



**WELCOMING
CHILDREN
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA**



Stations of the Cross March

Adaptive Activities for Children



**National Catholic
Partnership on Disability**

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Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

Each monthly edition incorporates the following:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

Prayer

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: Lord, Jesus Christ, we love you and know that you love us. You love us so much that you died on the cross for our sins. During this time of Lent, help us to learn more about you, draw closer to you, and deepen our love for you.

We are going to practice a prayer that we hear when we pray the Stations of the Cross, I am going to say, “We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you” and you will respond with, “Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.”

Jesus, in your passion you accepted the cross, and although you fell from the weight of it, you got up and kept walking.

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

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

Leader: Simon of Cyrene helped you to carry your cross, help us to remember that we too can ask for help and help others. Help us to learn from this example of love.

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

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

Leader: Jesus, in your time of agony you comforted others; you met the women of Jerusalem and assured them all would be okay. You gave others great hope even if you were in pain. You gave witness to how deeply you love us in these moments.

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

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



Juan Sánchez Cotán, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Leader: Our Lord and Savior died for us on the cross and was laid in a tomb. He died so that the heavens may be open and we may be able to spend eternity with him in paradise. This is the greatest act of love.

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

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

Leader: Lord, Jesus Christ, help us to remember your passion, but also have hope in your resurrection. In your most holy name, we pray.

Amen.

Video/Song: Stations of the Cross Meditation/Song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X054qXGUOrs&ab_channel=JourneyDeeper4



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Reading of Sacred Scripture

Luke 23:22-24; 26-28; 33-34; 44-47

Pilate addressed them a third time, “What evil has this man done? I found him guilty of no capital crime. Therefore, I shall have him flogged and then release him.”

With loud shouts, however, they persisted in calling for his crucifixion, and their voices prevailed. The verdict of Pilate was that their demand should be granted.



RomkeHoekstra, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

As they led him away, they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus. A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children.”

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. [Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”] They divided his garments by casting lots.

It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”; and when he had said this, he breathed his last.”

The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, “This man was innocent beyond doubt.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Reflection

Luke describes some of the events that are retold in the Stations of the Cross and many of them appear harsh or brutal, with people treating Jesus very badly for no reason. Pilate and the centurion know that Jesus has done nothing wrong. Jesus knows he did nothing wrong, but he does not argue or try to get out of his punishment. His death, undeserved, rescued us from our sins and opened the way to heaven. Jesus Christ's time on the cross was a very brave act of love.

Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 15:3, "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures."

The Stations of the Cross are also known as the Way of the Cross or Via Crucis. Parishes have images of the fourteen Stations hanging on the walls of the church or the images may be on stained-glass windows. These images help us remember how much Jesus suffered for us and how much he put up with because he loves us. During Lent parishes might host live Stations of the Cross, where people act out the fourteen stations, or they might pray the Stations of the Cross as a community. On Palm Sunday, also known as Passion Sunday, and on Good Friday the Scripture readings reflect many of the events in the Stations of the Cross.



AndyScott, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Next time you are at church look for the stations of the cross. Spend time thinking about how much Jesus loves us to have suffered through the events in the fourteen stations. Pick one Station of the Cross and look at the image. What is happening? Think about what you would have done if you were there and how you would have felt.

Faith in Action

As a family, talk about the people in the Stations of the Cross and the role each of them plays. Pilate knew Jesus did nothing wrong, but he sentenced him to death. Did that change how he ruled? Simon of Cyrene helped, but only because the soldiers made him. Did he tell others about his time with Jesus? Veronica wanted to relieve Jesus' suffering, was she successful? The soldiers who cast lots, what do you think they did with Jesus' clothes? We can use these stories as inspiration to find change in ourselves.

Stations of the Cross with a Charity Focus: During Lent, plan an action of charity, service or kindness after reflecting on each station. Consider focusing on one or two stations a week.

This gives the children a practical way to live out the values of compassion, service, and love that are exemplified in the story of Jesus' passion. Ideas include:

- Reflecting on one of Jesus' falls, pick up trash in the yard or help clean up around the house to help others.
- Veronica wiping Jesus' face may inspire the family to make cards or small gifts for persons in need.



Image from Vecteezy

Sidewalk Chalk Stations of the Cross: This activity provides an opportunity for evangelization.

- Go outside and draw the Stations of the Cross on the sidewalk, driveway, or even a park path.
- Label each station with a title so that everyone knows which is which.
- Walk the Stations of the Cross and pray along the way.

Activities with Children

Interactive Stations of the Cross Walk: Create a walk-through experience with simple, large images or posters representing each of the 14 Stations of the Cross.

- Set up the Stations in a large area for freedom of movement.
- At each station, have a tactile object (such as a cross, a crown of thorns, or a small hammer) that participants can touch to help them connect physically with the story.
- Have a family member or leader read a very short, simple reflection on each station that resonates with the child's level of understanding.



Sgconlaw, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Adaptations: Simplify the language and provide tactile objects (like crosses or fabric) to represent each station, allowing children to touch and engage with the story.

Role-playing Stations: Take turns acting out different roles during the Stations of the Cross, such as Jesus, Simon, Veronica, and others.

- Use simple costumes or props (such as scarves or cloaks) to help create a tactile and sensory-rich role-playing environment.
- This can be a great way to engage children through movement and drama, allowing them to embody the characters and learn more deeply through active participation.

Adaptations: Assign clear roles with simple actions and use props to engage children in each station's short, easy-to-remember role-play scenes.

Stations of the Cross: Sensory Bins: Sensory bins can be particularly helpful for children with sensory processing needs, providing a hands-on way to connect to the experience. Create sensory bins to represent the different Stations of the Cross. See examples below:

- Include dirt, small rocks, and a toy figure of Jesus to represent the carrying of the cross
- Use fabric or felt representing Jesus' robe during his trial

Craft Stations of the Cross: Create a craft project for some or each of the Stations of the Cross. See examples below:

Station 1: Make a small wooden cross representing Jesus' treatment he did not deserve.

Station 3: Color or decorate a crown of thorns with pipe cleaners or play dough.

Station 5: Create a paper Simon carrying a cross with arms extended.

Station 7: Cut out a paper veil that Jesus' mother might have used to wipe her tears.

Adaptations: Pre-cut craft materials and demonstrate each step to help children easily create simple, hands-on representations of the stations.



Saint for March

Saint Katherine Drexel

Feast Day March 3

St. Katherine Drexel was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on November 26, 1858. She was born into a wealthy family with a beautiful home. Her father, Francis Drexel, was a banker, and her mother, Hannah, was very kind and caring. She also had two sisters.

Katherine's family had a lot of money and they used it to help others who were in need. Katherine learned from her family how important it is to help people who don't have enough food, clothes, or a good place to live.

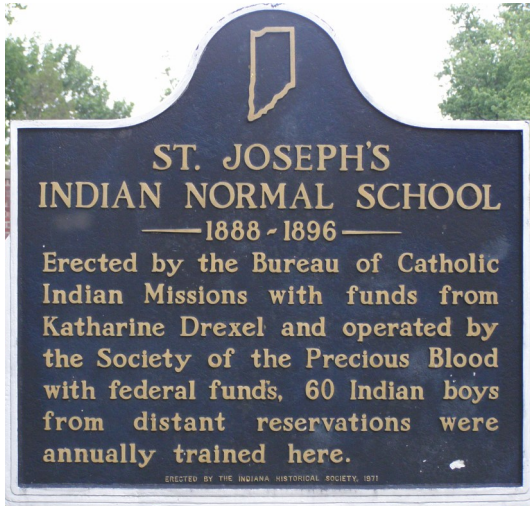
When Katherine grew up, she noticed that many Native American and African American children did not have good schools. They also did not have enough food or safe homes. This made Katherine very sad. She knew she had to do something about it.

Katherine felt a special calling from God. She prayed every day and asked God what she should do to help. God told her to start schools for these children. So, Katherine used all her money to build schools, orphanages, and homes for poor children.

Katherine became a nun, a woman who serves God and helps others. To help run these



<http://www.katharinedrexel.org/katharinepics.html>, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



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schools, she started a new group of nuns called the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. The Sisters worked with Katherine to teach Native American and African American children about God, reading, writing, and other important subjects.

Over her lifetime, Katherine helped many children get an education and a better life. She gave everything she had to serve others. Because of her love for God and for people, especially the poor, Katherine Drexel was named a saint by the Catholic Church in 2000.

Activity: Helping Hands Like St. Katherine Drexel

Objective: This activity helps children think about how they can help others, just like St. Katherine Drexel did in her life.

Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Scissors (optional)
- Glue (optional)

Steps:

Draw a Handprint: Trace your hand on a piece of paper, or you can just draw one if it's easier.



Color and Decorate: Inside the handprint, draw pictures or write words about ways you can help others. For example, you could draw:

- A heart to show kindness
- A book to show helping with schoolwork
- A smile to cheer someone up
- A house to show helping someone who doesn't have one

Write a Promise: Around the handprint, write "I will help others" to remind you to help someone every day.

Display: You can put your handprint somewhere you can see it to remind you of the good work you can do like St. Katherine Drexel.

Reflection: Think of one way you can help someone today. Maybe it's sharing, being kind, or helping with chores. St. Katherine Drexel helped many children and people in need, and now you can think of ways to do the same!



Image from Vecteezy

March Resources

Aleteia. 5 Stations of the Cross resources for kids. <https://aleteia.org/2024/02/29/5-stations-of-the-cross-resources-for-kids>

Catechism Angel. *Free printable Stations of the Cross guides and booklets for children.* <https://catechismangel.com/2020/09/03/free-printable-and-on-line-stations-of-the-cross-for-children/>

Divine Mercy. *Stations of the Cross for children.* <https://dmsbcatholic.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Childrens-Stations-of-the-Cross-for-Coloring.pdf>

Holy Heroes. *Pray the Stations of the Cross with us* [video]. <https://blog.holyheroes.com/families-pray-the-stations-of-the-cross-with-us-video/>

Loyola press. *Stations of the Cross for children.* <https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/lent/stations-of-the-cross/multimedia-stations-of-the-cross-for-children/>

National Catholic Partnership on Disability. *Adapted faith formation activities: Holy week.* https://www.ncpd.org/files/file_uploads/Adapted_Faith_Formation_Activities_for_April_-_Holy_Week_2.pdf