the mid-18th century. Eventually fixed at fourteen, the Stations soon became a familiar feature in all Catholic churches. The devotion may be conducted personally by the faithful, making their way from one station to another and saying the prayers, or by having an officiating celebrant move from cross to cross while the faithful make the responses. The stations themselves must consist of, at the very least, fourteen wooden crosses, pictures alone do not suffice, and they must be blessed by someone with the authority to erect stations. Devotion to the Stations of the Cross spread rapidly throughout the Roman Catholic world in the 18th century, largely as a result of the preaching of the Franciscan, St. Leonard of Port -Maurice, who erected stations and promoted the devotion in over five hundred churches and places throughout Italy. His work was supported by the popes of his time, who saw the devotion as a means of strengthening faith. Another 18th century saint, St. Alphonsus Liguori, wrote a brief work on the stations that is still in use today. Religious communities like the Jesuits and the Passionists made the devotion part of their missions and retreats. By the 19th century, the Stations of the Cross had become a staple in Catholic prayer books and in churches throughout England, Ireland, and North America.

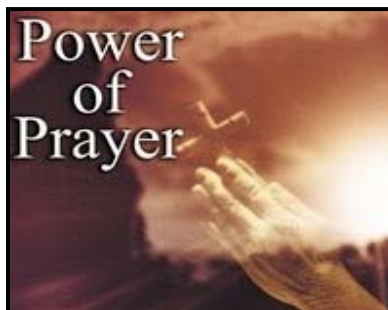
### **The 14 Stations of the Cross**

**Jesus is Condemned to Die**  
**Jesus is Made to Bear His Cross**  
**Jesus Falls the First Time**  
**Jesus Meets His Mother**  
**Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross**  
**Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face**  
**Jesus Falls the Second Time**  
**Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem**  
**Jesus Falls the Third Time**  
**Jesus is Stripped**  
**Jesus is Nailed to the Cross**  
**Jesus Dies on the Cross**  
**Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross**  
**Jesus is Laid in the Tomb**

The Way of the Cross is the most heavily indulgenced devotion in the Catholic Church; it is a devotion reputed to have been originated by Our Lady herself, who, legend has it, set up the original Way of the Cross in Her backyard in Ephesus. Moreover, **the great saints all affirm that meditation on the Passion and Death of Our Dear Savior is the most fruitful that one can engage in.** Brother Estanislao, a young Spaniard, at the age of 18 entered the Novitiate of The Brothers of the Christian Schools at Buggedo. He took the Vow of Regularity, Perfection and Pure Love. In October, 1926, he offered himself to Jesus through Mary. Soon after this heroic donation, he felt ill, and was obliged to rest. He died saintly in March 1927. He was, according to the master of novices, a privileged soul, who received Messages from Heaven. Confessors and Theologians recognized these supernatural facts. The spiritual director of Brother Estanislao (1903-1927) asked him to write down the promises that Our Lord had revealed to him for those who have a devotion to the Way of the Cross.

## **The 14 promises are as follows:**

- 1. I will grant everything that is asked of Me with faith, when making The Way of the Cross.**
- 2. I promise Eternal Life to those who pray from time to time, The Way of the Cross.**
- 3. I will follow them everywhere in life and I will help them, especially at the hour of death.**
- 4. Even if they have more sins than the blades of grass in the fields and the grains of sand in the sea, all of them will be erased by The Way of the Cross. (Note: This promise does not eliminate the obligation to confess all mortal sins, and this, before we can receive Holy Communion.)**
- 5. Those who pray The Way of the Cross often will have a special glory in Heaven.**
- 6. I will deliver them from Purgatory, indeed if they go there at all, the first Tuesday or Friday after their death.**
- 7. I will bless them at each Way of the Cross, and My blessing will follow them everywhere on earth and, after their death, in Heaven for all Eternity.**
- 8. At the hour of death I will not permit the devil to tempt them; I will lift all power from him in order that they will repose tranquilly in My Arms.**
- 9. If they pray it with true love, I will make of each one of them a living Ciborium in which it will please Me to pour My grace.**
- 10. I will fix My Eyes on those who pray The Way of the Cross often; My hands will always be open to protect them.**
- 11. As I am nailed to the Cross, so also will I always be with those who honor Me in making The Way of the Cross frequently.**
- 12. They will never be able to separate themselves from Me, for I will give them the grace never again to commit a Mortal sin.**
- 13. At the hour of death I will console them with My Presence and we will go together to Heaven. Death will be sweet to all those who have honored Me during their lives by praying The Way of the Cross.**
- 14. My soul will be a protective shield for them, and will always help them, whenever they have recourse.**



**Prayer is the only way to save the human race.**

**Pray for the poor souls – Your prayer will be their key to Heaven.**

**Our Blessed Mother said at Medjugorje that when we pray for a Holy Soul by name, that soul can see us.**

**“Families that pray together, stay together.”**

