

**The
First
Station**



**Jesus
is
condemned
to
Death**

No Greater Love

Stations of the Cross for Young People

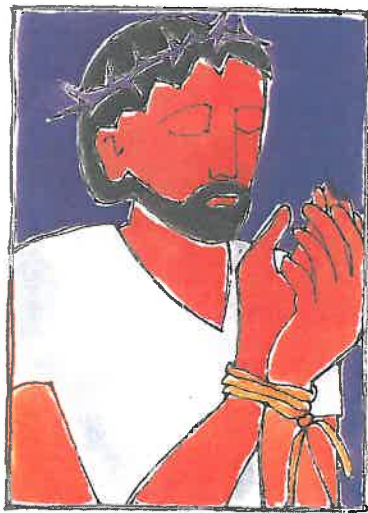
Love is important to all of us. We spend our time on earth engaged in so many activities, but in the end, it all comes down to love. We are seeking a place in life where we can safely love and be loved. We were made for love, and we all hope for a love that never ends and that accepts us just as we are.

What is love, though? The wrong idea of love can take us down sad or even dangerous paths. The Stations of the Cross are, above everything else, about love. When we journey with Jesus on the Way of the Cross, we learn what real love is, what it requires of us and how it gives us hope for the future.

The Gospel of John tells us that at the Last Supper, Jesus told his disciples that they were no longer servants, but friends of his—which means friends of God. “No one has greater love than this,” he said, “To lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” In this Way of the Cross we see what this “laying down” means for Jesus—and for us.

—Amy Welborn

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FIRST STATION **Jesus Is Condemned to Die**

Meditation

Jesus stands before those who hold his earthly life in their hands. He knows suffering lies ahead. He could lie about himself and escape that suffering. He tells the truth, though, because he loves us, and Love stands for truth.

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Prayer Before the Altar

Jesus, love has brought me here today. I am alive because of love. I can stand here in hope and courage because of the love I know you have for me. I'm here because I love you and want to be more like you.

I try hard to follow your voice in my heart and share your love with others. Sometimes I don't, though. Sometimes I take the gift of my life for granted. Sometimes I forget that everyone I meet is your beloved child, too. I cut myself off from others and from you. I cut myself off from life.

But even then, you don't stop loving me. You want me to return to you. You reach out like a shepherd, like a father waiting for his prodigal son. When I look at your image here on the cross, I see that love. I see love poured out for your friends. Help me to rejoice in your friendship and accept the love and forgiveness that you share with all your friends. Teach me to love as you love, as I walk with you on that way of great love, the Way of the Cross.

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Prayer

Jesus, so many times trying to be truthful seems just too hard. If I'm completely truthful about my sins, I will have to suffer consequences for my wrongdoing. If I'm completely honest about my plans, I may face restrictions that will keep me from doing what I want. If I'm really open about who I am and what I think, some people might change the way they think of me. They might decide I'm not very good or something.

In this first station, I see you stand before your accusers in truth, out of love. Help me be led by love, too. May knowing that you love me as I am strengthen me to be honest about myself. May my love for others help me see that they deserve the truth from me.

*No one has greater love than this,
To lay down one's life for one's friends.*

(John 15:13)

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