

Father Silvio De Nard, SdC

# STATIONS OF THE CROSS

*from the writings of Blessed Luigi Guanella  
Founder of the Servants of Charity  
Daughters of St. Mary of Providence  
Guanellian Cooperators*

Daughters of St. Mary of Providence  
Rome, Lent 2011

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Jesus Christ, since he came down from heaven to fulfill the will of his Father, did not refuse the agony in the Garden nor the more painful agony on the cross. Jesus, your elder brother, underwent so much in order to find you and lead you back to the Father. In the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, Jesus Christ undergoes the agony of the Garden and of the Cross in a mystical way. He waits that, moved to compassion for him, you hasten to return to God's arms and give him your heart.

LUIGI GUANELLA, *Let us go to the Father*,  
English Edition, vol. 3, p. 44.

*Our appreciation and gratitude to our confrere,  
Fr. Silvio De Nard, SdC,  
for offering us this Guanellian Stations  
of the Cross.*



## OPENING PRAYER

We look upon you with ardent love, O Jesus, while grieving you on your journey to Calvary. The love you bear for us has brought you to this sorrowful state. We must repay you by increasing our love to you.

Our Founder had shown us that he had achieved his goal of life by keeping always present in his heart and mind your sorrowful journey to Calvary.

It is our obligation to be grateful for all he suffered for us. Since we Guanellians are the fruit of his suffering, we are ready and willing to carry out his mission in the Church.

Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Father Luigi Guanella, grant that we may always journey through life filled with an ardent desire for perfection. Grant that we may achieve the sanctity, to which you have called us, by following the example of our Founder who has preceded us in loving you and in bearing witness to you.

Amen.

*At the cross her station keeping  
Stood the mournful Mother weeping  
Close to Jesus to the last.*



## The First Station

# PILATE CONDEMN'S JESUS TO DIE



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

## From the Gospel according to Matthew 27:22.26

Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

### **Meditation**

Jesus enters Jerusalem and the crowd meets him with jubilation. They lay their cloaks to decorate the walls and lay olive branches on the streets. All along, people come and go around Jesus exalting him with hymns and acclamations, "Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord". Jesus knew that not all those voices were truthful, and that on the sixth day of that same week they would shout, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

He had to ascend Mount Calvary. Jesus felt very sad in his heart, and showed it by weeping bitter tears.

## Prayer

O Jesus, grant me the grace to master my earthly self for the life of my soul. Let me remain faithful every day to my Christian and Religious life so that on the day of judgment you may find me worthy to be placed at your right hand, and to hear your words, "Come, you blessed of my Father".

Glory...

*Through her heart his sorrow sharing  
all his bitter anguish bearing  
now at length the sword had passed.*

## The Second Station

### JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

## From the Book of the prophet Isaiah

53:4.8

Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,  
our sufferings that he endured;  
while we thought of him as stricken,  
as one smitten by God and afflicted.  
Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away,  
and who would have thought  
any more of his destiny?  
He was cut off from the land of the living,  
and smitten for the sin of his people.

## Meditation

After tightly embracing the cross of your trials, you must keep it close to you and never separate it from your heart. Since the cross is the life-jacket in the stormy sea of this life, you must wear it until you reach the port. In fact, if you release it only for a moment, you will surely perish. How many embrace the cross of suffering for a while and then get tired of bearing it! How unfortunate they are! How do you bear the cross of your everyday suffering?

Resist until the end, and you will be blessed forever.

## Prayer

O Jesus, you once said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”.

Through your grace may I be granted the strength to receive and to carry my small, daily crosses willingly and lovingly.

Glory...

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

**The Third Station  
JESUS FALLS  
THE FIRST TIME**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

He was pierced for our offenses,  
crushed for our sins;  
upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole;  
by his stripes we were healed.

### **Meditation**

No one is more powerless than a little child who keeps falling and falling at every step. He is lucky because his father runs to him every time he cries and holds him in his arms. You are that powerless little child. You falter at every step you take in the journey of your life. How many faults you are committing!

Take courage in remembering that God is your Father. Who is not aware that a father assists his child more lovingly when he sees him more in need? In case you have fallen, it is enough for you to call your Father in heaven, and He will come to you immediately to save you.

## Prayer

O Jesus, on many occasions, our striving seems fruitless and dwarfed by the difficulties we encounter. We confidently turn to you begging for your help, for without you we shall surely fall. Help us to avoid all that is sinful, and guide our steps in the way of all that is profitable for our salvation.

Glory...

*Christ above in torment hangs,  
she beneath beholds the pangs  
of her dying glorious Son.*

**The Fourth Station**  
**JESUS MEETS HIS AFFLICTED MOTHER**



**V** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother: "This child is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed. And you yourself shall be pierced with a sword – so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare."

## **Meditation**

How much does the world hate the cross of the Savior! Let us approach Calvary where the crowd meets with the Blessed Mother. The soldiers are carrying their weapons, the executioners the nails, the ladders and the ropes for the crucifixion. Jesus is staggering, preceded by the thieves, and carrying his very heavy cross. What happens to Mary in the meantime? She stood on a watch post to see her Jesus.

People are insulting her, "Shameless mother of a crucified son!" How does Mary feel? I cannot even describe it. Certainly she feels great compassion for the world that insults her, and tender love for her Jesus who is suffering so much. Such must be the feelings in your heart.

## Prayer

O Jesus, help me to develop and foster a true and tender devotion to your Mother. Let me abandon myself like a child in her arms, and, through her, fulfill the will of your heavenly Father. Grant that, in my most difficult and perilous moments, her Immaculate Heart may be my refuge.

Glory...

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

## The Fifth Station

# SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS TO CARRY HIS CROSS



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

Jesus summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it."

### **Meditation**

There are two ways of happiness: one is here on earth, the other is in heaven. Happiness on earth will be found on following Jesus Christ and accompanying him in his suffering. Happiness in heaven will be found in following Jesus Christ above and being with him in his glory. There is no other way to be happy. I beg you, let us leave the world behind and let us follow Jesus. There are people who do not understand this invitation. They shun all kinds of sufferings, and avoid all the crosses. They think of nothing but satisfying their bodies and all their whims. What a pity!

## Prayer

O Jesus, your Holy Eucharist is our Simon of Cyrene that gives us the necessary strength to continue our earthly journey. Humbly and confidently we seek your aid till we would achieve perfection. Grant us the grace to follow you faithfully in your footsteps, and not to seek out false Simons who would interfere with seeking perfection.

Glory...

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

**The Sixth Station**  
**VERONICA WIPES  
THE FACE OF JESUS**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

## From the Book of the prophet Isaiah

53:2b-3

There was in him no stately bearing  
to make us look at him,  
nor appearance that would attract us to him.  
He was spurned and avoided by men,  
a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,  
one of those from whom men hide their faces;  
spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

## Meditation

Coming into this world, Jesus Christ showed himself as he was, the Image, the Face of God. He preached a heavenly doctrine, worked miracles on his own power by healing the sick, expelling demons and raising the dead. He forgave sins to all, and clearly declared himself to be the Messiah, the Savior, the true Son of the Eternal Father. We, adopted children of the Lord, must imitate the love of Jesus, because a child is expected to resemble the father. We cannot equal the holiness of God, since it is impossible. However, you can resemble him. This is not only possible; it is imperative.

## Prayer

O Jesus, Veronica knew intuitively that you were not an ordinary man facing imminent death. In like manner, the poor people who came to our Founder sensed the strength and sanctity that surrounded him. They witnessed his patient acceptance of the tremendous adversities that authorities placed in his path. We beg you, Jesus, for a great spirit of faith to see always in our brothers and sisters your divine Face.

Glory...

*For the sins of his own nation  
saw him hang in desolation  
till his spirit forth be sent.*

**The Seventh Station  
JESUS FALLS  
THE SECOND TIME**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

## From the Book of the prophet Isaiah

53:6-7

We had all gone astray like sheep,  
each following his own way;  
but the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all.  
Though he was harshly treated,  
he submitted and opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb led to the slaughter  
or a sheep before the shearers he was silent  
and opened not his mouth.

### Meditation

The battle you have to endure with evil is very serious, because it is very fierce. Scripture does not expect you to kill Satan. It only expects you to resist him. In order not to succumb under a mortal blow, it urges you to wear a strong armor. As soon as the battle became a hand to hand fight, the knights were accustomed to wear the armor plating to protect their head, their chest as well as their legs, so that they could defend themselves from all assaults. Your armor must be likewise. You have to protect the senses of your body by controlling them. You must protect the faculties of your soul with the armor of fervor, and keep yourself always alert.

## Prayer

O Jesus, when striving for perfection, our strength may seem depleted. Nevertheless, there is always a source from which we may find the courage to rise and face whatever difficulty we may encounter. In our moments of harsh trial, we sustain and strengthen ourselves by prayer, the most powerful weapon in the face of adversity. Help us that we will never withdraw into ourselves, but rather elevate ourselves in prayer so that we may encounter you, our divine Mercy.

Glory...

*Let me share with you his pain,  
who for all our sins was slain,  
who for me in torments died.*

**The Eighth Station**  
**JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN**  
**OF JERUSALEM**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

Jesus turned to the women and said: "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children. If they do these things in the green wood, what will happen in the dry?"

### **Meditation**

At our holy Baptism we have promised, "I renounce Satan, the vanities of the world and all the appetites of the flesh." Once grown up, we have received Holy Communion, and before the altar we have promised, "I will obey you, O Lord, in everything." There are many Catholics who hasten to attend Mass, to receive the holy Sacraments, to give alms, and then at home they are the source of gossiping and arguing. There are certain Christians who are very enthused about works of apostolic ministry, yet they fail in carrying out their family and civil duties. There are others, who, in these times of calamity for our most holy Faith and Church, could do much more in defending them, yet they do not act and they even excuse themselves by claiming that it would be imprudent to do more.

## Prayer

O Jesus, apart from the unavoidable encounters in life, there are others which constitute the stepping stones for the earthly journey that leads to perfection. Grant us to be more generous so that our living with our Brothers and Sisters be not in vain, but rather ever fruitful in the glory of your name.

Glory...

*O sweet Mother, font of love,  
touch my spirit from above,  
make my heart with yours accord.*

**The Ninth Station  
JESUS FALLS  
THE THIRD TIME**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

## From the Book of the prophet Isaiah

53:10-12a

The Lord was pleased to crush him in infirmity. If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the Lord shall be accomplished through him. Because of his affliction he shall see the light in fullness of days; through his suffering, my servant shall justify many and their guilt he shall bear. Therefore I will give him his portion among the great.

## Meditation

A sincere repentant is like Peter after falling. In encountering the gaze of his Divine Savior, he says, “I have denied my Divine Master! Have mercy on me, have mercy on this miserable man!” Peter is sorry for this. He does not care any longer for this world, but for the iniquity he has committed against God, and for the scandal given to his fellow companions. Peter was consoled by the sight of the cross. Dying on the cross is a cruel torment and an ineffable consolation as well. Since we are so spiritually sick, let us pray to heaven and let us entrust ourselves to our merciful God.

## Prayer

O Jesus, saintly persons do not remain content with merely limiting their efforts to overcome difficulties. Each and every day they ardently strive to grow in perfection. Evil is constantly lurking about in this world trying to destroy the beauty and splendor of our soul. Grant us the grace to abandon ourselves in you, and in you to seek help and comfort. May we weep for our sins which have caused you terrible sufferings.

Glory...

*Make me feel as you have felt;  
make my soul to glow and melt  
with the love of Christ, my Lord.*

## The Tenth Station

# JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

Scripture says:

*“They divided my garments among them; for my clothing they cast lots”.*

Near the cross of Jesus there stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

### **Meditation**

When Mary saw in spirit Jesus sweating blood in the Garden, and later saw him afflicted because of the much horrible ill-treatment, she was at his side. Jesus is loaded with the heavy wood of the cross and is cursed by the people. Yet he leaves the city and goes to the top of the hill in the sight of everyone, as though to say that if he has to die, he wants to die where everyone can see it. Jesus has reached the top of the hill. He has let himself stripped of his garments and be nailed to the cross. Look at him hanging on the wood of the cross! He is there to save you. Mary has arrived, and now she is at the foot of the cross.

## Prayer

O Jesus, even in times of extreme exhaustion, those who dedicate their lives to the service of others have no bounds for their generosity. Divine generosity and mercy placed you at the service of all the needy. Grant us faith and love for you so that you may sustain us in all great trials as well as in the most insignificant ones.

Glory...

*Holy Mother, pierce me through,  
in my heart each wound renew  
of my Savior crucified.*

## **The Eleventh Station**

### **JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**R.** **Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.**

It was about nine in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription proclaiming his offense read, "The King of the Jews".

With him they crucified two insurgents, one at his right and one at his left.

### **Meditation**

Reflect here on Jesus who ascends Calvary and from Calvary he mounts the cross. See with how much love he embraces the cross. He is carrying it on his shoulders and it is so heavy that he falls down as if dead.

When he lies exhausted on the transversal beam of the cross, he is fully prepared for his crucifixion. He offers his hands to be nailed. The hammer's strokes are first heard, then moans. Jesus offers his most holy feet, and again are heard hammer's strokes and moans that break one's heart. The tree of the cross is lifted up, and from it Jesus let rivers of blood flow to wash the earth from its iniquities.

## Prayer

O Jesus, your Calvary journey has ended and God the Father requires the great final sacrifice. We see you nailed in a bed of pain. But your pain is not in vain. It is through your boundless suffering that the gates of heaven will open and you will shower abundant graces upon your beloved mankind. We beg you to grant us the grace never to concede to selfishness, but rather to be constantly compassionate toward those in need whom God places in the paths of our life.

Glory...

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

## **The Twelfth Station**

# **JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

It was now around midday, and darkness came over the whole land until mid-afternoon with an eclipse of the sun. Jesus uttered a loud cry and said: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." After he said this, he expired.

### **Meditation**

The earth was touched with compassion for the Creator, and the sky sent its clouds to cover Calvary. The cross became the bed of agony of the Savior. He finally cried out, "Father, into your hand I entrust my spirit". He then bowed his head, and delivered his spirit. Show compassion for the dying Jesus who has no one eager to give him a little consolation. At least you should pray, "Sweet Heart of Jesus, make me love you more and more."

When the divine Savior breathed his last, the earth shook, the rocks broke, and the seas roared as if they groaned in the utmost grief. You will hear the sighing and afflicted angels saying, "Jesus Christ is the innocent Lamb, you are the sinner".

## Prayer

O Jesus, grant us the grace to bow our head in submissive obedience, and, as to a mystical command, to give up our spirit. The saints are eternally happy in the presence of you whom they fervently loved and faithfully served on earth in ministering to the needy. May we never lose sight of the glorious moment of our death that brings your divine life to our immortal soul.

Glory...

*For the sins of his own nation  
saw him hang in desolation  
till his spirit forth be sent.*

**The Thirteenth Station**  
**JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN**  
**FROM THE CROSS**



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.  
**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

Afterward, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, asked Pilate's permission to remove Jesus' body. Pilate granted it, so they came and took the body away. Nicodemus likewise came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes which weighed about a hundred pounds. They took Jesus' body and bound it up in wrappings of cloth with perfumed oils.

### **Meditation**

With sorrowful love, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus approached the cross of the Savior. They lowered down from it the body of Jesus, as they were handling a friend wounded to death. Then they laid him in the arms of Mary most holy. With what great sorrow the Blessed among all women received her Son and Savior, I cannot even describe it enough. How terribly pierced Mary felt in seeing Jesus dead in her arms! She kept pulling the thorns of the crown from Jesus' venerable head. And she worked on washing the bruises and wounds of his most holy Face.

Finally, she wrapped up his most sacred body in white linens. When you complain about all the evils of life, tell me, have you ever suffered like Mary? Do you think that your sorrows can compare with the torment of the Blessed Mother?

## Prayer

O Jesus, how much we regret having offended you with so many sins of ours! How sorry we feel for having insulted you with so many foolish conversations! We deserve to be abandoned. You do not abandon us, and I give you glory for it. May our lips resound always with praise for your name, for you are the one who saved us by paying the price, spilling your most precious Blood for us.

Glory...

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

## The Fourteenth Station

# JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB



**V.** We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

**R.** Because, by your holy cross you have  
redeemed the world.

In the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had ever been buried. Because of the Jewish Preparation Day, they buried Jesus there, for the tomb was close at hand.

### **Meditation**

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus anointed the body of the Redeemer with precious spices and then proceeded to bury him. Joseph had arranged for Jesus the tomb he had prepared for himself. They laid in it the most holy body of the Savior. In burying Jesus' body into the tomb, each of them in spirit buried their hearts with it. The guards of the temple came upon Pilate's command. They placed a large stone in front of it and sealed the tomb. Jesus, your Father and Savior, is there. His soul has descended into hell to cheer the souls of the holy fathers of old. From there, He looks at you and counts all the heart-beats of your heart. He looks to see if you, as a compassionate son and daughter, sympathize with his suffering and death.

## Prayer

O adorable Heart of my Jesus! What am I doing here on earth if I do not completely burn with your holy love?

I look at your tomb, and I am attracted by the loving heart of yours. Draw me to you, my Jesus. Draw me entirely to you. May all who turn to you for help and consolation be always fortified in spirit and be strengthened by a consuming desire to imitate you, the ardent furnace of charity that changed and saved the world.

Glory...

*While my body here decays,  
may my soul your goodness praise,  
safe in heaven eternally. Amen.*

## CLOSING PRAYER

“Either to suffer or to die”.

Dear Jesus,

these words were constantly  
on the lips of our Blessed Founder.

Suffering and death are words that nature rejects.

Nevertheless, this is the chosen route,  
whose destination is the immeasurable happiness of  
Paradise.

In my journeying with you and to you,  
happiness should be to trust in your loving guidance  
and to constantly recall your life, passion and  
resurrection.

Dear Lord,

let me climb my own Calvary with you.  
Grant that we, members of the Guanellian Family,  
may love and serve you with our whole soul and  
being,

At the end, may we all share in the everlasting  
inheritance of heaven.

Amen.

*A Plenary Indulgence is granted to the faithful  
who make the pious exercise  
of the Way of the Cross.*

# REFERENCES FROM THE WRITINGS OF BLESSED LUIGI GUANELLA

## ENGLISH EDITION

1 <sup>st</sup> Station	<i>The Bread of the Soul</i>	book 1	page	108
2 <sup>nd</sup> Station	<i>In the Sacred Time</i>	vol. 3	"	306
3 <sup>rd</sup> Station	<i>In the Sacred Time</i>	" 3	"	314
4 <sup>th</sup> Station	<i>In the Month of Flowers</i>	" 5	"	279
5 <sup>th</sup> Station	<i>The Bread of the Soul</i>	book 2	"	110
6 <sup>th</sup> Station	<i>In the Sacred Time</i>	vol. 3	"	382
7 <sup>th</sup> Station	<i>In the Sacred Time</i>	" 3	"	348
8 <sup>th</sup> Station	<i>The Bread of the Soul</i>	book 1	"	176
9 <sup>th</sup> Station	<i>The Foundation</i>	vol. 3	"	248
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The prayers at the end of each station are taken and arranged from prayers written by Father Guanella in different occasions and booklets.

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