

VILLANOVA COLLEGE: STATIONS OF THE CROSS



Jesus takes up his Cross.

“No one may cross the sea of his age, unless he be carried by the Cross of Christ... So do not forsake the Cross, and the Cross will carry you.”

St Augustine. Commentary on John II, 2

Name: _____

Introduction:

The aim of this booklet is to allow you to see what it means to carry the cross today, and to give you some ways of responding in compassion.

What are the Stations of the Cross:

Jesus died the shameful death of a common criminal. Not only was he nailed to the Cross outside the city walls of Jerusalem at a place called *Golgotha* (Place of the Skull), but he was made to carry his own cross through the narrow streets of Jerusalem.

Rewind further, and he faces a public trial in the streets. Some of the crowd cheer when he is sentenced to death, lashed with a whip, and mocked by having a Crown of Thorns placed on his head.

So exhausting was his walk through the streets of Jerusalem, that Jesus fell under the weight of the wooden cross three times.

Perhaps more painful was the meeting with his own mother, Mary, along the way. There were surprising moments of comfort: a young woman named Veronica rushed from the crowd to wipe the sweat and blood out of his eyes. A foreigner called Simon helped Jesus to carry the cross.

These powerful moments leading to Jesus's death are collectively known as the Stations of the Cross because many Christians pause to reflect on these moments.



Truly understood, the Stations of the Cross are the way of love.

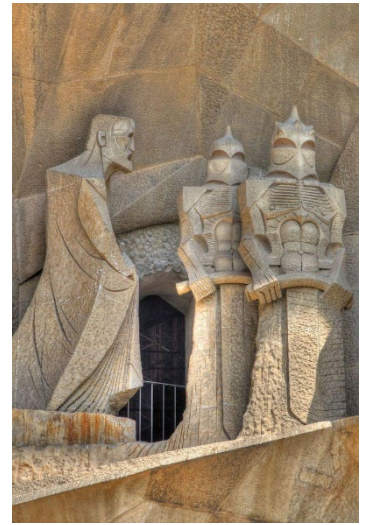
How the Stations work:

There are three main areas where we will encounter the stations, here at the front gate, in the Quadrangle, and down at the Green Team Garden. At each location, there will be an introduction, with a piece of Scripture and a prayer:

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

The First Station: Jesus is condemned:

Reflect on when you have condemned someone else. We ask you to tap the heart now and every day, as a sign of your commitment to make sure that every person enjoys a happy day at Villanova College



Jesus is scourged [whipped] at the gates of Jerusalem – from the Passion entrance at *La Sagrada Familia* - Barcelona

John 19:1-3: "Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and arrayed him in a purple robe; they came up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and struck him with their hands".

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The Second Station: Jesus takes up his Cross

We invite you to write down something that is worrying you on one of the white crosses, and also to pick one up – maybe you can carry this cross for someone else.

Reflect: we are all carrying little crosses. We never truly know a person until we share in their burden.

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Third Station: Jesus falls for the First time

Reflect: Jesus was truly God and truly human. We may think that God must have super-strength, like Thor. But God's only superpower is love. The only power which can conquer evil and death is love. If there is no sacrifice, there is no love. If there is no pain, there is no love.

Scripture: "He was despised and rejected— a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care." (Isaiah 53:3 – prophecy that looked ahead to the reality of Jesus as a servant suffering for human beings)

Action: We invite you to write down one thing that you are sorry for or ashamed of in the "Sorry sand." Then rub it out. Because Jesus picks up the Cross, your sins are washed away.



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Fourth Station: Jesus meets his mother

Imagine the hug as Jesus hugs his mother tightly for the last time. The young woman from Galilee who said yes to the Angel Gabriel and who passionately taught her son to care for the humble and the lonely, is now holding her son in her arms and gazing into his pain-filled eyes.

Scripture: Luke 1: 46-49 "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name."

Response: we invite you to take a purple ribbon and tie it to the prayer wire, praying a prayer in the silence of your heart for someone whom you care about.

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We invite you also at this station to spend some time pausing and listening. This garden is a sacred space where students try to listen to the cry of our beautiful planet. Rightly understood, the Earth is our mother. Read some of the information from the Pope's great document about care for our common home - *Laudato Si*. Listen to the music of our First Nations friends who teach us the skill of deep listening.



Fifth Station: Simon helps Jesus carry his cross.

Simon was a foreigner, in Jerusalem as a migrant worker, and suddenly told by the Roman soldiers to carry Jesus's cross. What do you think he saw when he looked into Jesus's eyes?

Action: Visit the gratitude stall near the Uniform shop and write down one thing or person you are grateful for at Villa. Who are some of the unseen people here at Villa, who quietly make our day go better...? Which countries do our cleaning team come from?

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Simon and Jesus – by German artist Siegfried Koder

The Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of the homeless Jesus

When a young woman called Veronica saw Jesus's face twisted by pain and smeared by grime and blood, she could not simply stand by. She rushed from the crowd and wiped his face with a towel. She restored his dignity.

When we reach out to the poor and the hungry, the lost, lonely, and afraid, we thereby reach out to Jesus Christ who is present in all of us. And especially so in the poorest people who humbly walk our city streets. This is the mystery of the Incarnation.

Scripture: Matthew 8: 20 "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

Response: Explore the homeless display in the Chapel Garden. Look inside the tents, the ruck-sacks and the cardboard "houses." What are the main things a homeless person

carries? Look inside the Chapel. The new pictures are photos taken by people who are homeless. What do they say to you about life on the streets of Brisbane?

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Statue of the homeless Jesus

Go into Langlands and look at the film footage of Roby Curtis, the founder of Emmanuel City Mission. ECM is one of our main Ministries. It is a welcoming space for people who are homeless and at risk. All Villa boys in Year 10 and higher take it in turns to serve breakfast there. By doing these simple acts of hospitality we wipe the face of the hidden Jesus – just as Veronica did.



Service of the poor leaves the imprint of the hidden Christ

Holy week challenge: carry out the following 14 tasks for an egg-ceptional prize

Task 1 - tap the heart	(witness sign)	
Task 2 - pick up a cross or write in the sorry sand		
Task 3 - in the Baptismal space, find out where Augustine was baptised	(write answer)	
Task 4 - what is one thing a homeless person often carries with them?		
Task 5 - Name one thing or person you are grateful for at Villanova		
Task 6 - What is one quote, from the College walls or from one of the stations which inspires or interests you.	(Write down quote)	
Task 7 - who is the founder of Emmanuel City Mission? What services do they offer to people who are homeless?		
Task 8 - How many beehives have the Green Team established at Villanova?		
Task 9 - What is one thing that you felt or thought when you saw the photo display in the Chapel? (by homeless people)		

Task 10 – What does the quote on Roby Curtis’s arm say?	(Write down quote)	
Task 11 – Name one person who was NOT a bystander in the story of the Stations of the Cross. When have you stepped in to help another person?		
Task 12 – What is one vegetable that is grown in the Green Team garden?		
Task 13 – What is one new thing you noticed about our campus today?		
Task 14 – Feedback please: which stations or sections were interesting or memorable? What can we do better? What have you learnt?		

Get behind our sponsored walk:

If you have found these stations interesting and want to do more this Lent to help the homeless, why not get beyond our student leaders – and those of San Sisto – who are doing a sponsored walk for Emmanuel City on Holy Thursday (last day of term).

Of course, you can also find out more by joining ministries at Villa – Green Team, YAYM, SVP, and Rosies.

Here are some of the walkers at ECM:



Here is the link to type into your browser to find out more and donate:

<https://ecmpilgrimage.com.au/villanova-sansisto>

The message of Easter:

Jesus is building the Kingdom in the poorest parts of our city right here and right now, by reaching out to those most isolated and hurt, and healing those who can hardly hold up their head for shame (Luke 4: 16-21). He teaches and empowers his followers to do the same (The Great Commandment, John 13: 33-4), and he conveys life-changing sermons and parables to embed this story once for all within the human heart (Sermon on the Mount Prodigal Son, Good Samaritan). The stories write a new code for human behaviour. Dignity of each person flows both from being created in the divine image and the fact that Jesus Christ takes on human flesh and is most present in the poor, the weak, the lame, the despised, the broken-hearted. (Matthew 25: 31-40).

The Christian church continues this mission with the help of the Holy Spirit, who enters the world to breathe fire into our Gospel actions.



Roby Curtis's tattoo reads "Matt 25: 40"

Concluding Prayer:

God of saving justice, of love and of hope. We remember that wherever Jesus went, he reached out to people who were poor, lonely, unloved, lost and afraid. By his healing hands and words, he brought comfort and peace to the poorest of people. He showed us that this is what God is like. God welcomes and reaches out to people who most need help, love and support.

It is our privilege today to be Christ's eyes, Christ's feet, Christ's hands and Christ's heart. We pray that at Villanova College, we will always reach out to those who most in need of help and support, on our campus, on our doorstep, and in places further afield. We make our prayer through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

You have made us for Yourself, O Lord – **And our hearts are restless until they rest in You.**

Credits

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