

A matter of life and death

We frequently hear that "Jesus died for us" or that "we are saved by the blood of the cross." What meaning does Jesus's death hold for you? How do you understand what it means to be saved by Jesus's death on the cross? Feel free to write whatever comes to your mind or heart in response to these questions.



The Stations of the Cross

The stations of the cross is a Catholic devotion that commemorates the Passion of Jesus. The practice began, most likely, in Jerusalem soon after Jesus's death. Believers prayerfully processed along the route that Jesus walked from his trial before Pilate to the cross on Calvary, stopping along the way for prayer and reflection at key places, or stations.

During the Middle Ages, the devotion spread and became more formalized. The design of most Catholic churches from that time on included the stations, often represented along the walls in forms ranging from simple crosses to highly detailed paintings or sculptures.

In Catholic churches today, the stations are most commonly practiced during the season of Lent, usually on Fridays. The fourteen traditional stations are listed below:

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
2. Jesus bears the cross.
3. Jesus falls the first time.
4. Jesus meets his mother.
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls a second time.
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.
9. Jesus falls a third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is placed in the tomb.



[Before he ascended into heaven, Jesus said to them], "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. . . . And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

—Matthew 28:18–20



The Paschal mystery of Christ's cross and Resurrection stands at the center of the Good News that the apostles, and the Church following them, are to proclaim to the world. God's saving plan was accomplished "once and for all"⁹ by the redemptive death of his Son Jesus Christ.

—Catechism, no. 571