

# Stations of the Cross



*composed by*

**Ignatius Cardinal Kung Pin-Mei**

during his imprisonment in Communist China

Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist • Stamford, Connecticut

**B**orn in Shanghai, China, on August 2, 1901, **Ignatius Kung Pin-Mei** was ordained to the priesthood in 1930. He was named the first Bishop of Soochow by Pope Pius XII in 1949, only months after the People's Liberation Army marched into Shanghai. In 1950, he was named the first Chinese Bishop of Shanghai. Bishop Kung was arrested on September 8, 1955 for his steadfast loyalty to the Catholic Church and to the Successor of St. Peter, and was sentenced by the Communist Party to life in prison. In 1979, Blessed Pope John Paul II secretly [*in pectore*] named Bishop Kung a Cardinal. After 33 years' imprisonment, Cardinal Kung was released, and spent his last years in Stamford, Connecticut. He died on March 12, 2000, and was buried from the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, Stamford.



**T**hese Stations of the Cross were written in Chinese by Bishop Kung in 1985. He had just been paroled and was living under house arrest at the residence of the Catholic Patriotic Association bishops. After their completion, Bishop Kung entrusted them to Father Ai, the parochial vicar at the Cathedral of Shanghai, who had been ordained by Bishop Kung years earlier.

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**On the cover:** Bishop Ignatius Kung (second from left), along with 12 other Catholic priests, endured a two-day show trial on March 16-17, 1960, staged by the Chinese Communist Government. They were found guilty of “counterrevolutionary and anti-government” activities. Bishop Kung was sentenced to lifetime imprisonment.

The priest gave the manuscript of the Stations of the Cross to an Chinese-American lady visiting Shanghai, asking that she bring them out of the country. Fearful that her luggage and hotel might be searched, she hand-copied the Stations of the Cross and mailed them to Hong Kong, then destroyed the originals. She was subsequently searched and detained, and warned that if she published any documents about Bishop Kung after her return to the U.S., her relatives in China and Father Ai would be punished. When Bishop Kung arrived in Connecticut, the lady returned her copy to him.



While Cardinal Kung lived at the Queen of Clergy Retirement Home at Saint Joseph's Hospital in Stamford, he daily prayed these Stations of the Cross in the hospital chapel at 3:00 p.m., followed by 20 minutes of meditation before the Blessed

Sacrament. This became well known.

Even the homeless knew his schedule. On two occasions, one man asked for money for train fare, and another asked for food. The Cardinal left the chapel, went upstairs to his room, and returned with \$5.00 for each man. When the hospital superior, Sister Daniel Marie, heard of this, she was alarmed. "The Bishop survived in jail for 30 years," she is reported to have said. "The last thing I want is for him to be hurt in the hospital." She alerted the hospital security guards to be more attentive to the homeless when the Cardinal was nearby. But the good Cardinal did not mind in the least.

## Introduction

### The Holy City Spattered with Blood: Fourteen Stations of the Cross

**T**he distance from the hall of the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate to Mount Calvary measured only 4 to 5 miles, but it was rugged and treacherous – sloping as it descended to exit the Western Gate, then through the valley and finally climbing Mount Calvary. Walking to complete this journey with serious wounds all over His body and carrying a heavy wooden Cross on His shoulder, Jesus' agony truly defies our imagination!

As an act of reparation and gratitude, early Christians frequently assembled to retrace Jesus' steps to His crucifixion, venerating and reflecting on the Fourteen Stations.

Passing down from generations to the present days, Catholics all over the world often make the Way of the Cross as a devotion in thanksgiving for our redemption and to show our deep love for Jesus.

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Photographs of the Stations of the Cross and the Crucifixion Window in the Basilica of Saint John the Evangelist by **John R. Glover**.

## The First Station

### Condemning the Innocent One to Death – An Unjust Verdict

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

A crowd of Jews intimidated the cowardly Pilate with a fanatic demonstration and secured from him an unjust verdict. The Roman soldiers then tore off the blood-stained scarlet cloak from Jesus' sacred body, and they clothed Him in His own garment. They immediately brought forth an already-prepared big, heavy wooden cross, forcibly put it on His shoulder, and started him towards the West Gate of the Holy City to Calvary, the execution site, to be crucified. Thus a grievous crime of injustice against an Innocent was committed!



*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.  
Through her heart, His sorrow sharing, all His bitter  
anguish bearing, now at length the sword had passed.*

## The Second Station

### Embrace the Cross and Follow Christ

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**J**esus viewed the Cross as the instrument of salvation for mankind and as the Divine will of His Father. In total obedience, Jesus accepted the Holy Cross willingly and climbed Calvary to complete the redemption of mankind with the sacrifice of His own blood.



We venerate the Holy Cross to conquer the three enemies: the devil, the world, and the flesh, and to secure the promise of Heaven. But we are fearful of suffering and death, and live lives of dreams. Though we dare not ask for Your Cross, we implore You to grant us the grace to embrace the Cross in our lives and not to run away from its burden.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*O, how sad and sore distressed was that Mother,  
highly blest, of the sole begotten One!*

## The Third Station

### Jesus Falls the First Time

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**T**oward noon, Jesus, suffering from extreme fatigue and with the weight of the Cross crushing His injured back, stumbled to the ground. But, He pressed forward without complaint to fulfill the will of His Father.



Jesus, grant me grace to see myself clearly, not to commit sins and wicked deeds that were the cause of your falls and great suffering. Let me resolve not to sin again, or at least be less sinful that I might reduce Your burden. Grant me perseverance and courage to walk the rugged road of life full of obstacles, and not to be afraid to rise from every fall, to follow You, My Lord, closely, never to falter or lag behind.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*Christ above in torment hands: She beneath beholds the pangs of  
her dying glorious Son of the sole begotten One!*



## The Fourth Station

### Meeting on the Way to Calvary

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**A**long the road stood the Blessed Mother and John. A heart-wrenching meeting between a mother and son – the heart of the Blessed Mother cradling the sorrowful Jesus; His heart holding His weeping Mother. Both hearts pierced, suffering extreme sorrow in silence.



Most Holy and Sorrowful Virgin Mary, I am the cause of your Son's suffering. My sins are grave – they are the swords piercing through your heart. I do not deserve your mercy. Knowing your boundless kindness, please intercede for me. At the hour of my death, let me see Jesus who will take me to enjoy eternal happiness in Heaven. Amen.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*Is there one who would not weep, whelmed in miseries  
so deep, Christ's dear Mother to behold?*



## The Fifth Station

### Embrace the Cross

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**T**he mob feared that Jesus might die of serious wounds before reaching Mount Calvary. They forced a passer-by, Simon, to help Jesus carry His heavy Cross to the execution site. Simon was blessed to perform this act, an act the Apostles were not given the chance to perform.



If you are envious of Simon, you only need to endure patiently hardships in your life: poverty, sickness, trials, and tribulations. This is the way of carrying the Cross given to you by God. If you can actively preach the Gospel, save more souls, and share in Jesus' work of salvation, you will be helping Jesus in carrying His Cross as Simon had done.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*Can the human heart refrain from partaking in her pain,  
In that Mother's pain untold?*

## The Sixth Station

### Adoration of His Sacred Image

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**V**eronica, a brave holy woman, was moved by Jesus' soiled, blood-stained face. She braved the cruel mobs, rushed directly to Jesus, and offered her veil to wipe His Holy Face. To reward Veronica's courage, Jesus imprinted His sacred image on her veil.



O my Jesus, grant me the grace to always see You – mankind's most beautiful image! Preserve my fidelity to You. Let me not be stained with sins lest I would be ashamed to venerate Your Holy Face. Grant me courage not to recoil from my duties due to suffering or even death. Grant me prudence to clearly recognize false belief by focusing on the vision of Your Holy Face.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,  
She beheld her tender Child, all with bloody scourges rent.*

## The Seventh Station

### Jesus Falls Again

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**J**esus carried the Cross through the Western Gate. Overcome by exhaustion, He fell again at the feet of sinners, subjected to trampling and ridicule.



O my meek and kind Savior, you got up and pushed on for my redemption without any complaint. From dust I came, but my sins cast me even lower. I was arrogant and conceited, putting myself above others. With this attitude I not only deceived others, I also fooled myself. Shamefully I committed the serious sin of pride. I now repent with humility. I beg my Lord to forgive me all my past sins and grant me the virtue of charity and humility.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*For the sins of His own nation, saw Him hang in desolation  
till His spirit forth He sent.*

## The Eighth Station

### Weep for Your Sins

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**A**s Jesus exited the gate, some women who were following Him were weeping with great compassion. Jesus consoled them and said, "Women of Jerusalem, weep not for my suffering, but weep for the sins that caused my suffering. Weep also for the future disaster that shall befall you and your children. There shall be fire and destruction of the temple and the holy city, the killing and enslavement of the people, and the great suffering of the end of a nation."



O Jesus, I implore you to give me tears to cleanse my soul and the resolve to sin no more so that I can avoid the heavy punishment due for my sins.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*O thou Mother: font of love! Touch my spirit from above, make my heart with thine accord.*

## The Ninth Station

### The Third Fall and Rise of Jesus

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

Jesus descended a hilly slope from the Holy City before climbing up Mount Calvary again. Under the crushing weight of the Cross, Jesus fell to the ground for the third time, causing him the most intense pain and opening wide His Sacred Wounds. Three times Jesus fell and rose again; each time He struggled to His feet, bravely pushing forward to complete His great act of redemption.



O Jesus, give me spiritual strength and fortitude. Grant me not only wisdom to discern temptations, but also an unshakeable will not to commit sin. If I should fall, let me not be afraid to get up and try again, to follow Your footsteps, and never succumb to fear or despair.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.  
Make me feel as thou has felt; make my soul to glow  
and melt, with the love of Christ my Lord.*

## The Tenth Station

### Nailing My Own Desire to the Cross

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**H**is back hunched, Jesus stumbled along, forcing Himself forward. He collapsed on the edge of the crucifixion site. A soldier tore off His blood-soaked garments, taking with it His skin and flesh. This exposed Jesus' naked mangled body, subjecting Him to unspeakable humiliation and pain. They forced Jesus to drink sour wine to increase His pain.



Jesus, I indulge sinfully in sumptuous food, fashion, and sexual pleasure, causing You humiliation and suffering. I resolve to renounce all sins related to gluttony, seductive clothing, and passions of the flesh, so I may show my gratitude to You for Your suffering caused by me.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.  
Holy Mother, pierce me through; In my heart  
each wound renew of my Savior crucified.*



## The Eleventh Station

### You Pierced My Hands and My Feet, and Counted My Bones

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**T**aking a hammer, the soldiers pounded nails into Jesus' hands and feet. Then, they tied His sacred body to the Cross. Imagine the big iron nails piercing Jesus' flesh, slicing tendons, forced between the bones of His limbs. What horrific pain! This torturous punishment was designed for the worst criminals and slaves – never for a Roman citizen.



Jesus suffered the crucifixion to redeem my sins of succumbing to worldly pleasures and uncontrolled desires. From now on, I resolve to nail my passions and desires to the Cross to eliminate the root cause of my sins.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*Let me share with Thee His pain, Who for all my sins was  
slain, Who for me in torment died.*



## The Twelfth Station

### All Generations Venerate the Holy Cross

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**A**t noon, the soldiers elevated the Cross and placed it between two crucified criminals, one of whom was cynical and insulting to Jesus. With every movement of the Cross, Jesus' wounds were further split apart. O Holy Son of God, what suffering! What humiliation! Behold, hanging high on the Cross was the Sacred Body of Jesus, naked and broken.



Jesus Christ, we adore you and we praise you. I kneel before You and humbly confess my sins. It was my sins that pierced Your hands and feet, crowned Your head with thorns, pierced Your Heart, and caused Your most perfect body to be trampled upon like a worthless creature in the mud. The sins were the cause of Your suffering. I am not worthy to venerate Your Holy Face. I implore You to forgive all my sins. I will not sin against You again.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*Let me mingle tears with thee, mourning Him who mourned for me, all the days that I may live.*

## Jesus Bowed His Head and Died

**I**t was the day before Passover [Saturday, 14th of Nisan]. Jesus' body had been hanging on the Cross since noon – His entire body weight suspended by three nails. His Crown of Thorns prevented Him from looking up towards Heaven; He could only look at the jeering, abusing crowd below. What unspeakable, heart-wrenching torture! He remained in this state for three hours when He cried out in a loud voice: "It is finished."

Jesus then bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

At that moment, the sky darkened and moved, the earth trembled, the whole world turned dark. Graves split open. Onlookers struck their breasts and wailed in remorseful agony. Heaven and earth moaned over Jesus' tragic death. Many said, "This man is indeed the Son of God. Who else could have brought forth such an astounding change on the whole earth?" In fear they covered their heads and faces and dispersed. Remaining beneath the Cross were the Blessed Mother, John, Mary Magdalene, and some other holy women weeping in unspeakable compassion for the death of Jesus, their Lord and Savior.

One of the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two crucified thieves in order to speed up their deaths. To make sure that Jesus was indeed dead, a soldier thrust his lance through His ribs into His Holy Heart, and out flowed the last drops of His Precious Blood.

Jesus, may Your Passion and Death strengthen me and never let me betray You.

## The Thirteenth Station

### Removal of the Holy Body from the Cross

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

A man named Joseph of Arimathea, together with Nicodemus (both were disciples in secret), petitioned Pilate and received the body of Jesus. They brought along tools and took Jesus' sacred body and placed it at the bosom of His Blessed Mother. Conforming to the Jewish custom, they anointed the body with perfumed oils and wrapped it in burial cloth. They placed the body in a newly-hewn tomb prepared for Joseph himself, then they rolled a big rock against its entrance. Because it was the day of preparation for the Sabbath, the Blessed Mother and the holy people helping in the burial had to complete the ceremony quickly.



*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*By the cross with thee to stay;  
there with thee to weep and pray is all I ask of thee to give.*

## The Fourteenth Station

### The Burial of the Holy Body and Mourning the Death of Jesus

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You;  
Because by Your Holy Cross You have redeemed the world.*

**T**he sacred Body of Jesus was laid to rest in a stone tomb. The chief priests sent guards to keep watch, to stop Jesus from fulfilling His prophecy of rising from the dead on the third day. The poor fools' plan was defeated! At the predicted time, Jesus was gloriously raised from the dead.



Jesus spent over 30 years glorifying God and teaching us His divine way. He set the example to exhort mankind to put aside their own desires; He instituted Sacraments to give us the Grace to do good and avoid evils. If only mankind would follow Jesus' teaching and make good use of the Sacraments, everyone could be assured of the Kingdom of God. O Victory!

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*

*Lord Jesus, crucified. Have mercy on us.*

*Virgin of all virgins best, listen to my fond request:  
let me share thy grief divine.*

## Prayer Before a Crucifix

**L**ook down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before Your face I humbly kneel and, with burning soul, pray and beseech You to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity; true contrition for my sins; and a firm purpose of amendment; while I contemplate, with great love and tender pity, Your five most precious wounds, pondering over them within me and calling to mind the words which David, Your prophet, said to You, my Jesus: "They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have numbered all My bones." Amen.



## Prayers for the Intentions of the Holy Father

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.*



Please pray  
one "Hail Mary" daily  
for the opening of the  
cause of canonization  
for Ignatius Cardinal  
Kung Pin-Mei

**THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION**

P.O. Box 8086, Stamford, CT 06905 USA • 203-329-9712

Web: <http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org>