

The Way of the Cross with St. Dominic
Written by The Sisters of St. Dominic of the St. Cecilia Congregation
from "The Dominican Campus" Prayer Book

Introduction

Jesus, You called me to follow You more closely in the way of St. Dominic, and in this calling to join You along Your way to the Cross.

As I meditate now on Your sufferings and Your death, strengthen me in my Dominican vocation and give me perseverance to praise You, to bless You, and to preach You all the days of my life.

The First Station
Jesus is Condemned to Death
Silence acceptance

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Leader:

Knowing the disobedience of Adam and Eve, the Lord inquired, "Where are you?" Adam's response, "I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid," failed to answer this penetrating question. Adam descended into a mire of excuses and blamed Eve for tempting him with the forbidden fruit. How different was the New Adam, Jesus Christ, who silently accepted His condemnation to death amidst the slanders and jeers of the soldiers and the mob.

All:

Lord Jesus, you accepted the Cross in silence. The Cross comes to me under different guises, and I do not always recognize my trials, humiliations, and illnesses as the Cross. Too often I pattern my responses after Adam, by hiding from responsibility, by not acknowledging my weaknesses and sins, or by shifting blame to others. Our Holy Father Saint Dominic lived a rhythm of silence and grace-filled words patterned on You, the New Adam. In this journey of the Cross, help me to embrace my Cross in silence and grace.

*Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
She whose heart, its silence keeping,
Grief had cleft as with a sword.*

The Second Station
Jesus Takes up His Cross
Firm purpose

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

It was the hour for which He came. Jesus' whole heart and will desired and accepted to take up this cross. He took it up, embracing the world of sin to bring the world to the Father's love. How the guards must have been astonished by the determination in His eyes: eyes filled with love. This was no ordinary man. For this did He come and how delighted He was to begin the walk to the saving tree. He was still tired, worn, and bruised from the night in the garden and the scourging, but love spurred Him on. There was no reluctance to take up the cross, only total and complete willingness.

All:

Jesus, Savior of the world, as I set out on the journey of Your passion each day, give me the grace to forget myself in remembering Your love. Give me the same clear vision of purpose that filled the soul of Holy Father Dominic: that of love of God and love of neighbor. May I possess his broad heart and open mind to embrace the world for its salvation and Your glory.

By the Cross, on which suspended,
With His bleeding hands extended,
Hung that Son she so adored

The Third Station
Jesus Falls the First Time
determined mission

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

The Son of God fell beneath the Cross of all the world's sin and suffering. He was the strongest of us all; sin had not diminished His integrity. Yet, in all His power and out of His great love, He consented to endure our human limitations and even to collapse under this great weight. In His weakness He showed His true strength: His mission to be our Savior.

All:

Lord Jesus, I stand in awe of Your apparent weakness, and our Holy Father Saint Dominic kneels beside You in the dust. He invites me to join him, to share in Your salvific mission. Following him to Your Cross, I ask for the grace to faithfully embrace this task, that I may preach with my life and teach in the apostolate the truth of Your redemptive suffering. Thus, may the knowledge of the dignity You

grant to all mankind ease the burden of ignorance that crushes so many of our brothers and sisters.

Oh, that Mother's sad affliction-
Mother of all benediction-
Of the sole-begotten One.

The Fourth Station
Jesus Meets His Mother
Mary's presence

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

Once the sentence had been given, Mary positioned herself so that Jesus would see her on His way to the Skull Place. When He was learning to walk; she had stood a way off and held out her arms: and He, by keeping His attention fixed on her, crossed the space in between. Now she stood a way off; and He, seeing her in the distance, was able to cross the space in between again. She was a loving presence in the crowd. She gave support cost her what it may. She was His Mother, and He needed her then.

All:

Lord Jesus, I turn to meet your Mother as you did, and as Saint Dominic did. He saw her in the dormitory, at the Salve, in the devotion of the Rosary. Let her console me as she did You. Let me offer consolation to those who are suffering, and when I am suffering, let me see the compassionate face of Your Mother so that I will have courage to go on. Under the mantle of her protection, I am armed to face the cross.

Oh, that Mother's deepest grieving
At her inner soul's perceiving
Dreadful suff'rings of her Son.

The Fifth Station
Simon of Cryene Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

Jesus was tired and weak, yet still had a long way to go. The Soldier forced Simon to help Jesus carry His cross. Simon began unwillingly but resigned himself to the task at hand. "Come, follow Me" had begun to take on new meaning for the Apostles and disciples, and now for Simon. Face-to-face with his own timidity, he learned in his

encounter with Jesus the truth about himself. And there he began to find his strength, and to transform his unwilling act into one of holy virtue.

All:

Oh Jesus, so many times I find myself afraid to help You carry the cross, to follow You in all things, to do your will at each moment. Our Holy Father Saint Dominic was the Preacher of Truth, who echoed Your promise that truth will set us free. Help me to know the truth about myself. Give me the grace to put effort in forming habits of virtue, and inspire me to go out of myself in service to You and to others.

What man is there so unfeeling,
Who, his heart to pity steeling,
Could behold that sight unmoved?

The Sixth Station
Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus
Divine reflection

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

From a distance, Veronica saw Jesus covered in blood, struggling for each painful step, and she recognized the depths of Divine Love. She longed to be near Jesus – to hear His gentle voice instead of the shouts of the mob, to look into His eyes, to offer love for Love. Cutting through the angry crowd, she reached out and touched the Face of God. In that moment, Christ’s image was burned into her soul, and she was filled with the desire to share Him with all people.

All:

Lord Jesus, Saint Dominic learned to be a true icon of Your mercy by uniting himself to You in Your Passion. He too longed to be near You, to share Your suffering, and seized every opportunity to reach out to You in prayer – with sighs, genuflections, prostrations, and tears. And like Veronica, the deeper You led him into the mystery of Your Passion, the more he poured himself out in acts of mercy for others. Help me, like Saint Dominic, to be assiduous in contemplating Your passion – contemplation that will overflow in works of mercy. Transform me into Your image, and make me a true preacher of the Word.

Saw her loved one, her consoler,
Dying in His dreadful dolor,
Sacrifice for sinners proved.

The Seventh Station
Jesus Falls the Second Time
merciful forgiveness

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

A second time, Jesus' legs trembled and gave way beneath His heavy burden. His Body collapsed: the cross crushed Him, the ground bruised Him, and His Face was smeared with the earth He created. Yet His greatest pain was the sin of those who accompanied Him; His eyes looked into the souls of the soldiers – but they avoided His gaze. Nervously they laughed and made crude jokes to distract their troubled hearts. They mocked and jeered at Jesus, they became violent, and they forced Our Lord to His feet.

All:

Lord Jesus, You know the weakness of human flesh; forgive me when, having repented of my sins, I fall again. Give me the grace to see You in all my trials and to return Your loving gaze. Prevent me from causing others pain: Save me from slander, divisiveness, and scandal. And when I do sin against my brethren, give me the courage to ask their forgiveness. Our Holy Father Dominic, who mourned for sinners, pray with me. Help me to grieve for my sins, but to trust in God's merciful love.

Ever leading where thy bleeding
Son is pleading for my needing,
Let me in His wounds take part.

The Eighth Station
Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem
holy love

Leader:

A crowd ran to Jesus after He had fallen. They saw Him abandoned, tired, sad, and ran to weep for Him. But they were amazed at what they found. He rose strong, and He comforted them. With one arm about the Cross, His other was outstretch in consolation and strength as He told the women, "Weep not for me, but for your children."

All:

Jesus, You know how frail my human heart is and how hard it is to trust in what I do not see. You called on the women to weep and pray for their children and in turn You invite us to intercede for the faith of Your Church. Contemplating Your supreme sacrifice of love on the Cross, our Holy Father Saint Dominic accepted Your commission to weep, pray, and bear witness tirelessly for the salvation of souls. May I heed his admonition to "weep after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, and grieve for the sinners of the world that they may repent."

Blessed Mother of prediction,
Stamp the marks of crucifixion
Deeply on my stony heart.

The Ninth Station
Jesus Falls the Third Time
hopeful perseverance

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

“Unless the grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies...and if it dies, it bears much fruit.” Jesus fell yet a third time. The death to which He had been sentenced made it look as if His life was a failure. And now, with this third fall, it seemed He would even fail to make it to that death. What hopelessness much have surrounded Him – that the weakness of His Body was preventing Him from fulfilling the Father’s plan. But His will was ever joined to God’s providence, and His trust in the Father’s promise.

All?

Lord Jesus, there are so many times that I find myself too weak to go on: burdened by the limits of my body, saddened by my lack of success in my work, wearied by my inattentiveness at prayer and my mediocrity in the life of virtue. Our Holy Father Saint Dominic also knew his limitations in the flesh and in his preaching. But his body became his prayer and his failures still sang out your praises. Strengthen my hope and trust when all seems lost that I may continue, even bruised and burdened, on my journey with Saint Dominic and You.

Make me truly, each day newly,
While life last, O Mother, duly
Weep with Him, the Crucified.

The Tenth Station
Jesus is Stripped of His Garments
trustful poverty

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

“Blessed are the poor,” He said. Blessed are those stripped bare of all that could separate them from God. Now He Himself stood before the jeering crowd, the example of poverty they needed so badly. He was stripped of all except his will to offer himself in love. Stripped on Calvary; stripped still in the Eucharist....Poverty becomes increasingly the only garment worthy of Him.

All:

Lord Jesus, You were, for Saint Dominic, His own "Example of Poverty." Fast knit to You, he assumed that role for me. Teach me, with him, to place nothing between myself and You, to hold nothing of myself back from You. Help me, Lord, to admit my poverty before You, and to place my trust only in your loving mercy.

Let me, 'tis my sole demanding,
Near the Cross, where thou art standing,
Stand in sorrow at they side.

The Eleventh Station
Jesus is Nailed to the Cross
personal sacrifice

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader: The nails pierced, the Precious Blood flowed, and He suspended judgment. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." The mocking crowd makes a soul pause. "He saved others, let Him save Himself." Moments before, His gentle touch healed the servant's ear. What would He do? Display His power? Heal Himself? No. Never would He trample our freedom, even when His own blood trickled down the cross. Only words of mercy came forth, "Father, forgive them."

All:

Oh Jesus, I supply the penetrating nails. I tear Your flesh without knowing it. Like Pilate in his cowardice, I obscure the truth for fear of becoming unpopular. Often I cast lots and gamble with the reputation of others. Merciful Jesus, teach me to be more like our Holy Father Saint Dominic who removed his shoes and walked the pebbled road for sinners. Broaden the horizon of my charity that I too may remove my shoes of pride and offer a small drop of sacrifice for the forgiveness of the sins of the world.

Queen of virgins, best and dearest,
Grant, oh, grant the prayer thou hearest,
Let me ever mourn with thee.

The Twelfth Station
Jesus Dies on the Cross
total abandonment

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

All trace of human dignity seemed to be gone. Jesus had yielded His will to the Father, His liberty to the Jews, His kingly prerogatives to the mockery of the pagans, His body to brutality, His garments to the soldiers, His limbs to crucifixion. What more could Christ surrender for love of man? Seeing His Mother with the disciple He loved, He said, "Behold your son...Behold your Mother." And consummating the sacrifice, Jesus breathed forth His spirit.

All:

Jesus, with my Father Dominic I kneel at the foot of Your Cross. I desire to discover as he did, in this "Book of the Crucified," Your way of total self-giving. Grant that I may imitate Dominic, the Evangelical Man, holding back nothing, but spending my whole being until death to gain souls for You.

Let compassion be my fashion
That Christ's wounds, His death and Passion,
Be each day renewed in me.

The Thirteenth Station
Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross
embracing suffering

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

The Mother's heart once brimming with joy was pierced through with the searing sword of pain – a pain that fused Mother and Son in a bond stronger than death. The Mother would not abandon the Son: rather, she drew His lifeless body more closely to her bosom as she was drawn into the redemptive suffering of her Son. The death of the Son became the death of the Mother. Our Lady accepted the death of her Son, willingly embracing all that the Father sends. She accepted the crushing weight of the lifeless body of her Son that we might live. Her Mother's heart was broken but not defeated.

All:

Lord, with Mary, Queen of Martyrs, as my model, may my life always be a witness to Your life, and to Your death. Make me, like our Holy Father Saint Dominic, most desirous of martyrdom. May the pain of suffering never cause me to turn away from the needs of others, but give me the grace to embrace their sorrows with them, and transform them in the power of your redemptive love.

May the Cross be my salvation;
Make Christ's death my preservation;
May His grace my heart make wise

The Fourteenth Station
Jesus is Laid in the Tomb
eternal union

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,
Because by Your Holy Cross, You have redeemed the world

Leader:

After witnessing the ravaging terrors of the crucifixion, only a small group gathered – Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene, and the other women. They did what little they could before the Sabbath, their Hope now being wrapped in burial cloths and blood. The stone was rolled, the tomb was sealed, and all seemed finished. As the men left, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulcher. Though all hope seemed gone, their love was as a heavy weight that anchored them there and would not let them leave. They did not understand His suffering and death. But in this darkness, they remained with Him: waiting in the darkness of faith and love.

All:

Jesus, when I am overcome with grief, with loneliness, with the pain of abandonment or lack of understanding, bring me here to your tomb. Teach me to wait, to suffer patiently, and to trust in Your undying love. Give me the grace you gave to our Holy Father, Saint Dominic, who nurtured his love for You in hours of silent contemplation before Your altar. Draw me to Your Eucharistic presence, hidden in the tabernacle. And as I watch and pray with You, in the dark nights of my sorrow and sufferings, transform me into a torch of love ready to give witness to Your resurrection.

And when death my body taken
May my soul when it awaketh
Op'n heav'n its raptured eyes.

