

*O crux
ave spes
unica*

*O hail the
cross, our
only hope*

These depictions of the Stations of the Cross are located in the church of the Benedictine Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese. Monastery Immaculate Conception is the motherhouse of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove.

The stations were designed and molded in plaster by sculptors Joseph and Charles Horchert of Munich, Germany, in approximately 1923. The monastery church was completed in 1924.

The reflections on each station were taken from a text written in 2005 by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger—now Pope Benedict XVI—for a Stations of the Cross prayed at the Colosseum in Rome on Good Friday.

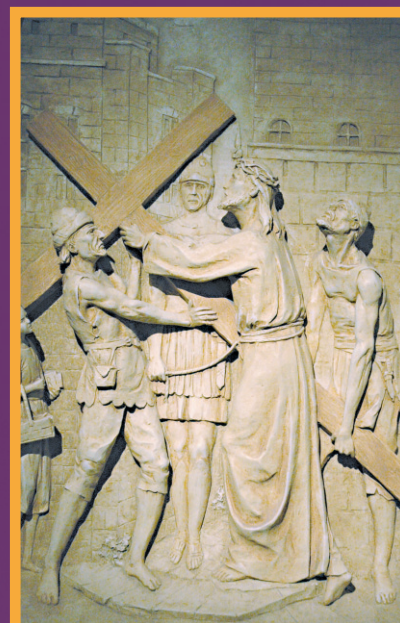
(For the full text of this version of the Stations of the Cross and larger images, log on to www.CriterionOnline.com.) †



Station I

Jesus is condemned to death

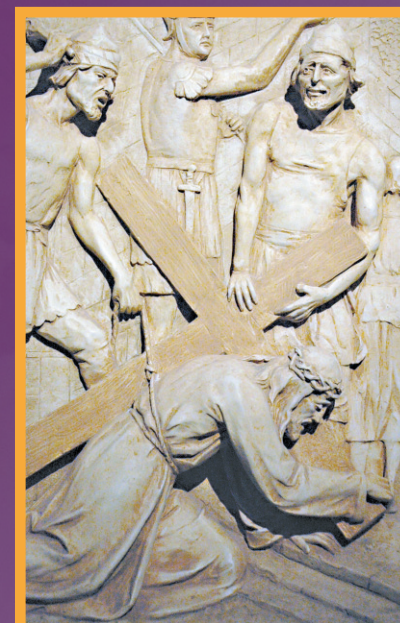
"The Judge of the world, who will come again to judge us all, stands there, dishonored and defenseless before the earthly judge. ..."



Station II

Jesus takes up his Cross

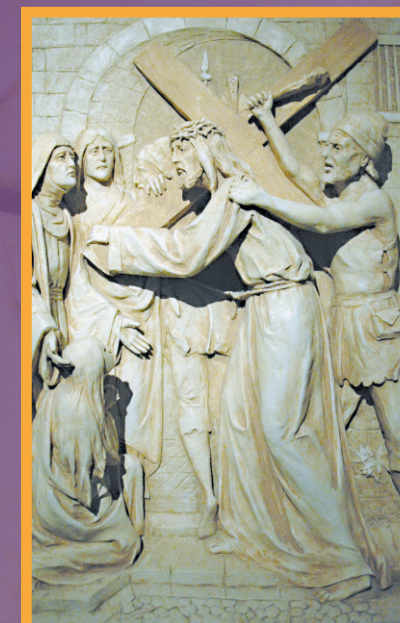
"... He takes up the Cross, our cross, the burden of being human, the burden of the world. And so he goes before us and points out to us the way which leads to true life. ..."



Station III

Jesus falls for the first time

"... In Jesus' fall beneath the weight of the Cross, the meaning of his whole life is seen: his voluntary abasement, which lifts us up from the depths of our pride. ..."



Station IV

Jesus meets his Mother

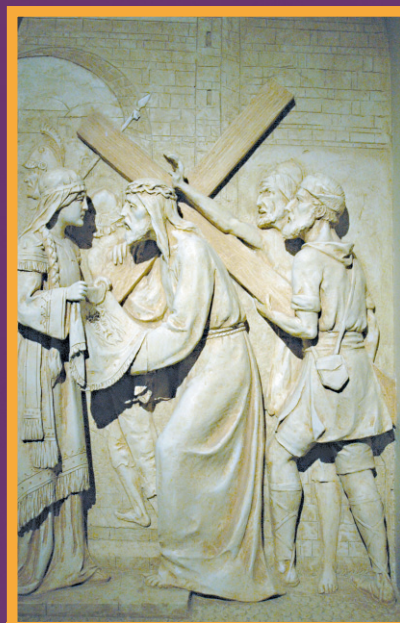
"... at the hour of the Cross, at the hour of the world's darkest night, you became the Mother of all believers, the Mother of the Church. ..."



Station V

The Cyrenian helps Jesus carry the Cross

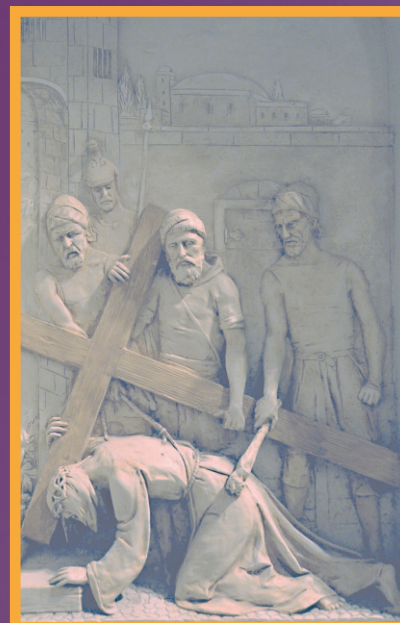
"... Lord, you opened the eyes and heart of Simon of Cyrene, and you gave him, by his share in your Cross, the grace of faith. Help us to aid our neighbors in need, even when this interferes with our own plans and desires. ..."



Station VI

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

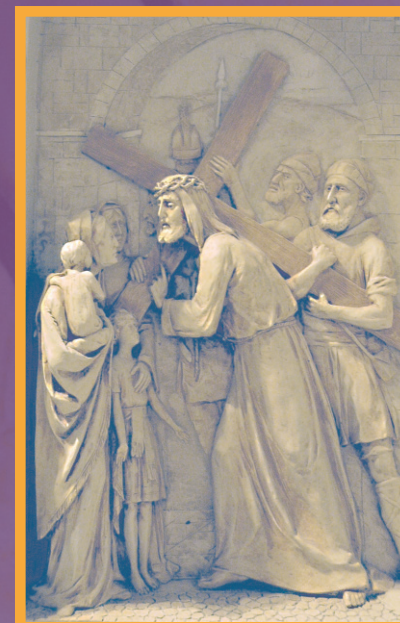
"... At first, Veronica saw only a buffeted and pain-filled face. Yet her act of love impressed the true image of Jesus on her heart. ..."



Station VII

Jesus falls for the second time

"... Lord Jesus Christ, you have borne all our burdens and you continue to carry us. Our weight has made you fall. Lift us up, for by ourselves we cannot rise from the dust. ..."



Station VIII

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem who weep for him

"... Grant that we may not simply walk at your side, with nothing to offer other than compassionate words. Convert us and give us new life." (cf. Jn 15:1-10).



Station IX

Jesus falls for the third time

"... When we fall, we drag you down to earth, and Satan laughs, for he hopes that you will not be able to rise from that fall. ... But you will rise again. You stood up, you arose and you can also raise us up."



Station X

Jesus is stripped of his garments

"... Lord Jesus, you were stripped of your garments, exposed to shame, cast out of society. ... Give us a profound respect for man at every stage of his existence, and in all the situations in which we encounter him. ..."



Station XI

Jesus is nailed to the Cross

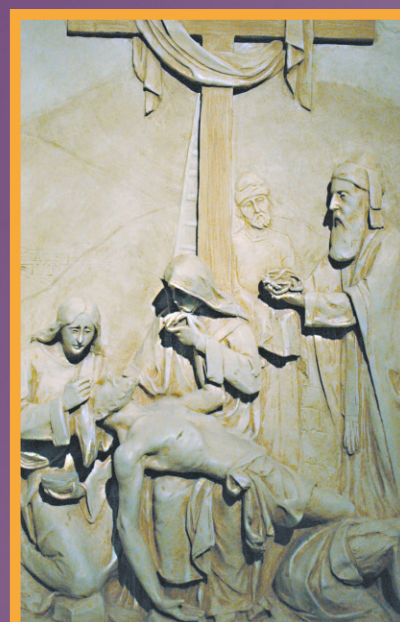
"... Lord Jesus Christ, you let yourself be nailed to the Cross, accepting the terrible cruelty of this suffering, the destruction of your body and your dignity. ..."



Station XII

Jesus dies on the Cross

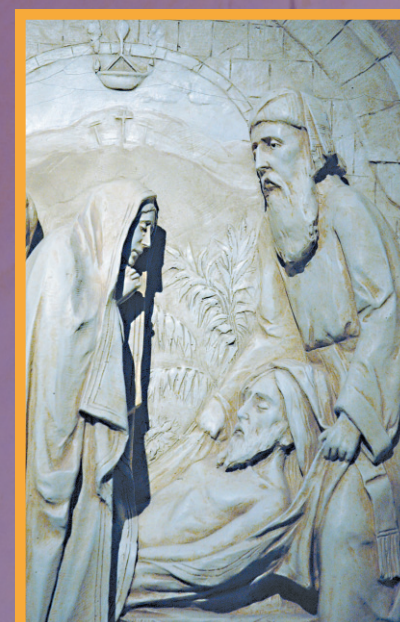
"... Lord Jesus Christ, at the hour of your death the sun was darkened. ... Help us to believe in you and to follow you in our hour of darkness and need. ..."



Station XIII

Jesus is taken down from the Cross and given to his Mother

"... Help us not to leave you alone. Give us the fidelity to withstand moments of confusion and a love ready to embrace you in your utter helplessness, like your Mother, who once more holds you to her breast."



Station XIV

Jesus is laid in the tomb

"... Lord Jesus Christ, in your burial you have ... become the lifeless grain of wheat which produces abundant fruit for every age and for all eternity. ..."