

THE
STATIONS
OF THE
CROSS
FOR
CHILDREN



Introduction

The liturgy we know as “The Stations of the Cross” is usually aimed at adult worshipers. The experience of symbolically “walking with Jesus” along the “Way of Sorrows” is one that many have found moving. Perhaps because of its mature content, focused as it is on the suffering of Christ, it has not traditionally been celebrated as a liturgy for children. Yet our experience has shown that if the Stations of the Cross is done in a hands-on, experiential manner, and explained in terms understandable for children, it can be meaningful for them, as well.

We begin in the Parish Hall with fellowship. A bell is rung to mark the beginning of the liturgy. Please gather at the first station marker in the hall. We will be singing the following choruses as we move between stations:

**Stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, night will soon fall.
Then stay with us, O Lord Jesus Christ, light in our darkness.**

**Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.**

**Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.
Those who seek God shall never go wanting.
Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten.
God alone fills us.**

1 Parish Hall

JESUS IS ARRESTED

Celebrant: We love you, Christ;

People: **Because you first loved us.**

Reading:

Jesus went with his friends to a hill called the Mount of Olives to pray. While they were there, soldiers came to arrest Jesus. His friends were scared and ran away. The religious leaders brought Jesus to the Roman governor, called Pilate. Pilate asked them, "What do you want me to do with this Jesus, the one you call Messiah?" All the people said, "Put him to death on a cross." When Pilate saw that all the people were angry and going to start a fight, he was afraid to do anything else. So he gave permission for Jesus to be punished by being nailed to a wooden cross.

Activity

Constructing the Cross

1. Ask the children what a cross was made of (wood and nails).
2. Show the children the boards, nails, and hammer that will be used to construct the cross.
3. Help the children construct the cross.
 - a. Get a couple of parents to hold the 2x4s in position.
 - b. Start a nail into the 2x4s.

- c. Let each child have a few whacks with the hammer until the nail is in.
 - d. Start a second nail.
 - e. Let each parent have a few whacks with the hammer until the nail is in.
4. Children write names on cross
5. Each child then makes a small cross out of popsicle sticks and a pipe cleaner.
6. Ask the children if they have ever been accused of something they didn't do and how it felt.
7. Ask the children to carry their little crosses to the next stations.

Note:

Children are invited to colour in the booklet in the blank spaces provided next to the liturgy for each station.

2

Parish Hall

JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

Celebrant: We love you, Christ;

People: **Because you first loved us.**

Reading

The soldiers made a big cross out of wood and nails. Then they made Jesus carry the cross. He had to walk a long way outside the city to a place called Golgotha. That is the Hebrew word meaning “the Place of the Skull”.

Activity

1. Show the children the big cross in the stand.
2. Explain to the children that Jesus had to carry his cross himself and that it was very heavy.
3. Ask the children if they have ever been made to do something they didn't want to do and how that felt.
4. Ask the children to carry the cross to the next station (each child takes a turn carrying the cross by him or herself).
5. Lead the children to the next station.

3

South Landing

THE CROSS IS LAID ON SIMON OF CYRENE

Prayer

Celebrant: We love you, Christ;

People: **Because you first loved us.**

Reading

It was very hard for Jesus to carry the heavy cross. The people on the way watched Jesus struggle. The soldiers grabbed a man called Simon of Cyrene who was coming in from the country. They made him follow behind Jesus and carry his cross. He helped Jesus share the load.

Activity

1. Explain to the children that cross was so heavy and Jesus so injured and tired that he couldn't carry it by himself anymore, so they grabbed a bystander and forced him to help Jesus carry his cross.
2. Ask the children how it might have felt to be Simon.
3. Tell the children that from now on they will help each other carry the cross.
4. Have all the children pick up the cross together and carry it to the next station.
5. Lead the children to the next station.

4

Font

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Prayer

Celebrant: We love you, Christ;

People: **Because you first loved us.**

Reading

When Jesus and the soldiers came to the Place of the Skull, they offered him sour wine to drink. When he tasted it, he refused to drink it. The soldiers took off his clothes and gambled to see who would win them. Then they nailed Jesus' hands and feet to the cross. They stood up the cross so that he hung there with other criminals who had received the same punishment. There were other crosses on his left and his right, all the people that the Romans had decided should die for crimes. Those who came to look laughed and called him names. They didn't help.

Activity

1. Taste vinegar on sponges.
2. Ask the children if they have ever gotten hurt when there was no one around to help.
3. Ask all the children to pick up the cross together and carry it to the next station.
4. Lead the children to the next station.

5

Pulpit

JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

Prayer

Celebrant: We love you, Christ;

People: **Because you first loved us.**

Reading

Standing close to the cross of Jesus were his mother and his aunt and his friend Mary Magdalene. Jesus looked down from where he hung and saw his mother and one of his best friends, John. He said to his mother, “Woman, this is now your son”. Then he said to John, “Here is your mother now.” From that time, John took Jesus’ mother into his home and treated her like his own mother. There were also some other women standing a little farther away and watching what was happening. They had followed Jesus and helped to look after him and his friends. Now all of them could only watch him suffer.

Activity

1. Ask the children if they have ever run to their parent after hurting themselves and what they said and did.
2. Ask the children how Jesus’ mother must have felt when she wanted to help Jesus with his hurts but couldn’t help him.
3. Ask all the children to pick up the cross together and carry it to the next station.

4. Lead the children to the next station.

6 Altar

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Prayer

Celebrant: We love you, Christ;

People: **Because you first loved us.**

Reading

From noon until three in the afternoon, the sky grew very dark. Then Jesus cried out loudly, “My God, My God, why have you left me all alone?” Jesus knew he was very near death. He said, “I am thirsty.” So someone put a sponge full of wine on a long stick and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had tasted this wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and died.

Let us be quiet for a minute.

(Pause)

Since it was nearly time for the Jewish holy day, the people did not want the bodies which were nailed to the crosses to stay up after dark. So they asked Pilate to take them down. The soldiers killed those who were still alive by breaking their legs. Then their suffering was over. But when they came to Jesus, they saw he was already dead, so they did not hurt him more.

Activity

1. Get the children to help put the big cross in the stand in front of the altar.
2. Tell the children that when Jesus died, all his friends, and his mother, and even God were very sad and heartbroken.
3. Invite the children to help drape a black cloth over the cross. Tell them that for many people, black is a colour that is used at deaths and sad times.
4. Ask all the children to leave the cross behind and just bring their small crosses with them to the next station.
5. Lead the children to the next station.

7

Meditation Garden

JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

Prayer

Celebrant: We love you, Christ;

People: **Because you first loved us.**

Reading

When the day was done, a rich man named Joseph from Arimathea came to the Roman governor. He was a follower of Jesus, and he asked for the return of Jesus' body so he could bury it. Pilate agreed and Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a long white cloth. Then he put it in a new grave where he himself was planning to have been buried. It was a rocky chamber with one entrance. Once the body of Jesus was laid in the tomb, Joseph ordered that a great stone be rolled in front of the door to close it. Then everyone went away.

Activity

1. Open the "Tomb" and ask each child to lay their small cross in it.
2. Put the lid on the "Tomb" and the stone on top.
3. Remind the children to come back to a church on Easter because that is when God raises Jesus from the dead. They will see crosses surrounded by flowers and colour and life, not hidden under a stone or draped in black.

Final Prayer

Celebrant: We glory in your cross, O Lord, and in your holy resurrection;

People: **For because of your cross joy has come to the whole world.**

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

This is the end of our liturgy together.

Everyone is welcome to come back into the building

to explore the stations

or to have quiet time in the church.

St. Stephen the Martyr Anglican Church

9887 Cameron Street, Burnaby

604-421-0472 www.ststbby.ca

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| Easter services: | Holy Saturday Vigil | 8 pm |
| | Easter Baptism & Eucharist | 10 am |

St. Timothy Anglican Church

4550 Kitchener Street, Burnaby

604-299-6816 www.sainttimothy.ca

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| Easter services: | Easter Vigil with Baptism | 8 am |
| | Easter Breakfast | 9 am |
| | Easter Eucharist | 10 am |