



Stations of the Cross
with
St. Bernadette of Lourdes

Reflections by:
Père Régis-Marie de La Teyssonnière



INTRODUCTION

Saint Bernadette Soubirous loved to pray the Stations of the Cross for the same reason that she was deeply attached to the Eucharist.

At this very moment, as we set out to contemplate Jesus on His journey of Love unto death, let us be guided by Mary.

Let us ask her “how to make the Sign of the Cross well.”

*† In the name of the Father, the Son
and the Holy Spirit. Amen!*

FIRST STATION Jesus is Condemned to Death

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

Pilate said to the people: “Behold the man!”
They cried out, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

We are facing two worlds:

- with Pilate, it is the world of power, esteem, prestige and worldly matters.
- with Jesus, on the contrary, it is a world of humility, truth and interiority.

Sick, an illiterate child, living with her poor family in an old abandoned prison, excluded from society, Bernadette said:

“It is because I was the poorest the Blessed Virgin chose me.”

With one another, and for one another, we can ask the Lord for the grace to choose to love and so to enter into the experience of “the other world,” the world of Jesus, the Kingdom of Heaven.

SECOND STATION

Jesus Takes up His Cross

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

Pilate handed Jesus over to the people to be crucified. Then, carrying His cross, Jesus set out for Golgotha.

The cross, the instrument of the execution, divides Pilate and Jesus.

The instrument of horrible execution, the cross, separates the two worlds. The world of hate, violence and suffering unto death, from the world of love, the gift of one's whole life.

Bernadette learned this from Mary at the first apparition in receiving from her, with the Sign of the Cross, the secret of how to enter into "the other world."

Lord Jesus, we pray for each other that we may have the grace to be united to You and like Bernadette, enter into the mystery of the love of God.

THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls for the First Time

*We adore you, O Christ, and praise you.
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*

This event is not just retold in the Gospel but it summarizes all of the Gospel:

Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself in becoming man
Jesus, the Son of God, humbled Himself even unto death.

Bernadette humbled herself, particularly during the eighth and ninth apparitions. At the request of Mary, Bernadette humbled herself by kissing the dirt ground in the Grotto as a sign of "penance for sinners."

Lord Jesus, give each of us the grace to become humble.

FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Mother

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

By his humility, Jesus brought us into touch with the “other world,” with the Kingdom of Heaven, where one lives in total love, in the total giving of oneself and a total acceptance of the other.

Amazed at being looked upon by Mary “as one person speaking to another,” Bernadette said, “I looked at her as intensely as I could,” that is to say, with all my heart, all my strength, all my soul, all my desire, and all my spirit. Thus it was how Bernadette lived each of these 18 meetings with Mary, in a spirit of love.

Lord Jesus, forgive us for the lack of love in our relationships, help us to open our hearts to your love.

FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

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

Behold in the midst of the violence of this world, we can contemplate the reality of this “other world,” that of the Kingdom of Heaven.

For Mary, her meeting with Jesus is a prayer and the prayer of Mary is heard: Jesus is helped by Simon in making His painful journey.

For Jesus, meeting Mary is a prayer, and the prayer of Jesus is heard: In Simon, all of humanity is associated with the mystery of the cross.

Bernadette experienced suffering through which she participated in the cross of Jesus. Thus she had compassion for everybody, which enabled her to help everyone with her welcome, prayers and caring ways.

We can ask the Lord forgiveness for our selfishness and lack of availability. We ask the Lord to open our hearts and our lives, to be more at the service of our brothers.

SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

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

Let us contemplate this “other world,” the Kingdom of Heaven, where we are completely occupied with others and not turned to ourselves.

The Father is turned entirely to the Son, and the Son turned totally to the Father. This is Heaven.

Veronica is completely turned to Jesus because Jesus is completely turned to her: this is the “other world,” the Kingdom of Heaven.

Bernadette, entirely turned towards God and completely concerned with the life of those who suffer said: “It is such an honor to nurse a sick person, there is no other reward needed.”

Lord Jesus, pardon our indifference, help us to be present to others in their needs.

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls for the Second Time

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

The Cross brings us in touch with the “other world;” the Cross which opens the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven brings us to accept humility and mortification.

During the eighth and ninth apparitions, Bernadette not only kissed the ground “for sinners,” but she also had her face covered in mud showing sadness, suffering and pain to remind us that Jesus Himself “seems no longer human” when he carried the weight of our sins so that we are losing “the image and likeness of God.”

Lord Jesus, forgive us all our failures, give us the grace to be open to Your mercy.

EIGHTH STATION

The Women of Jerusalem Weep for Jesus

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

Our contemplation invites us to look deeper into this “other world,” the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus, having fallen exhausted, rises and turns to the bystanders, whose trials and sufferings He shares and takes on Himself.

This is our human condition that Jesus wants to raise.

The Sisters of the convent in Nevers tell us that Bernadette, although nearly always sick, never prayed for her own cure but always that others may be cured. Bernadette always preoccupied herself with others, never herself.

Lord Jesus, we ask forgiveness for our lack of interest in those around us. Grant us the grace of being attentive to the other so that we may truly live from it.

NINTH STATION

Jesus Falls for the Third Time

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

Jesus is one with us in the greatest of all our falls, weaknesses and abyss.

During the eighth and ninth apparitions, when in the same ways as the prophets, Bernadette mimicked the Passion of Jesus, she experienced this humbling by drinking the muddy water and eating the bitter grass “for sinners.”

Lord, we ask pardon for the falls in the lives of others that we caused by our sinfulness.

Tenth Station **Jesus is Stripped of His Garments**

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

The first time Jesus was stripped of His clothes was when He was plunged in the water of Baptism in the River Jordan.

Again, at the Last Supper, Jesus stripped His clothing when He was as a servant washing the feet of His apostles.

For the last time, Jesus is stripped of his clothes when He gives His life in ransom for all of us.

At the eighth and ninth apparitions, Bernadette not only took off her shawl when mimicking the Passion of Jesus, but in imitation of Jesus, her whole life was a stripping of herself in order “to clothe herself in Christ.”

Lord Jesus, pardon us that we may live the grace of our baptism. We beg this grace for all baptized, that they may live their baptism.

Eleventh Station **Jesus is Nailed to the Cross**

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

We have now arrived at the heart of the paradox of our faith: the horror of the Cross. Men are going to crucify a man, we are nailing the Son of God to the wood of the Cross.

We have now arrived at the heart of the paradox of our faith. We are faced with Beauty never seen before, incomparable, Divine Love; One who not only gives but gives Himself, offers Himself up:

“No one takes my life, but I give it of my own free will,” Jesus said.

“This is my body which will be given up for you.”

“This is my blood shed for you.”

Bernadette in Lourdes or Nevers, sick or better, always offered herself so that at each moment of her life she could say, “Lord take my life.”

Lord Jesus, have mercy on us sinners.

TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Dies on the Cross

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

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (19:26-30):

Seeing His mother and the disciple He loved standing near her, Jesus said to His mother, "Woman, this is your son." Then to the disciple He said, "This is your mother." And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home. After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been completed, and to fulfill the Scripture perfectly, He said, "I am thirsty." A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge soaked in vinegar on a hyssop stick, they held it up to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar He said, "It is accomplished." and bowing His head, He gave up the Spirit.

Silence

At times of darkness, anguish and death, Mary is given to us. Let us turn to her with confidence like Bernadette.

Silence

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death.

THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Given Back to His Mother and to Us

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

We now contemplate the dead Jesus, who is in fact Life.

Jesus transforms death that we fear so much. We, as the Scripture says, are "held in slavery by the fear of death" (Heb 2:15).

Jesus transforms our death by making it the moment of the meeting with God, by making it the moment in which we enter the eternal life.

During all her earthly life, above all things, Bernadette desired to go to heaven. So she prepared herself to die, that is to say to consciously live the moment of the crossing over to meet Mary again and living with God forever.

Lord Jesus, have mercy on us sinners.

FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus in the Tomb Awaits the Resurrection

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

This is the hour of deepest mystery, when all is buried and awaiting a new birth. It is the moment in which, in his human death, Jesus received the Life of God. He is the “Risen One,” and, for us, He is “the Resurrection.”

It is the moment in Nevers, where Bernadette is living hidden and lets Jesus come into her life and transform all her suffering in Love.

It is the moment in which, in the depths of our hearts, Jesus transforms everything so that in our lives we can go from the darkness to the light, from suffering to joyfulness, and from loneliness to communion.

Lord Jesus, Glory be to You.

FIFTEENTH STATION

The Victory of Easter: Love is Stronger than Death

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

We are now fully in this other world, the Kingdom of God, which is the world of the Resurrection, the world of Christ, the world of the Holy Spirit, the world of God, our Father.

The first apparitions of Mary correspond for Bernadette to the time of preparation for her First Holy Communion. From this point, the Holy Eucharist will be, for her, the source and summit of all her life.

For us, it is in receiving the Body of the dead and risen Christ that we can make of our lives a gift of ourselves, a Eucharistic life.

It is in giving our life for others that we may taste “this other world,” this Kingdom of God, which is love, joy and peace.

On the road which brings us to God, as for Mary, as for Bernadette, Jesus walks with us.

With one another and for one another, we can ask the Lord for the grace to choose to love and so to enter into the experience of “the other world,” the world of Jesus, the Kingdom of Heaven.

Our Mission:

*To extend the invitation of the Immaculate Conception
as given to Bernadette in the Grotto at Lourdes;
to serve the sick and suffering at Lourdes and at home
following the loving example of St. Bernadette
in simplicity, humility and obedience.*



Produced by:

**Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality
North American Volunteers, LTD. ©**

***With the Permission and Blessing of:*
Père Régis-Marie de La Teyssonnière,
Sanctuaire Notre-Dame du Lourdes,
Lourdes, FRANCE**

**For additional copies or permission to print:
(315) 476-0026
107 Michaels Ave, Syracuse, NY 13208 USA
www.LourdesVolunteers.org**