

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

In the current tradition of the Catholic Church, we will have 14 Stations of the Cross in the Nave of our new church. Of the 14 stations, 9 have already been sponsored by members of our congregation and 5 remain available for sponsorship (stations 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). See the list of **“Additional Items Available for Sponsorship”** on our parish website at <https://st-matthias.net/sponsorship-items>. At St. Matthias the Apostle of Magnolia we also have Stations of the Cross around the pond behind the pavilion. You are invited visit the Stations either here or in the Nave for a spiritual experience.

The Stations of the Cross depict images of Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem which is believed to be the actual path Jesus walked to Mount Calvary. The stations may take many forms, they may be as simple as wooden crosses or they may be ornate. Each station identifies one of the 14 scenes.

The Stations of the Cross began in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe as Franciscans built a series of outdoor shrines, often along the approach to a church, to depict their counterparts on the Via Dolorosa in the Holy Land. In those days the number of such shrines varied from 7 to 30. In 1686 Pope Innocent XI granted the Franciscans the right to erect stations inside their churches. Later all churches were extended the right to have the stations, provided that a Franciscan father erected them, with the consent of the local Bishop. In 1862 all Bishops throughout the church were granted the right to erect the stations in their churches without the intervention of a Franciscan.

In our church today the Bishop has the authority to grant permission for the stations in church and he has the authority to erect the stations.

The 14 stations are:

1. *Jesus is condemned to death*
2. *Jesus carries his cross*
3. *Jesus falls for the first time*
4. *Jesus meets His Mother, Mary*
5. *Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross*
6. *Veronica offers her veil*
7. *Jesus falls for the second time*
8. *Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem*
9. *Jesus falls for the third time*
10. *Jesus is stripped of his clothes*
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*

A visit to Jerusalem to walk the Via Dolorosa, to walk in person the path that Jesus walked on his way to Mount Calvary, might be a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage. But each of us is able to spiritually make that walk by visiting the Stations of the Cross in our Nave in our own church.

The Stations of the Cross are a 14-step devotion commemorating Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as a man. The 14 devotions focus on specific events of His last day, beginning with His condemnation. At each station, the devotees recall and meditate on a specific event from Christ's last day. The devotees recite prayers as they move to the next station until all 14 are complete.

The celebration of the Stations of the Cross is especially common on the Fridays of Lent, especially Good Friday.