

STEP UP CLOSE TO JESUS
Living Stations of the Cross
(for St. Francis Borgia Parish)
by Sister Mary Terese Donze, ASC

Prayer for all cast and crew:

Lord Jesus,

Help me to remember
that this presentation
is **not** about me,
but about **you**.

This is **your** story to tell.

Let me be the means to deliver your truth,
so you may reach the hearts and minds
of those willing to come to you.

Jesus, use my body to show your story
that all may see something
in a different way, this time.

Jesus, use my voice to clearly tell your story
that all may hear a special way
to become closer to you, this time.

Jesus, use my talents to play the music in my soul
that all may join in worship
of the everlasting life
that comes from your suffering for us.

May we serve **your** purposes, Lord Jesus,
to the best of our abilities.

Amen.

Prior To Program Beginning:

- **Carefully move jugs and table with sound box to back wall corner by credence table.**
- **Place two kneelers between altar and ambo.**
- **Microphone on stand with longer cord set low by kneeler closest to altar.**
- **Cordless microphone in front pew.**
- **A bowl and a pitcher with a small amount of water are on a table near Priest's chair.**
- **I-pod music set up to go by cantor's microphone.**
- **Sound system turned on - test sound.**
- **Lights on: Altar, Inner, Center, Side Wall lights, master switch for pew Lanterns.**
- **Reserve signs on front three left pews.**
- **Side aisle doors closed with signs asking to be seated in center sections.**
- **Brochures handed out as people enter.**

Music Is Playing:

- **We Are the Reason -
by Avalon**
- **Mighty is the Power of the Cross -
by Chris Tomlin**
- **By His Wounds -
from Glory Revealed Album**

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for being here this evening,
and joining us as we enter more fully
into Jesus' suffering tonight.

There will be three readers
for each station this evening:

Reader 1 will introduce each station.
Please note your response in the handout
during each introduction. (*Because by your...*)
However, we will not kneel
during this response
as there is another time set aside for this.
Reader 1 continues describing what takes place
during each station of the cross.

Then a second reader will come forward
representing each one of us
and take us up close to Jesus.
We will reflect with a whisper in our hearts.
It is during *this* reflection time
that we will ask you to kneel
along with the readers
if you are able to do so.

Finally our third reader
brings us back to our lives today,
giving us all something on which to reflect
for our own lives.
You may then be seated
when all of the readers return to their seats.

There will also be times when our cantors and
musicians will lead us in singing
parts of songs.
All of the music is found
in the program guide or
in the RED, HARD-COVER GATHER HYMNAL.
The song numbers will also be shown
on the boards.

At the end of Station 14,
there will be time for silent prayer.
You may stay and pray if you wish.
When you leave,
please do so in **complete silence**,
saving any conversation for outside
or in the gathering area.

In the penitential spirit of Lent,
these Living Stations also act as
an Examination of Conscience,
allowing each of us to look
into our own hearts and
find the ways we have drifted away from God.
The actors, readers, and musicians are here
to help you visualize
part of Christ's sacrifice for us.
Let the Holy Spirit speak to you tonight,
helping us all to become closer to Jesus.

***Speaker exits through sacristy door
and closes it.***

Lighting: Turn off main lanterns switch

After lights are adjusted,

Pilate and Servant Girl enter from sacristy

Pilate sits in Priest's chair

Servant girl stands by water table

***Readers and remaining cast process into
church from the gathering area,
as follows:***

Readers 1 & 3

Readers #2

Jesus

Guards "pushing" Jesus,

Remaining cast follows as crowd

***Readers 1 & 3 go around ambo to the right
staying on main floor until the side***

Readers #2 are seated in the front pew

***Soldiers guide Jesus into sanctuary to Pilate
standing between Pilate and altar, then
turn to face audience***

Soldier 1 near altar

Soldier 2 near Pilate

***Crowd follows going to server's chair area
staying on main floor until the side***

1 JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Reader 1: The first station:
Jesus is condemned to death.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

See intro page for scene set up.

Reader 1:

Look at the man sitting.
He is Pontius Pilate.
He is the Roman Governor
and the most powerful man in Judea.
Angry people have told lies about Jesus,
and they want Pilate to kill him.
Pilate knows
Jesus is an innocent man.
He knows
He should not be killed.
But Pilate is afraid.
He wants the angry people
to like him,
to be his friends,
or he might lose his job.
So he tells them, *Pilate points
at Jesus*
"Go ahead and kill Jesus."

Pilate rises and washes his hands.

*Servant girl takes pitcher, bowl, and towel into
sacristy. Changes her sash to a cloth over
her head. Waits in back until station #2.*

*Pilate takes the table and goes back into
sacristy to change out of server's alb and
dresses as John. Waits until station #2.*

*Soldier 2 takes the priest's chair into sacristy
and then gets the purple cloak and crown
of thorns.*

*Soldiers put a purple robe and crown of thorns
on Jesus (Jesus assists for his comfort).*

Soldiers push Jesus forward toward the pews.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
See how hard and fast He is breathing.
He is afraid.
He could stop these men
if He wanted
because He is the Son of God.
But then who would make up for our sins?
So Jesus is going to let it happen
because He loves us.
He wants to save us
and win heaven for us.
Still, He's afraid.
Put your hand in His.
Let Him know you care.

Let us now kneel, if you are able.
(pause until all kneel)

Whisper to Jesus in our hearts:
"Jesus, I'm here. I'll stay with you."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
please make me brave
so I can do what is right
even when it is hard to do.
Don't let me be afraid
to stand up for somebody
when others are telling lies
about that person.
Help me to not
put luxury, success, popularity,
or my own opinions
above what is right?

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

*Soldier 2 goes to back corner by cross
and waits there.*

Reader 1: The second station:
Jesus takes up His cross.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

John (formerly Pilate) *and*

Weeping Woman (formerly servant girl)
- now become part of crowd.

Soldier 2 *brings cross forward to "stage" back
corner.*

Reader 1:

Look at the quiet way
Jesus does what they tell Him.
He does not fight
with the men who push him.
He does not hate them
and say rough words to them.
If they had known He was dying for them
and for all of us,
they would have acted differently.
So Jesus forgives them.
He thinks only of how **Soldier 1** *pushes Jesus*
He loves them and us. *toward the cross.*
Then He takes up the cross
but in His heart **Jesus** *places cross*
He asks His heavenly Father *on his shoulder*
to help Him carry it bravely. *then faces pews*

Soldiers *and Jesus* *should be standing facing
pews but as far back as can be*

Soldier 1 *is now between Jesus and the crowd*

Soldier 2 *is behind Jesus*

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
See what a hard time he has
getting the cross onto his shoulder.
It is clumsy and heavy. **Jesus** *adjusts cross*
His shoulders are already sore
because they have whipped Him
extensively.

There are thorns around His head too.
Sometimes the cross hits these thorns.
They go into Jesus' head like sharp nails.

Let us kneel, if you are able.
(pause until all kneel)

Whisper in our hearts:
"Jesus, make me brave like you."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
when something is hard for me to do,
help me to remember
how you took the cross
without fussing about it.
Help me to be good and kind to others
even when it is not easy.
Help me to control the anger in my life.
Help me to take responsibility
for both the good
and the bad things
that happen to me.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: Behold The Wood of the Cross
(Refrain only)

3 JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Reader 1: The third station:
Jesus falls the first time.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Crowd comes up from server's area to be
closer to Jesus carrying the cross.

Soldiers motion pushing Jesus with spears
to hurry him along.

Reader 1:

Look at how Jesus is stumbling along,
struggling just to stand.

The cross is crushing His shoulder,
and the sharp stones in the road
cut His bare feet.

All around Him
people are shouting and pushing,
and the Roman soldiers,
who have been ordered to crucify Him,
want Him to hurry.

Jesus tries as hard as He can to move faster
but He stumbles and falls.

Jesus falls onto one knee with the cross.

Soldier 2 helps balance cross during fall.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
See Him trying to get up.
He wants to keep carrying His cross.
Everybody around Him is yelling
and poking at Him.
But Jesus does not get angry.
He offers all the hurting
to His heavenly Father for us
because He loves us.

Then He pulls Himself to His feet
and walks forward.

Think that you
put your arms around Him.

Crowd
points

Jesus stands up
takes one step
to his right

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*

Whisper in our hearts:

"Jesus, teach me to be loving like you.

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
if something hurts me today,
remind me to offer my hurt to God.
Do not let me be mean
to anybody who gets hurt,
or who makes mistakes,
or to anyone who is different from me.
Help me
to love others
as you loved us.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Reader 1: The fourth station:
Jesus meets His mother.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Simon joins the crowd near the back.

*John comes behind Mary and puts his hand on
her shoulder.*

*They both come forward and Mary touches
Jesus' hand on the cross.*

Jesus looks toward west side pews.

*Mary looks toward stain-glass windows above
readers 1 & 3.*

Reader 1:

Look at that lady
reaching out to Jesus from the crowd.
She is His mother, Mary.
She comes close
and her face is full of tears.
Tears are on Jesus' cheeks, too.
You can tell how much they love each other.
Look at Jesus and see a Son
who honors and respects his mother
out of the great love he has for her.
Jesus performed his first miracle
because his mother expressed concern
for the shortage of wine at a wedding.
Although this man is the Son of God
and needs nothing,
He still follows the Father's command
to honor His mother.
But Mary is not allowed to stay close to Jesus,
to say kind and loving words to Him.
They make her go away.

*Soldier 1 then "pushes" Mary & John back to
the crowd.*

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
He feels so sad to have His mother
see him all bruised and beaten.
He knows it makes her unhappy.
But she is brave like Him.
She knows that He chose to carry the cross.
And if that's what God planned for Jesus,
she wants Jesus to do it.
They are both willing to do
what God wants them to do
because they know that
what God wants
is always good for us.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*
Whisper in our hearts:
"Help me to always do what is good!"

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
when I have to be away
from someone I love,
help me offer
my lonely feelings to You.
Help me to do
what God wants me to do today.
Help me to respect those in authority.
Help me to always do
what is good and just.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Reader 1: The fifth station:
Simon helps Jesus carry His cross.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

**Soldier 2 roughly grabs Simon
and then makes him help with the cross.**
**Simon and Jesus stand side by side facing
pews, each holding one of the "arms" of the
cross.**

Reader 1:

Look at that man helping Jesus carry the cross.
This is Simon of Cyrene.
He was on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem
for the Passover Feast
when he was stopped
and told to help carry Jesus' cross.
At first Simon did not like having to help Jesus.
He thinks; "Why must I help this man?
Who is He that the crowd so hates him."
He has these doubts and questions
because Simon did not know Jesus.
But later, when he found out who Jesus was,
he was proud
that he had helped to carry the cross.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
See how Simon is trying
to get hold of the cross
and carry it for Jesus.

**Simon
adjusts
cross**

Simon is strong
but the cross is heavy,
yet not too heavy.
Jesus never asks us to do
something we cannot do.

Sometimes,
when you have hard things to do,
it is Jesus asking you to carry the cross,
as He asked Simon.

Try to think **then**,
Jesus is making you strong.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*

Whisper in our hearts:
"Jesus, I want to be proud like Simon
that I helped you with your cross."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
make me strong
when I have to do something hard.
When I don't like to do something
do not let me push it off
on somebody else.
I don't really want to be singled out,
but one look at Simon
shows me the importance
of helping my brothers and sisters.
Help me to willingly and joyfully
help others.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: The Summons Verse 1

Reader 1: The sixth station:
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

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

All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.

Veronica comes forward with the cloth.
Picture of Jesus' face is folded to the inside.

Reader 1:

Look at that woman standing before Jesus.

We call her Veronica

a poor Jewish woman

who sees love in this man's face.

She has pushed her way through the crowd

to get to Jesus.

That was a brave thing to do

with all those rough people around

to scare her.

She does not understand

how they can look at his kind loving face

and do these terrible things to him.

But she does not think of them.

She thinks only of how

she wants to give Jesus **Veronica gives**

a handkerchief **cloth to Jesus**

to wipe his face. **Jesus wipes face**

When Jesus gives it back to her **Jesus gives cloth**

there is an image of his face **back to Veronica**

on the handkerchief. **Veronica looks at it**

It was Jesus' way of thanking her.

Soldiers push Veronica back.

**Veronica steps away from Jesus toward pews
and turns to hold up cloth for all to see
the face of Jesus.**

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.

Think how, if men can be proud

because Simon helped Jesus,

females can be proud

because Veronica helped Jesus too.

It does not matter who we are.

What is important to God

is what is in our hearts.

If our hearts are good and kind,

that is the best

and most important thing.

Let us kneel.

(pause until all kneel)

Whisper in our hearts:

"Jesus, print your face

on my mind and my heart,

so I can learn to be more and more like you."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,

let me be thankful

to people who help me

when I need help.

Help me do kind things for other people

even if I don't get any reward.

Jesus you based your words and actions

on charity

and the greater good of others.

Help me to be gracious and generous.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Veronica blends back into crowd.

SONG: The Summons Verse 2

Reader 1: The seventh station:
Jesus falls the second time.

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

**All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Reader 1:

Look at how hard it is for Jesus to walk.
He feels weak and shaky.
He has had nothing to eat or drink
and He hurts all over.
But the soldiers won't let Him stop and rest.
They keep pushing at Him to walk faster.
He tries, but again He falls down
in the dirty street,
and the heavy wooden cross
falls on top of Him.

Jesus falls to his hands and knees.

Simon also falls down to one knee.

*Simon holds most of the weight of cross,
but the other "arm" of the cross
rests on Jesus' back.*

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
Stoop down to where
He has fallen in the street.

He is out of breath
and very tired.

It would help
if He could just lie there a minute.

But He gets up *Jesus slowly gets up*
and tries walking again. *Simon gets up*

You were not there *with him.*

when all this happened;
but remember,
what you do or say to Jesus now
counts as if you had been there.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*

Whisper in our hearts:

"Jesus, thank You for showing me
how always
to get up and to keep going."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
when I try to do something
and mess it up,
help me to start over again
as You did.

If somebody falls down or gets hurt,
let me feel for them
and help them if I can.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Reader 1: The eighth station:
Jesus meets the weeping women.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Women come forward with handkerchiefs -
dabbing at their eyes as if weeping.

Reader 1:

Look at the women of Jerusalem
who are standing at the corner of the street
where Jesus is passing.

When Jesus draws near, **Women** kneel
they fall to their knees *by Jesus*
sobbing and weeping for him.

They feel sorry for Him
and say loving words to Him.

They are weeping
because they have been touched
by the immense love and compassion
of Jesus.

Jesus has never given them worldly goods,
but he offered his love, his mercy,
his hope, and now his life.

He tenderly *Slowly and painfully*
reaches out to them. **Jesus** reaches out

Even now in his pain, *to them*
he doesn't think of himself **Simon** bears
but stops to comfort them. *weight of cross*

He tells them that He will feel better
if He knows they will always be kind
and gentle toward everyone
for love of Him
and if they will teach their children
to do the same.

They are good women.

They will do what Jesus asks.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
Listen when He talks to these women.
It is hard to behave well
when you are sick or feeling bad.
It takes much courage
to be unselfish like that.
But Jesus does not think of Himself.
He thinks only of being kind
to these ladies.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*

Whisper in our hearts:

"Jesus, help me to be thoughtful of others
as you are."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
show me how I can help others
and make them happy.
Teach me to share what I have
with others
and to not always try to keep
the best of everything
just for myself.
Help me to think beyond my possessions,
and to think about things
that bring joy to others.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Soldiers then push the women back into the
crowd and make **Jesus** retake up his cross.

Reader 1: The ninth station:
Jesus falls the third time.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Reader1:

Look at Jesus now.
He is walking slower and slower.
He's been nearly beaten to death
and has fallen twice already.
The soldiers wish He would hurry.
They are afraid that
all the excited people watching Jesus
and yelling at Him may cause a riot.
Jesus is packed in so close
He can hardly breathe.
He takes several more steps
and then falls down in the dirty street
for the third time.

*Jesus falls flat on the ground,
Simon stays standing with cross.*

Reader 2:

Step Up close to Jesus.
He is flat on the ground.
It is very hard for Jesus to move,
but he gets to his knees and
pushes himself up again.
He knows He has to go on.
Jesus does not like all this pain.
He would like to be rid of it.
But He can't stop now
if he wants to do what will help us.
And . . . He wants to.
He started this way of the cross
for God and for us,
and He wants to finish it.

*Jesus slowly
stands up*

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*
Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, You are a hero!"

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
if I am slow and people rush me;
help me not to get upset.
Help me to be kind to everybody
because every one of us
needs help sometimes.
When I fail, please give me
the strength and the courage
to keep picking myself up and continuing.
Help me to keep going
when times are tough and
it would be easier to quit
than to continue.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

*Entire crowd moves back down to server's
chair area.*

SONG: Change our Hearts-(Refrain only)

Reader 1: The tenth station:
Jesus' clothes are taken away.

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

**All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

***Simon takes the cross and steps back,
holding the cross upright***

Reader 1:

Look at Jesus.
He is outside the city of Jerusalem now
and standing on a hill called Calvary.
The soldiers are going to crucify Him here.
One of them is pulling off *Soldier 2*
Jesus' clothes. *removes purple cloak*
The clothes are sticking *and takes spear,*
to Jesus' sore back. *goes into sacristy*
It hurts when they are pulled off *and waits*
just as it hurts when somebody
pulls a Band-Aid off a sore on your knee.

Dismas, a thief,
is being crucified along side of Jesus.
He realizes his sins and asks Jesus to forgive him,
to remember him when He comes into His
kingdom.
Jesus promises Dismas
that he will join Him today...in paradise!

***NOTE: Soldier 2 has taken the spear and
leaned it against the wall and credence
table so that it is ready for watching the
tomb in station 14***

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
He stands there without His clothes.
He is like a wrestler or boxer
who takes off his ordinary clothes
so he can fight better.
Jesus is getting ready for a fight also.
He is fighting against death and sin.
He wants to win the fight.
He wants to make it possible
for all of us to have a life
that lasts forever in heaven.
We are on Jesus' side
and want Him to win.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*
Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, I am cheering for You."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
keep me strong in the battles
I will have to fight
to be good and true to You.
Let me never forget
that I can pray for Your help
when I am at Mass.
Help me to share the gifts
God has given me
with those who need them.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

Reader 1: The eleventh station:
Jesus is nailed to the cross:

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

All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.

Simon brings the cross forward behind Jesus
and supports it upright

Jesus grabs "arms" of cross from underneath
and behind

Soldier 2 comes back with rubber mallet and
red ropes

Reader 1:

Look at Jesus.
He has been laid flat down on the cross.
One soldier takes spikes
and hammers them through Jesus' hands.

(PAUSE) **Soldier 2** pretends to hammer,
while **Soldier 1** wraps red cord
to "tie" Jesus' wrists to the cross.

*Out of sight, someone hits metal with a
hammer 3X for each hand and his feet.*

Simon takes mallet and goes to sacristy.

After Jesus' feet also are nailed,
the soldiers fix the cross into a hole
so it will stand straight.
Everybody stands around and looks at Jesus.
The good people feel unhappy
because they love Jesus.
The people who don't love him are unhappy too,
because they have done something bad.
It was a very sad day - that first Good Friday.

Mary comes forward with **John**
John holds the kneeling cushion to his side
away from pews.

**Lighting crew cracks open the door by ambo
and prepares for turning off lights.**

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
He hurts all over.
His head aches.
He is thirsty,
but in His heart
He is not sad like the people.
He knows that
what He **chose** to do
was the right thing.
Now He looks down at the men
who nailed Him to the cross
and He forgives them.
Then He tells Mary
to be a mother to all of us
and to count us as her children.
He keeps thinking of others
even when he is dying.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*
Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, I love you."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
when somebody hurts me,
help me to be forgiving,
and help me to live
so Mary will be proud
to count me as her child.

Turn off ALTAR lights

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: Were You There

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Reader 1: The twelfth station:
Jesus dies on the cross.

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

**All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Reader 1:

Look at Jesus hanging on the cross.
He has been there for three hours.
He hurts all over.
He is so thirsty but nobody brings any water.
Jesus does not complain.
He prays to His heavenly Father
and tells Him that He has finished
what had to be done.
He bows His head and dies.

(PAUSE) *Jesus bows his head.
Mary and John kneel near the cross
using the kneeling cushion.
Crowd kneels also by steps.
Readers 1 & 3 go to kneelers,
Everyone in church kneels briefly
Reader 1 counts to 10 then stands
Turn off INNER lights*

A soldier runs a spear into Jesus' side.
Blood and water come out,
a sign that Jesus gave everything.

Many will wish
that they would have met him sooner
so that they could have lived their lives
according to His way.
You still have that chance.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
He is dead on the cross.
He suffered all this
because He wanted to put down death
and find a way to give life.
He has met death
and won the fight with it.
But it does not look that way.
He hangs there so still
as if death has Him for good.
But it doesn't.
Jesus once said He was life.
He told everybody that,
if they would wait three days
after His death,
He would show them
that Life had won the fight over death.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*
Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, I believe **You** bring life."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
no matter where I am,
how long I live,
or what happens to me,
let me always be thankful
that you died for me.
At the hour of your death,
I will look at you
and see love, hope, and mercy.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: Were You There

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Reader 1: The thirteenth station:
Jesus is taken down from the cross.

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

All Reply: **Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Soldier 2 *unwraps the rope from Jesus' hands
and holds the cross upright*

John *helps brace Jesus as he "falls" down
and helps lay Jesus near Mary*

Mary *removes the crown of thorns,
gives it to John and
John hands it to Soldier 2*

Soldier 2 *takes cross, thorns, & rope into
sacristy and waits till next station*

Jesus *rests his head on cushion*

Mary *gently puts her hand on his shoulder*

Reader 1: **(PAUSE)**

Look at Jesus
after His body has been taken down
from the cross
and the blood and dirt washed away.
The sharp thorns have been taken off, too.
Now He is lying on His mother's lap.
She holds Him lovingly.
She keeps saying His name over and over.
How she loves him!
Her heart is broken,
but she does not cry or give up.
She remembers about waiting three days.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.

All His enemies are gone now,
so those who love Him
can come near
and stay with his mother.

Crowd
*gathers
by Mary*

If you had been there
you would have done the same.

And you would have been proud
of Mary's being so brave.

You would not have cried either
even though your heart would hurt for Jesus.

You would be thinking
about the third day.

Let us kneel.

(pause until all kneel)

Whisper to Him in our hearts:

"Jesus, I love You."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,

when somebody dies,
help me to remember
that You have given new life
and that I can see that person in heaven.

Let me be kind and helpful
if someone in my family is sad.

Pause 15 seconds, then sit down.

SONG: Were You There

Were you there when the sun refused to shine?

Reader 1: The fourteenth station:
Jesus is put in the tomb.

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

All Reply: Because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.

Soldier 2 returns with black cloth

While READER 1 is reading.....

Musicians get ready to play last song on ipod
and then leave the church area

Both soldiers hold cloth to hide Jesus while
Jesus crawls to the sacristy (tomb) behind the
black cloth and closes door when text is
read

John and **Mary** follow the cloth to tomb

Soldiers remain at the tomb

The **crowd** sits on the steps in the server's
chair area

Reader 1:

Look at how Jesus' friends
have put clean clothes on His body
and sprinkled Him
with a sweet smelling perfume.
Now they are putting His body into a tomb. *cloth*
The tomb is a small cave-like room *covers*
cut out of a big rock. *Jesus*
After they lay Him inside, *crawling*
they leave the tomb *soldiers*
and roll a giant stone *slide*
in front of the doorway. *stone*
It is so large that it takes several big men *over*
to roll it into place. *door*
Then they all go home.

Soldiers remain and sit on steps by door.

Soldier 1 grabs spear.

John and **Mary** lead the crowd,
to be seated in pews.

Reader 2:

Step up close to Jesus.
You cannot see Jesus
because He is still inside the tomb.
It is Saturday, the next day.
Pontius Pilate,
the judge who let Jesus be killed,
sent soldiers to the tomb
so that nobody would steal
the body of Jesus.
The soldiers sit by the tomb
all day and all night.
Imagine that you also sit there
and that you watch, pray,
and remember
the promise of the third day.

Let us kneel. *(pause until all kneel)*
Whisper to Him in our hearts:
"Jesus, I am waiting for You."

Short pause (count 3) before reading.

Reader 3:

Dear Jesus,
help me to pray
even when I cannot see you
or You don't seem very near to me.
Teach me how to wait
when I cannot have what I want
right away.
Help me to be patient
and allow Your ways to happen
as You have them planned.

Count to 10, then turn off CENTER lights

*All readers, musicians, and cast walk back
to gathering area
in COMPLETE SILENCE*

Songs: play quietly in the background

*You Are My King (Amazing Love) by Newsboys
Above All by Michael W. Smith*