



The Way of the Cross



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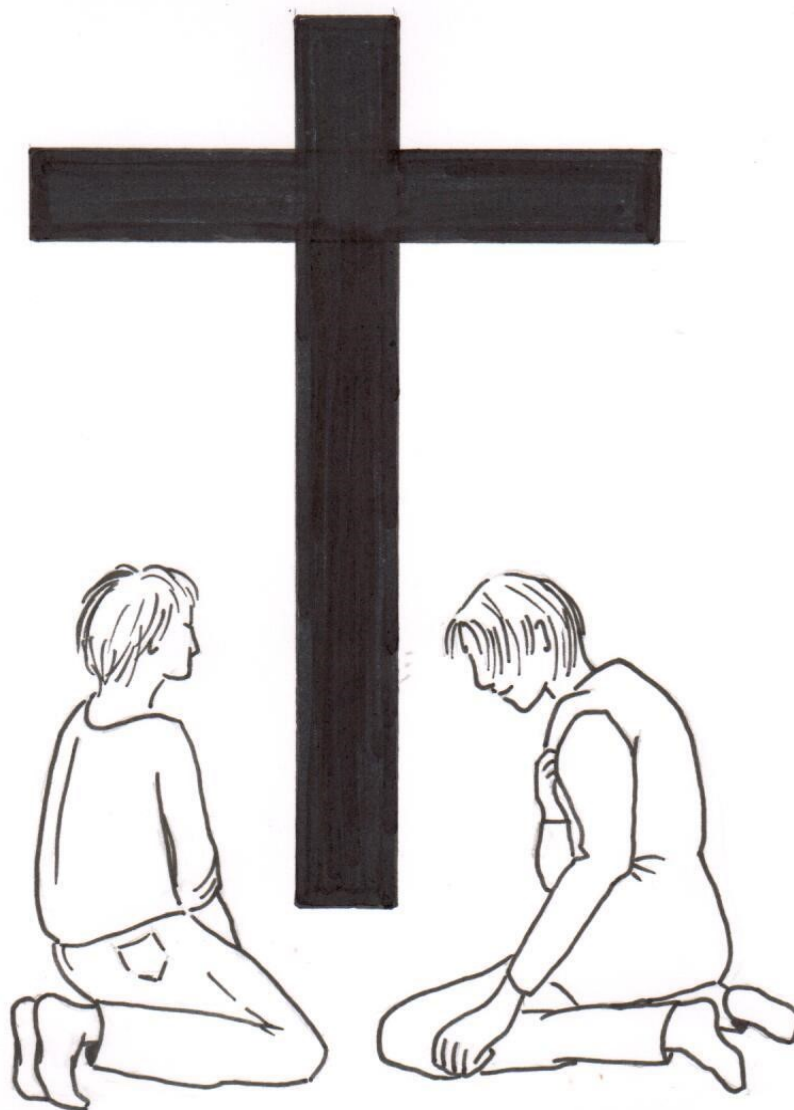
Ethiopian Orthodox priest at Biete Qeddus Mercoreus (House of St Mark) in Lalibela, Amhara region, Ethiopia, 2021.

Stations of the Cross for the Suffering Church

Introduction: **THE WAY OF THE CROSS**

Every day millions of Christians around the world suffer for their faith. Many are persecuted for their beliefs; they can suffer from discrimination at home or in the workplace, fines, imprisonment, torture and even execution. Still others are living out their Christian faith in extremely isolated communities or in the face of abject poverty.

Every story about suffering and persecuted Christians involves real people with names and hopes and dreams, and it is often far too easy for us to think in terms of facts, figures and statistics rather than those who are suffering. St Paul the Apostle reminds us that, “just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body... If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.” (1 Cor 12: 12-13, 26) St Paul underlines our responsibility towards our brothers and sisters. So let us work together to end their suffering and persecution by offering our prayers, sharing their stories with others and, finally, through our actions.

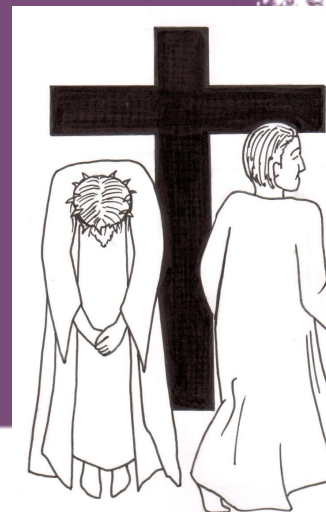


Just as we walk with Jesus whenever we pray before the Stations of the Cross, so we walk with all those who suffer for their faith. Let us pray for them, that their faith may continue to grow and that their suffering will ease through the mercy and compassion of Our Lord.

1st Station: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH



March 28th: The celebration of Mass on Palm Sunday had just ended. Flames engulf the Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral in Makassar, capital of South Sulawesi province, Indonesia.



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

Scripture

But he was silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” And Jesus said, “I am; and you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” And the high priest tore his mantle, and said, “Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death. **Mark 14:61-64 (RSV-CE)**

Indonesia

At 10.26am on 28th March 2021, Palm Sunday, two suspected suicide bombers attacked the Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral in Makassar, the capital of Indonesia’s South Sulawesi province. The attack took place at the side gate to the Cathedral and the explosion killed both bombers, who were apparently a newlywed couple. At least 20 people were injured. The two suspected suicide bombers were linked to the Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) network, which is affiliated with Daesh (ISIS). JAD has been blamed for several attacks in Indonesia, including church bombings. The Indonesian bishops’ conference Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious affairs issued a statement just after the bombing asking for prayers and stating, “We hope that the incident will not harm or weaken the relationships which have so far been intensively built, maintained, and developed by religious followers. May the Lord continue to give peace and protection to all of us.” [ACN News, March 29 2021](#)

Let us pray:

Have mercy on us, Lord. We pray that you will strengthen the weary, console those in distress and protect all who are suffering from depression and lead them out of despair and darkness and into your wondrous light.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, greatest attribute of God, I trust in You.



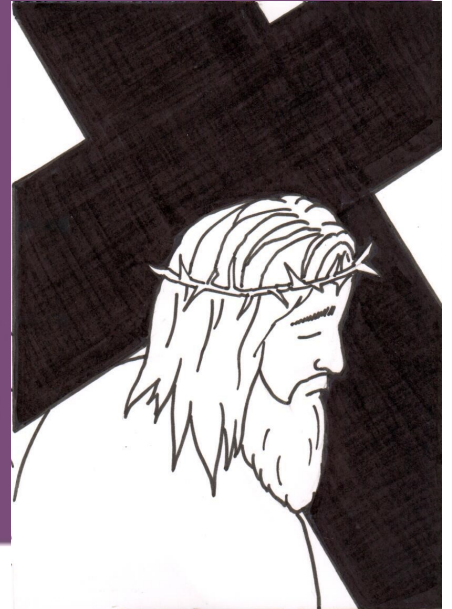
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2nd Station:

JESUS TAKES UP THE CROSS



Leah Sharibu, abducted by Boko Haram in 2018.



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

Scripture

Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. **Ephesians 6: 14-18 (RSV-CE)**

Nigeria

Leah Sharibu, a young Nigerian, turned 18 on 14th May 2021, 1,153 days after she was forcibly taken from her school along with 110 classmates in February 2018. The following March, those students who were still alive were returned by the extremists, but Leah was held back for refusing to convert to Islam as the price of her freedom. To mark the third anniversary of her abduction in February 2021, ACN spoke with Evangelical pastor and friend of the Sharibu family, Gideon Para-Mallam. Rev Para-Mallam called on the world's governments to apply pressure on President Muhammadu Buhari's administration to step up its efforts to release all those held by Boko Haram/ISWAP. Alice Ngaddah, a young Christian nurse and mother of two, was kidnapped just ten days after Leah; she too remains in custody. Confirmation that both Leah and Alice are still alive was received by ACN in October 2021. [ACN News, May 14 2021](#) [ACN News, October 7 2021](#)

Let us pray

Merciful Lord Jesus, we know we are precious in your eyes. All things were created through you and for you. We place into your care Leah, her family and her fellow captives as well as all families separated by war, conflict, violence, famine, sickness and corruption.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, encompassing the whole universe, I trust in You.

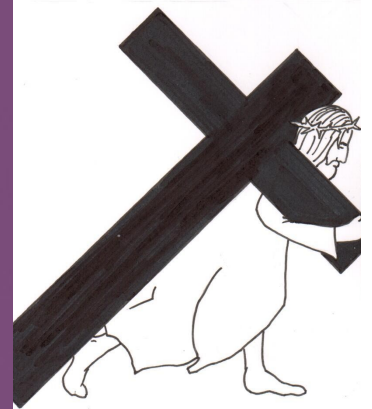


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3rd Station: JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME



Father Celso Ba Shwe, a Catholic priest, in front of the police during violent protests in the Diocese of Loikaw , Burma (Myanmar) on 9th March, 2021.



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

Scripture

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” **Matthew 2: 13 (RSV-CE)**

Myanmar/Burma

Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, Archbishop of Yangon (Rangoon), condemned attack on the Sacred Heart Church, Kayanthayar, south-east Burma (Myanmar) in May 2021. According to reports, more than 300 people sought refuge in the church after soldiers attacked the village looking for members of groups opposed to February’s military coup. The cardinal said: “The church suffered extensive damage, bearing witness to the intensity of attack on a place of worship.” The Sacred Heart Cathedral in Pekhon in neighbouring Shan State, was also damaged by artillery shells the previous day (Pentecost Sunday, 23rd May). Cardinal Bo expressed great concern for all those who left Kayanthayar to escape the fighting. [ACN News, May 27 2021](https://www.acnnews.com.au/news/2021/05/27/2021052701)

Let us pray:

O Prince of Peace, you guaranteed we would find you if we persisted in prayer and searched for you in your Word and glorified your name by doing your will. In your Holy name we ask for your perfect peace to reign over Burma.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

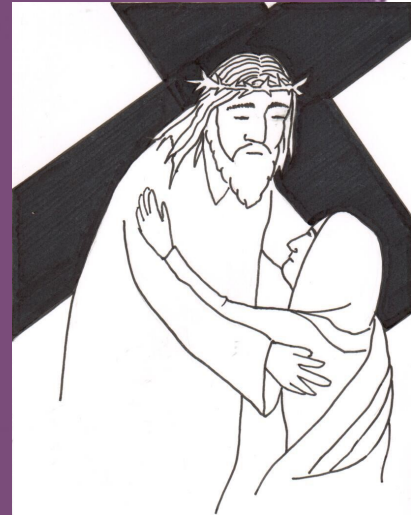
All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, unfathomed by any intellect, human or angelic, I trust in You.

4th Station: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER



Sr Gemma (left) and Sr Kim are Korean missionaries from the Congregation of Sisters of St Paul of Chartres.



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

Scripture

...But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. [John 19:25 \(RSV-CE\)](#)

Nepal

Two Korean missionaries from the Congregation of Sisters of St Paul of Chartres were arrested in Nepal after a complaint accusing the Sisters of proselytism and conversion activities. Together Sr Martha and Sr Gemma run a training and social services centre for slum children in the Pokhara area. Bishop Paul Simick, Vicar Apostolic of Nepal, says "We believe that the allegations of conversions are utterly baseless and unjust." In recent years, Christian Churches generally have been experiencing growing hostility and intolerance in Nepal following the adoption of the new Constitution in 2015 and the new penal code that outlawed proselytism and efforts to convert others. The Sisters were released on bail after two months in prison. [ACN Religious Freedom in the World Report 2021: Nepal *licas.news/2021/11/23*](#)

Let us pray:

O Word made flesh! Guide us in your truth so that through prayer, fasting and almsgiving we may become missionary disciples learning to grow, think, see, act and pray as you do.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, repose of hearts, peace amidst fear, I trust in You.

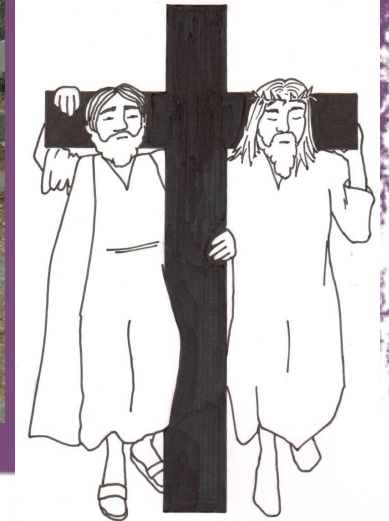


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5th Station: SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS TO CARRY THE CROSS



Poverty in Venezuela: A man weighed down by his problems.



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

Scripture

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. **Ephesians 5:1-2 (RSV-CE)**

Venezuela

For more than 15 years, the people of Venezuela have been suffering a terrible economic crisis. Nearly seven million Venezuelans have emigrated to escape the crisis, including many young people. Venezuela suffers from uncontrolled hyperinflation. Hyperinflation affects the poorest especially, who see their low incomes increasingly lose value; meanwhile, hunger increases and employment and business opportunities decrease. Salesian, Bishop Raul Biord of La Guaira, a diocese in the north-central part of the country, said the Church is committed to helping those most in need through different food programmes for destitute children and the elderly. There are also many soup kitchens in parishes, dispensaries and parish health centres, where thousands of volunteers are helping the most vulnerable every day. [ACN International news report, October 25 2021](#)

Let us pray:

God of inexhaustible compassion, through your Son you reconciled us to yourself. We trust in you. Fill us with your light, your wisdom, your peace, your grace and your joy and make us ambassadors of your love and mercy.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

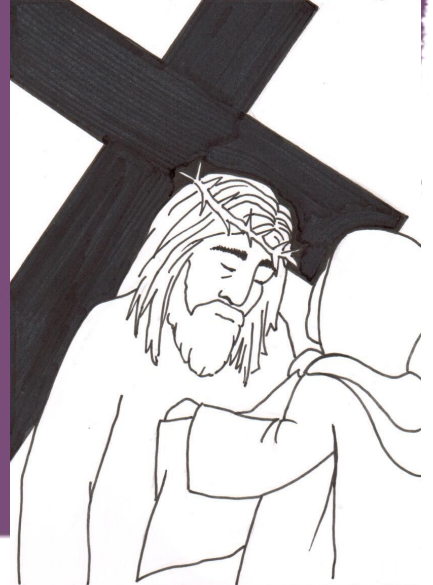
All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, lifting us out of every misery, I trust in You.

6th Station: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS



Picture of Neelam Masih—face pixelated.



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

Scripture

If I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing... **1 Corinthians 13: 2 (RSV-CE)**

Pakistan

A young Christian woman in Pakistan, Neelam Majid Masih, 30, is determined to let “the world...know what happened to me.” Neelam was attacked in her home where she was sexually assaulted and beaten after refusing to convert to Islam and marry Faisal Basra, a man in his late 20s. Mr Basra pleaded guilty after being charged with rape and faces ten years in prison. On the evening of the attack, Mr Basra tried to kill Neelam, but Neelam’s neighbour and cousin, Nasir Masih heard her cries and rushed round; Mr Basra fled. Neelam’s lawyer, Sumera Shafique, says her decision to go public is “very unusual” as most victims are cowed into silence. There have been reports that friends and family of Faisal Basra, are trying to kill Neelam for standing up to him. Neelam, who is in hiding, is studying for a Master’s degree. As the only educated Christian woman in her village, she is committed to speaking out against oppression and abuse. The Movement for Solidarity and Peace in Pakistan calculates that every year up to 1,000 young Christian and Hindu women and girls aged between 12 and 25 are abducted by Muslim men. [ACN News, June 7 2021](#)

Let us pray:

Lord of everlasting tenderness and mercy, our hope is in you. We pray for an end to people trafficking, forced labour and exploitation. We ask that you shelter and protect women and girls against all forms of exploitation, mistreatment, violence, aggression and hateful and controlling behaviour.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

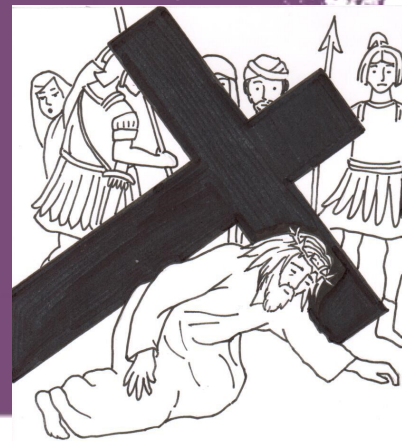
All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, sweet relief for anguished hearts, I trust in You.

7th Station: JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME



A gate of metallic spikes and a cross on top of a convent chapel in the background in Bihar State, in eastern India.



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

Scripture

Out of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice! Let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications! **Psalm 130: 1-2 (RSV-CE)**

India

In January 2021 the Madhya Pradesh government implemented a stringent anti-conversion law. Christians in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh are living in fear after radical Hindutva activists stepped up a campaign to reconvert indigenous believers. More than a dozen Christians, including priests, were jailed and prayer meetings were obstructed following the allegation of religious conversion—a charge anybody can level without any proof. Between January and November 2021, Hindutva activists accused now fewer than 56 Christian leaders of carrying out illegal religious conversions. Father Rocky Shah, public relations officer of Jhabua Diocese, said: “Our people are frightened as radical Hindu groups are pressuring the indigenous Christians to give up their faith in Christianity.” In Jhabua District, where indigenous people make up the majority, Christians comprise four percent of the population – but are less than one percent of the state’s population of 71 million. Father Shah said Christians are contemplating taking legal action if harassment and persecution from radical Hindu groups continues. [ACN News, November 1 2021](#)

Let us pray:

O Lord, our rock and our refuge! Restore and renew us in your mercy. Stay with us, Lord, and help us to abide in you so that filled with your courage we may strive to do your will.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, accompanying us through our whole life, I trust in You.

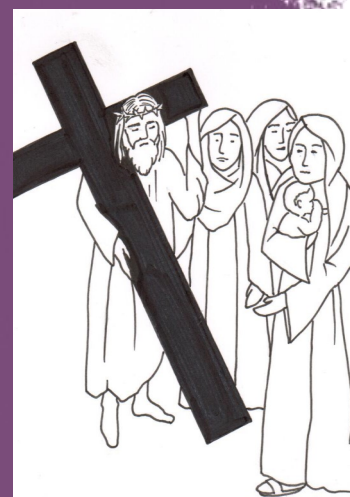


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8th Station: JESUS CONSOLES THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM



Lida, her daughter-in-law Mariam and granddaughter Nané, struggle to make ends meet in the aftermath of the recent conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Dec 2021



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

Scripture

Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you. **1 Peter 5: 7 (RSV-CE)**

Armenia

In September 2020, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan escalated into war in the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. Though a ceasefire was negotiated six weeks later, more than 4,000 Armenian soldiers were killed and over 90,000 ethnic Armenians were forced to flee their homes. Many have been unable to return and are now desperately trying to provide even the most basic necessities to their families. Lida (pictured above) saw her two sons head off to fight in the conflict. She, a widow, was forced to flee her home in Nagorno-Karabakh, and now lives in a dilapidated flat with her daughter-in-law and young grandchild in a village in Armenia. Both of her sons have returned home. One son is too traumatised to work ; the other has found a job, but will not be paid for six months. Little help for Lida or the thousands others like her is forthcoming from the state. ACN is supporting the local Catholic Church in its efforts to provide basic necessities and trauma counselling for 150 families in the nearby city of Goris. [ACN International News 22 Dec 2021](#)

Let us pray:

Jesus, our Saviour and Redeemer, enlighten our minds and our hearts so that in fulfilling your will we will discover and understand our mission and your plan for our lives.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, inspiring hope against hope, I trust in You.

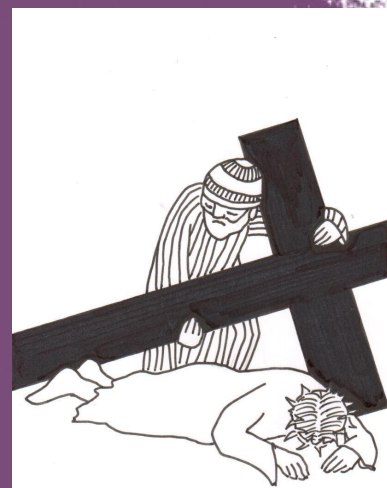


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9th Station: JESUS FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME



Food aid and medical assistance for internally displaced people and vulnerable families in the Parish of Niono, Mali.



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

Scripture

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. **Ephesians 2: 10 (RSV-CE)**

Mali

According to reports, jihadists in central Mali are escalating offensives in an effort to take control of the region and impose Shari'a law. A local source has told ACN that Katiba Macina, an Islamist group with links to Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, has burnt rice fields and attacked farmers harvesting their crops. They do this in order to intimidate the local community into joining their group or abandoning their land, so the Islamist extremists can take it over. In Ségou region, fierce fighting has broken out as local community militia and Donso hunters try to repel Katiba Macina. The conflict is complicated by armed bandits in the region trying to exploit the situation. ACN's source said, "There are villages where it is impossible [for people] to go and celebrate Holy Mass" because of the fear of being the target of verbal abuse or receiving anonymous threatening telephone calls. According to UN figures, the number of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in the region exceeded more than 400,000 by the end of September 2021. With support from ACN, the Catholic Church in Mali is providing food and medical aid to IDPs and vulnerable families in the Ségou region regardless of their religion or ethnicity. [ACN News, December 3 2021](#)

Let us pray:

Christ Jesus the Good Shepherd, we pray for peace, understanding, reconciliation and unity in Mali.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, accompanying us every moment of our life, I trust in You.

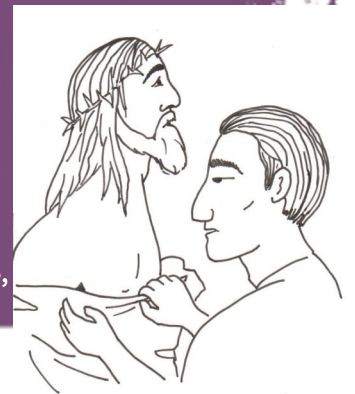


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10th Station: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS



Survivors of the Muidumbe massacre, in the north of Cabo Delgado Province, travelled 300km on foot or by boat to reach the Pemba refugee settlement.



**We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you
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Scripture

Yea, dogs are round about me; a company of evildoers encircle me; they have pierced my hands and feet—I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me; they divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots. **Psalm 21 (22): 16-19 (RSV-CE)**

Mozambique

A Sister in Mozambique held captive by jihadists for more than three weeks has raised the alarm about the growing numbers of children abducted by terrorists in Cabo Delgado Province of Mozambique. Sister Eliane da Costa, of the Congregation of Saint Joseph of Chambéry, was kidnapped with Sister Ines Ramos last August when the northern town of Mocimboa de Praia fell into terrorist hands. Father Kriwiwi Fonseca, a priest ministering to families displaced by Islamist violence, explained that the terrorists forcibly train the young boys to fight in their ranks and turn the girls into child brides. Father Fonseca said: “I believe the object is radicalisation. We are talking of children and young people who were torn from their homes last year, or the year before... It’s a long time to be in contact with evil, and one ends up assimilating this evil.” Last March, ACN agreed emergency aid of around £140,000 to provide beans, flour, cooking oil and other foodstuffs for displaced people facing famine in Mozambique. [ACN News, June 10 2021](#)

Let us pray

Dear Lord, we pray for all, who have been falsely accused or imprisoned, abducted, mistreated or denied justice. We pray that the Holy Spirit will bring lasting healing.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

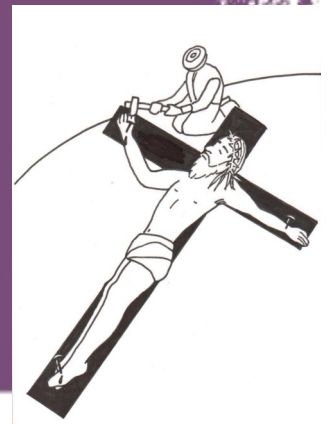
All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, only hope for despairing souls, I trust in You.

11th Station: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS



An ACN-funded relief kitchen housed in the Cathedral of Saint Elias and Saint Gregory the Illuminator provides food for poor families and the elderly in Beirut, Lebanon.



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

Scripture

Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. **Psalm 82: 3-4 (RSV-CE)**

Lebanon and Syria

Returning from a 10-day visit to Syria and neighbouring Lebanon, ACN's Regina Lynch said, "An associate [in Syria] of one of our project partners showed me pictures on her phone, which she took from her flat. You can see a little girl inside a large rubbish bin, rummaging, passing things to her mother." Internally displaced Syrians and over a million Syrian refugees in Lebanon are struggling to survive with as many as 90 percent now living below the poverty line. Economic collapse and hyperinflation in both countries mean that jobs are hard to find and food, housing and other necessities beyond the grasp of even those who were relatively well off before a decade of armed conflict in Syria. The vast numbers of Syrians streaming into Lebanon, the explosion in Beirut in August 2020 and the collapse of Lebanon's formerly healthy economy make it increasingly difficult for displaced Christians and others to find help and support in either country. ACN has funded more than 100 projects worth £426 million in Lebanon and Syria in 2021. [ACN News, October 5 2021](#)

Let us pray:

Lord our God, you are gentle and humble of heart. We ask that you watch over and strengthen the peoples of Syria and Lebanon and fill them with your wonder, so that peace may flourish.

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

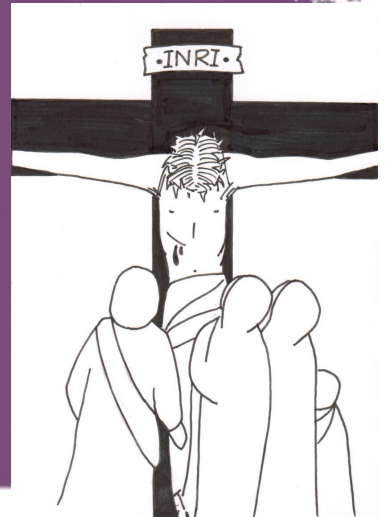
All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. ever permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, source of our happiness and joy, I trust in You.

12th Station: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS



Internally displaced children in Burkina Faso are living under hard conditions.



**We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you
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Scripture

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. **Isaiah 53: 5-6 (RSV-CE)**

Burkina Faso

In late October 2021, a group of 147 Christians – including children, elderly and eight pregnant women – fled from two villages on the Niger border, to Dori, the capital of Burkina Faso’s Sahel region, as extremists sought to kill them. Still other Christians from the area were unable to flee. Multiple local sources have told ACN that terrorists entered villages and demanded taxes per head of cattle, as well as asking cattle herders whether they are Christian or Muslim so that they could kill the Christians. Laurent Birfuoré Dabiré, the Bishop of Dori and the president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Burkina Faso and Niger, told ACN that these sort of attacks, along with abductions and murders are taking place throughout the whole country. He said, “Dori runs the risk of being cut off from the rest of the country”. In 2019 the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimated that 289,000 people had fled their homes because of the violence. In the last five years, ACN has funded 28 projects in the diocese of Dori, including emergency relief programmes and pastoral work. [ACN News, November 5 2021](#)

Let us pray:

O Lamb of God, with your stripes you have taken away the sins of the world. May your kingdom come! May your will be done!

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

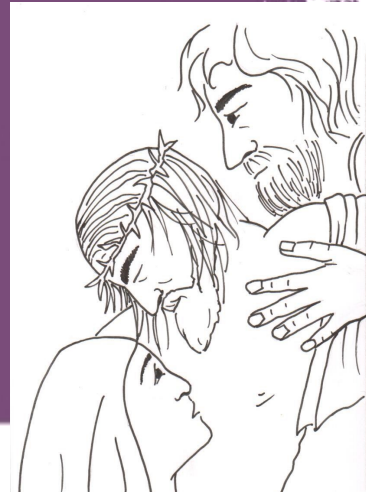
All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, which flowed out from the open wound of the Heart of Jesus, I trust in You.

13th Station: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS



Votive lamps over the Stone of Anointing, where the body of Jesus was anointed after being taken down from the cross, Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Jerusalem).



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

Scripture

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. **1 John 3: 16-18 (RSV-CE)**

Holy Land

A recent statement by the bishops in Jerusalem explained that “[s]ince 2012 there have been countless incidents of physical and verbal assaults against priests and other clergy, attacks on Christian churches, with holy sites regularly vandalised and desecrated, and ongoing intimidation of local Christians who simply seek to worship freely and go about their daily lives. These tactics are being used by such radical groups in a systematic attempt to drive the Christian community out of Jerusalem and other parts of the Holy Land.” The hierarchs noted that “radical groups continue to acquire strategic property in the Christian Quarter, with the aim of diminishing the Christian presence, often using underhanded dealings and intimidation tactics to evict residents from their homes...” The statement acknowledged with gratitude the Israeli government's express commitment to provide a secure home for Christians in the country, but expressed anxiety over the failure of state institutions to tackle these attacks. The local bishops have proposed the creation of protected zone within the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City to ensure the preservation of the city's Christian heritage. [ACN News, December 16, 2021](#)

Let us pray:

God, come to my assistance. Lord, make haste to help me: Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides for ever. **Psalms 124 (125): 1.**

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, source of miracles and wonders, I trust in You.

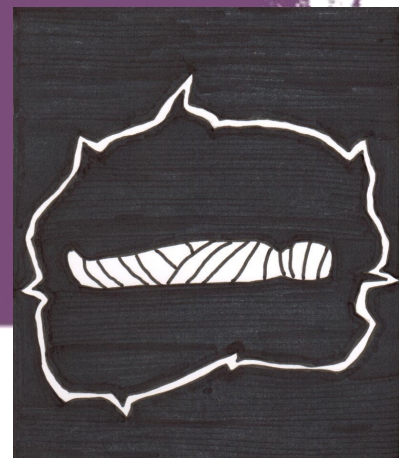


ACN

14th Station: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB



Students, academics and volunteers from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile begin cleaning and restoration work on the interior of the Church of the Assumption in Santiago, Chile.



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

Scripture

Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4: 6-7 (RSV-CE)**

Chile

During the protests of 18th October 2020, the Church of the Assumption in the Chilean capital of Santiago was vandalised and set on fire. The inside was completely gutted. It is likely the reconstruction of the interior will take years, since under Chilean law the building is listed. Nonetheless, with financial help from ACN, one of the parish rooms has been reconfigured so that the Catholic faithful can gather to celebrate the Eucharist. ACN is currently working on a project to refurbish some of the parish offices also. Deeply affected by images of the church tower collapsing in a sea of flames, a group of university students, studying construction, electrical installation, restoration of historic buildings and risk prevention, contacted the parish priest to offer their help. Students, academics and volunteers launched the project "Sursum Corde" (Lift up your hearts) with the aim of assessing the damage and cleaning sculptures and paintings with a view to their future restoration. Since October 2019, no fewer than sixty Christian churches and chapels have been vandalised in Chile. [ACN International News September 7, 2021](#)

Let us pray:

Trust in the Lord, and do good; so you will dwell in the land, and enjoy security. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 36 (37): 3-4

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

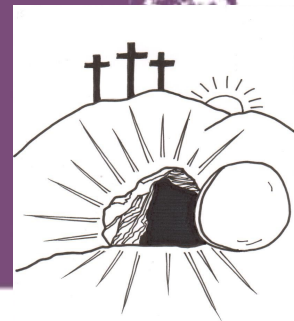
All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, in our justification through Jesus Christ, I trust in You.

RISEN JESUS, WE PRAISE YOU!



Repair of the church of Magagnosse in Haiti after it was heavily damaged by Hurricane Matthew in 2016.



Risen Jesus, we praise you! You have triumphed over sin and death and your victory is evident in your Church today. No evil can withstand the power of your love.

Haiti

The small island nation of Haiti is one of the poorest in the world. Natural disasters, political instability, inadequate infrastructure and a burgeoning gang culture add to the challenges faced by Haitians every day. In July, President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated in the presidential residence; little over a month later, Haiti was devastated by mudslides and flash flooding from a tropical storm landing just days after an earthquake wreaked havoc on the island. Haiti's Civil Protection Agency claims that 2,207 people lost their lives and 12,268 people were injured, while 53,000 homes were damaged or destroyed. 26 churches, including the Cathedral of St Louis, were extensively damaged, with at least 11 of these having collapsed completely. Shortly afterwards, Cardinal Chibly Langlois, Bishop of Les Cayes Diocese, described the dreadful situation, "The people are sleeping on the ground. There is no water, no electricity, no food, [and] no clothes." The cardinal explained that many people were traumatised by their experiences and were forced to wait to locate family members classified as missing. Working alongside the local Church and religious orders on the ground, ACN quickly arranged for the first portion of emergency aid to go out to Haiti to help 45 desperately struggling families in the Diocese of Jérémie. With the prayers and support of loyal benefactors around the world, ACN is working to rebuild churches, parishes and communities, offering hope and a brighter future to those who currently suffering in Haiti. [ACN News, August 24 2021](#)

Let us pray

Christ Jesus, our Redeemer, through your Resurrection we know that your "power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think". We pray that we may follow the instruction given by your Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the servants during the Wedding at Cana to "Do whatever he tells you".

R: Lord, hear us.

A: Lord, graciously hear us.

All: I love you, Jesus, my love above all things. I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always, and then do with me what you will.

Divine Mercy, fount gushing forth from the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, I trust in You.

A PRAYER FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS



Children in the Diocese of Dedza, Malawi taking part in the ACN prayer initiative 'One Million Children Praying the Rosary'. ©ACN



A man prays in Pakistan while a police officer guards the church ©ACN/Magdalena Wolnik

We pray together in solidarity with the millions of Christian people around the world who are persecuted because of their beliefs.

Loving Father, we pray that each of your precious children across the world may know of your love for them. We pray that, where life has become very difficult, you may make a clear path for them.

We pray for their protection, and for them to know that “under His wings you will find refuge”. (*Psalm 90(91):4 RSV-CE*)

May persecuted Christians know that with your grace, Lord God, they can do anything. We offer our prayers for their strength and safety.

We make our prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.



The ONE NIGHT Icon commissioned after One Night for Religious Freedom at the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Manchester. March 2015. ©ACN

“My grace is sufficient for you” (2 Corinthians 12:9 RSV-CE)

“Blessed are those who have not seen
and yet believe” *John 20:29* RSV-CE



Children from the Diocese of Dori in Burkino Faso on an annual retreat funded by ACN ©ACN

ACN, its project partners and thousands of suffering Christians around the world are deeply grateful for the part you are playing to care and pray for God’s people everywhere. We pray especially for those who are faithful, even under the threat of persecution or death.



ACN

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is a Pontifical Foundation of the Catholic Church, supporting the Catholic faithful and other Christians where they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need.

Founded on Christmas Day 1947, ACN supports around 5,000 projects across the world each year.

For regular updates from the suffering Church around the world or to find out more information, please visit

www.acnuk.org

Thank you for your prayers and support for our brothers and sisters in Christ across the world.

All images are Aid to the Church in Need copyright, unless otherwise stated. The line drawings have been produced for us by Wendy Moore, for use with ACN materials.

Please keep in touch with your local office. Details are listed below.



Volunteers working to support Christians in Aleppo, Syria ©ACN

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