

The Way of the Cross

Travis and Jacinta's Story

By Cynthia Reeg

The Way of the Cross (also called the Stations of the Cross) is a traditional Catholic prayer, especially during Lent. It follows Jesus step by step as he carried his cross to Calvary, where he was crucified and died.

But, the Way of the Cross is not just thinking about what happened to Jesus a long time ago. It helps us change our lives and learn how to help others who are suffering. It helps us remember how much Jesus loves us.

Let's follow Travis and Jacinta as they discover how the Way of the Cross affects them.



1st Station: Jesus Is Condemned to Death

Travis: Today, while others called the new girl names, I just stood there. But now I remember how no one defended you, Jesus, when you were being condemned to death.

Prayer: Jesus, help me to see you in others and to treat them with love.



2nd Station: Jesus Takes Up His Cross

Jacinta: Today I started at a new school, and they made fun of me at recess. Was your cross as heavy as my heart felt today?

Prayer: Jesus, help me to be strong even when my cross seems too hard to carry.



3rd Station: Jesus Falls For the First Time

Travis: Today Haley tripped the new girl in the hallway. I could have helped pick up her scattered books and papers, but I didn't. Just like no one helped you when you fell, Jesus.

Prayer: Jesus, show me how to reach out to others in kindness when they are

down.



4th Station: Jesus Meets His Mother Mary

Jacinta: Today my mother brought my forgotten lunch to school. Your mother was also a comfort to you when you were carrying your cross, wasn't she?

Prayer: Jesus, help me to say words of love to those close to me.



5th Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

Travis: Today when I came to school, I said "Hi" to the new girl. It isn't really so hard to be nice. I wonder if Simon thought it would be hard to help you.

Prayer: Jesus, help me to be brave in reaching out to others.



6th Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Jacinta: Today Travis smiled at me when he opened the door and even remembered my name. Did Veronica's soft cloth and words of love comfort you as much as Travis's hello comforted me?

Prayer: Jesus, help me always to be grateful for little acts of kindness.



7th Station: Jesus Falls a Second Time

Travis: Today Philip knocked Jacinta down on the way to Music. He and Haley giggled when I tried to help Jacinta up. I wish someone had helped you up when you fell under the weight of the cross.

Prayer: Jesus, help me to do the right thing, even when people laugh.



8th Station: Jesus Speaks to the Women of Jerusalem

Jacinta: Today, after Travis helped me up, I thanked him and said, "I'm okay." Could he tell how much I appreciated his friendship, and how hard it was not to say unkind words to the others, who were laughing? You must have felt that way when you met the women who were weeping for you.

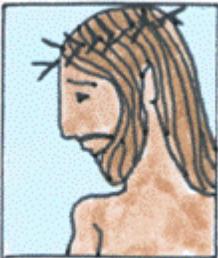
Prayer: Jesus, show me how to speak out in love even when I am angry.



9th Station: Jesus Falls a Third Time

Travis: Today Haley splattered Jacinta's shirt with yogurt in the lunchroom. Jacinta must feel like people will never stop being mean to me. Did you feel like that when you fell the third time?

Prayer: Jesus, help me to learn patience and understanding in difficulties.



10th Station: Jesus Is Stripped of His Clothes

Jacinta: Today I had to get a clean shirt from the nurse's office because Haley spilled yogurt on me. I had to wear an ugly orange T-shirt that came down to my knees. Could everyone tell how awful I felt? You must have felt like that, Jesus, when they took your clothes away.

Prayer: Jesus, help me find courage even when I feel embarrassed.



11th Station: Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

Travis: Today I stood by Jacinta while she read the unkind note left on her desk. I watched helplessly as her tears fell. I hope at least my being there helped. Did seeing your mother and the others at the cross help you, Jesus?

Prayer: Jesus, show me the way to comfort those who are suffering.



12th Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Jacinta: Today I cried when I read the words, "Go away, weirdo!" I wished I *could* go away. Is this what it felt like when you said, "It is finished" and gave up your spirit?

Prayer: Jesus, stay close to me when I feel like I have no friends.



13th Station: Jesus Is Taken Down From the Cross

Travis: Today I asked Jacob and Laura to sit with Jacinta and me at lunch. Then we all played soccer at recess. Jesus, your friends stayed around to take care of your body after your death. I wonder if they felt funny standing out from the crowd.

Prayer: Jesus, help me to show others your love through my actions.



14th Station: Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

Jacinta: Today when Ms. Montgomery asked me to read my poem called "All Alone," I was so nervous. But then, I saw Travis and my two other new friends smiling at me. Did you feel the love of your followers as they put your body in the tomb?

Prayer: Jesus, help me to be always ready to offer support to my friends.



15th Station: The Resurrection

Travis and Jacinta: Today at recess when Haley and Philip asked to be on our soccer team, we just looked at each other and nodded. It felt like a new beginning! Is this how you felt stepping into the Easter morning sunshine?

Prayer: Jesus, help us to see each day as a new beginning when we offer it up to you.

(You can use this to reflect on the Way of the Cross with your class or family. It is also good to join in praying the Way of the Cross with your parish family. Check out the bulletin to see

times planned during Lent. You can also read the story of Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection from one of the gospels. In Matthew, read chapters 26 to 28. You might even want to spend a little time on Sundays or Fridays in Lent to read a little and talk to Jesus about it.)

