

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

INTRODUCTION

In solitude we will walk the course, desert sand around.
By silent steps we will trace the route, the path we now have found.
With somber face, in quiet thought we will trail the holy way.
In solemn mood, with readied heart, our journey will be today.

A cursed oppressive heat we will bear to hear the words alone.
With voices heard beyond harsh light we will trek on steps of stone.
Our thoughts redeemed when we travel to hide our pain once numb.
In sweat we will cry, dirt caked on, we will push past fears that come.

With blinding rays, with curses tossed, we will creep past haunting scenes.
In garments soaked, with burning feet, we will cross what sorrow means.
A wail unleashed from horrors felt, all will bow when pain they feel.
By three we will try to understand, that this was really real.

Through time we learn the saving grace of Father, His will be done.
In faith we trust salvation came from Father's love of Son.
Follow as we visit the place our Lord was then crucified.
We will pray on trembling knees, we will remember how He died.

STATION 1

JESUS IS CONDEMNED

In somber mind amidst the feasts, with attitude they come to me.
Now Priests, Elders, Pharisees a circled crowd grown vast I see.
Release of one who has done wrong becomes my own ordeal,
Before me most want to be heard, the mass shouts morbid appeal.

Questioned man in my command, his innocence my true belief,
Another one who suffers others, steals, cheats, is truly thief.
Upon my hands their freedom rests, appeasing those here now their cost.
Screams outside for thief's parole weakens me, courage fades, then lost.

Let me flog him and be done with the anger outside my door.
Incited voices cry for death, crucifixion they implore.
Declaration from my wife to let this Jesus please be heard.
From Judea He has come so I turn for King Herod's word.

King Herod laughs and mocks the man, dresses up and sends Him back.
Once more my turn for immunity, yet bravery I lack.
To crowd I cry for Jesus' sake, He is free of harmful charge.
Barabbas they bellow for, the angry crowd has grown so large.

Curses, threats aimed at me, to Caesar I am no longer friend.
There is no out but to deny I am guilty for this end.
Amazement fills my deepest thoughts, as Jesus will to me not speak.
I rush outside; I plead His case, wrested from my hand, too weak.

Water on my hands to now wash away my dreadful error.
I set him on the Judge's Bench to ease my growing terror.
I give in to their own ways to have him scourged for death.
Then with my hands now soft, cleaned, dry, I exhale my held in breath.

Jesus is condemned, doomed by the Priests, Elders, Pharisees.
Roman soldiers take Jesus away; there are not any pleas.
Barabbas is then released, the crowd roars cheers vehemently.
Turned away from this day's faults I go so not to have to see.

Governors must do their work with careful tact for what is best
For all the ones under his command. And now I go to rest.
The afternoon has come to bear the pain of a deathly hour.
Oh I am feared but may not help if I am to have power.

STATION 2

JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

A Student watched from the side as Jesus lifted cross to bear.
Peculiar man so beaten bad, thought the novice with a glare.
Little did he think of man who broke the Jewish customs learned,
He wished this would teach other ones that this is what they had earned.

He walked behind the one some called Messiah, the one whose life was due.
He analyzed the crowd's features, as he began the trek too.
Many women wept, swollen faces, bitter hearts, inflamed scene.
Some men pressed against walls of stone not wanting to be seen.

Intrigued learner turned to study the back of man soon crucified.
Slashes, lashes, a bloody flow, such pain on His every side.
The afflicted man, resigned to death, still kept His walk along
With sheer will. The student frowned, something about Jesus seemed wrong.

Where were curses, the verses of help that He should surely voice?
The guards hit man to pass the time, beat him for fun, He had no choice.
The grade of hill rose up as the student came so very near,
Children played beside him as it seemed a festive time was here.

Similar image brought forth as Jesus carried His cross.
Isaac with wood on his back for sacrifice of his father's loss.
Isaac's father would give his son to God to keep as his own.
The scholar watched as Jesus seemed to have no God, walked alone.

Was he alone now? Was God here now? The student reviewed his doubt.
Through miracles, acts of healing this man's death had come about.
But Jesus had ignored the ways that the Jews had always done.
His education now carried on his back, cross to bear, His one.

The scholar researched for the Pharisees, scribes, perhaps a priest.
Was anyone taking note, did anyone care in the least?
The student watched as the man bore the wood each step he took.
Another man pressed to serve, lifted beams, nervous with each look.

Isaac was never sacrificed but Jesus would surely die,
Why would this make a difference thought student, he wondered, why?
The cross seemed so heavy as the two men carried it along,
The learner read their faces pain but still they seemed so strong.

The novice dismissed reason, soon it would be crucifixion.
He examined each line on face of Jesus with conviction.
The student knew from the Elders that Jesus must die for sin,
He trusted faith that came forth, an inspiration from within.

Perhaps this man was innocent of all wrongful acts and deed
But he would suffer consequences from what the crowd did need.
The crowd closed in as the cross was now laid down upon the ground.
The Messiah, in pain, spread over cross, still had made no sound.

The student wiped a careful tear then he turned his back on love.
He went to books to understand more of God on high above.
At home inside he whispered prayers from scripture as time drew near.
Indignant was he to the mob for in error was their cheer!

STATION 3

JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

An Elder walked along a stone path behind Jesus set to die.
He took in guards, the scourged burns on Jesus, the brilliance of the sky.
He walked best with cane, his robes real loose, for sticky was the day.
With piercing eyes still in good use, he thought to watch, to now stay.

Down the path, no grunts of wrath, the bloodied man pulled cross along,
When lagging on, a whip that stung, He kept on, weary but strong.
The Elder approved of man's abuse, Jesus had abused tradition.
If custom died to nothing what would happen to his life's station?

The Elder cheered the weakening, he nodded his approval
Perhaps this man would never make it to the Place of the Skull.
The Elder glanced at some youth that raced along within his reach,
He decided this was a good experience he could teach.

As Jesus stumbled forth a guard kicked the cross and Jesus fell.
The Elder waited to see Jesus move, so bruised it was hard to tell.
Jesus spat out dirt, coughed up blood, tried to rise up, endure.
The Elder laughed for this road would never lead him to a cure.

Jesus with his face in dirt, hands no use, breathed and gasped for air.
His eyes swollen, hard to see, he searched for any friend there.
The Elder thought, 'There's no one here to help you face your own fate.'
But Jesus crawled His way upright; to His God He still had a date.

'This man disgraced the laws, customs, inciting others to aid.
Jesus must be stopped from changing ways,' the Elder thought, afraid.
As Jesus stood the Elder pulled on his beard and prayed for the death
Of this Jesus who preached different ways with every breath.

The Elder followed dusty road as procession went forward,
He stopped every few moments to rest, to recall the word
Of God in his mind, the commandments, all from the book.
Slowly Jesus moved along, The Elder did not want to look.

Decision gripped upon his chest, the Elder changed his mind.
Back to temple square, away from man to his own priestly kind.
The Elder stood but cane was gone, he looked for it by his side.
Laughing on the wall, were two kids the cane they tried.

The Elder roared annoyed at kids who had his cane in hand.
Turned away they didn't hear, now the Elder could not stand.

He watched as Jesus made His way up the path for man he cried.
The Elder's turn for tears, helpless, he tried to walk but legs denied.

He heaved a sigh then turned to look as Jesus crept along.
This journey was too slow for him, this Jesus much too strong.
The Elder wished for temple to pray in his own peace,
Without the thought that some miracle would Jesus find release.

The Elder sat, his body useless to walking back to temple's square.
He moaned, and groaned at how life could be so unfair.
He scanned the backs of guards with whips that slapped them so very swift.
If only one would stop their fuss and come to give him a lift.

But no one came for the old Elder as he wished back in town.
He looked ahead at Jesus still getting up when He fell down.
'Irony has come to me,' spat out the Elder as he sat.
'Jesus walks and I am stuck, what's the meaning of that?'

The Elder watched as Jesus climbed up to the top of the hill.
The Elder's legs were cramped and wouldn't do his will.
The Elder closed his eyes and looked for kids who had his cane.
But there was none all was up ahead. No one knew his pain.

Tired from his pain the Elder leaned against the wall of stone.
He closed his eyes, his breath slowed; he tried to feel not so alone.
Each breath was calming, he felt better, stronger, all right.
Slowly with fear he opened his eyes, he saw relief in sight.

For here there came a woman with child holding his cane in hand.
She marched him to the Elder made him help the Elder stand.
He prayed to God, thanked His mercy, He stretched his legs so tired.
He looked up hill, waited still for that Jesus to be expired.

The Elder went back on the path to head to temple for prayer.
As he walked a brief thought hit him, what if he was in error?
What if this Jesus was really special, God's beacon of light?
What if that Jesus was really a healer come from God's great sight?

The Elder shivered in the heat, a cold chill pierced through his skin.
At the Place of the Skull, Jesus was there dying for everyone's sin.
'But who could possibly stop the death of the man up on hill?
'Perhaps', thought the Elder with regret, 'Perhaps this is God's will.'

JESUS SPEAKS TO HIS MOTHER

To Jesus Christ my Son I walk with agonized steps forward
He stops to touch my face, his cross carried with no word.
Yet we know the spirit of each that needs no thought to speech.
With love I walk along but His side I can no longer reach.

On this day of cruelty we walk to the Place of the Skull.
Three crosses there upon the hill, my speech, my senses dull.
Crucified, beaten blue I scan his face for needed hope.
Perhaps another miracle, just please one so I can cope.

Each time he gasps my body moves to be close as He grows weak.
He was pierced, poked, pulled apart yet still He stayed there spread out, meek.
Sin kept him hanging there. Oh my dear sweet babe, God's will be done.
Another gasp, another move, I crept passed guards to be with Son.

Blood streaked His eyes, His face, His all, yet close to me was His voice.
He spoke to me four simple words to change my world, I had no choice.
Beloved John at my side learned with me that he was to be my son.
John was told three simple words to care for me all day's be done.

Then I knew that God had spoken with each careful verse we heard.
I was to be the mother of the followers of the word.
Jesus was the Son of God, eternal God, encompassed all.
I would pray for sinner's sins for those with large to those with small.

This path before me here laid out was the greatest tragedy.
Having to watch my Son, without relief, dying in agony.
Beloved John held my hand as we both watched our Jesus go.
With psalms cried out, with hurt endured, His end seemed just too slow.

I prayed to God, please relieve His pain, to take him now just so fast.
Then came the hour He cried out psalm's line and breathed out His last.
My aching chest was raw with hurt, my teeth clenched; I held John's hand.
Then to the ground I slowly knelt to pray so to understand.

Up to His face I raised my own as then I began to weep.
Oh how I prayed with all my might for peace for both sons to keep!
The soldiers rushed away as dangers struck the earth this hour.
John and I stood without harm to watch the nature of God's power.

Then I knew God's will was true that I would have to be the one

For others to call Mother too, for any lost wanting son.
I took a deep breath, gave one final look, gave one final touch.
With patience, prayers, and blessings, I turned to love the world so much.

STATION 5

SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS CARRY THE CROSS

An agonized man who carried a cross, beaten down, quite broken,
Approached. His body purple with welts, a guard's firm token.
In quiet sight Simon eyed this man who had fallen nearby.
The soldiers pushed the man from a woman with tears in each eye.

The proceedings were seen by Simon, with lack of emotion.
It was nothing to him at all, all this Jesus commotion.
Here there were guards now with long whips, their anger on surface.
Simon looked down, hid his eyes, did not want to make any fuss.

To the wall on the street with quick feet went Simon of Cyrene.
He had no desire, though strong was he, to help, then cause a scene.
The man focused forward as guards turned to where Simon hid.
They all laughed as they saw him crouched down on the ground as he did.

Impressed by swords to lift the cross beams, Simon cursed his bad luck.
The soldiers kept him going on as he felt so very stuck.
On shoulder's strength He shared the load with the man so hurt and bruised.
While lugging he wondered why this man was hurt and thus accused.

The crowd looked away as Simon walked, his back in so much pain
The heavy wood, the hurt man weak, Simon's spirit began to wane.
But with all their force the guards compelled the both of them onward.
Beside there came another woman, with a cloth and a word.

She wiped Jesus' face, at this place, then crying she slowly went.
As Simon watched, sweat on his brow, thirsting so much, tired, spent.
The guards moved them on, as the sun was so high, the sweat trickled down.
They both heaved under pressure of wood as they inched through the town.

Creeping on they went along but then the blood soaked man fell,
Simon went too as they hit the ground, his face began to swell.
He spit out blood, hurt his head, stood when spoken to.
The man stayed down his second time Simon didn't know what to do.

With might and will Jesus stood and turned to Jerusalem's women.

He spoke to them of times when there would be tragic sin.
Time when people cared for only one, themselves and not the old and young.
Simon bowed his head as he listened as some women slowly sung.

'He is just a man with cross to bear,' which Simon no more believed.
The man whispered soft, "Soon you'll be relieved."
Simon cringed because the final act would mean crucifixion.
But there went the man, praying along with such conviction.

The guards heard his words and they pulled on the wood,
The third fall came to both, on faces fallen, they no longer stood.
Laughter at them on the ground, pulsing pain, end almost complete.
'Stay down,' thought Simon to the man, but He slowly rose to His feet.

At Golgatha they told Simon go and pushed him out of the way.
As they circled the man, Simon out, tried to begin again his day.
As he turned in dismay he saw a woman near his side.
"Who is that man?" He took her hand, and then he cried.

The woman turned from cross to Simon with silent wondrous eyes.
So like her Son he knew the one, the man was hers, no surprise.
Her hands came up and touched his face, a warmth he held on to.
"He is our Savior, Jesus Christ, He'll tell you what to do."

Unknown to this growing feeling Simon didn't know what to do.
He touched her hand as she let go he felt God come through.
She knelt on ground beside his feet; he bowed and knelt as she had done.
Simon stayed on his knees as the mother prayed aloud to Son.

Simon closed his eyes and played over the parts of past scene.
Was this the path that led life now to him, Simon of Cyrene?
Was this God the new Messiah come to all with love at His side?
Simon cried beside the woman, tears clouding eyes, as Jesus slowly died.

STATION 6

VERONICA WIPES JESUS' FACE

Veronica weaved between the sets of hardened hearts, the throng
Of angry voices wild, the echoed chant of a killing song.
Then past the clanking swords in sheaths and the useless need for shield,
She learned to twist her body through the mass that would not yield.

In dust covered white dress she flowed with crowd heading down
The winding path of sediment, through the harshest light in town.
A mob's heightened hysteria declared a man's death be done.
The timorous few beside the woman could not save God's Son.

She came to where Jesus leaned, His face was drenched, His body bruised.
His feet raw they wobbled so, His human form almost all used.
She crawled on hands and knees. She shrieked and scraped the ground so cold.
Between the limbs of hatred's stance she forced her way bravely bold.

There at His side she thrust her hand to reach to His agony.
With a scrap of cloth she traced His face, a touch of humanity.
An imprint of His grace of life lingered on in her stretched hand
Eternal blessing for those who foundered yet helped others stand.

Time stopped not His torture forward but He turned and gave a look.
He shared his eyes, He loved her soul, hands clasped as she then shook.
Then down the path shoved on and on He moved to salvation's hour.
The mob closed her out again they had no idea of His power.

Veronica crept to edge of the street to follow His trail
To Golgatha where crosses now stood, She cried out with a wail.
She fell to ground her dress ruined, never to be sewn again.
She gathered courage, prayed for Him not to be alone then.

Veronica loved, she wiped her tears then she stood to watch Him die
Here upon this earth she braced for the moment that must go by.
Lightning crashed against the sky and the world flashed to light then gray,
Veronica held close the cloth that wiped His pain away.

STATION 7

JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME

Festive spirits from last night's feast, prayers sung some still asleep.
One in yarmulke raced streets rushing forth with carefree leap.
Such pageantry he had never seen in such a great city.
Day before he laughed at jokes, bowed at scribes, loved the gaiety.

His pilgrimage began long before these unusual sights.
Through many towns to Jerusalem his family spent much nights.
Unknown to parents he slipped away to watch the daytime crowd.
The tents, the wares, the booths of those who stirred, their voices loud.

Down roads he skipped past working men until he spied a guard.
A Roman soldier with whip on his belt stared at him so hard.
The boy backed up, turned in fear, and ran back to the market square
Where merchants worked fast for last few sales for coins, their golden share.

The boy climbed up a stone wall so he could get a better look.
Ahead on a distant street the boy saw a crowd formed, his legs shook.
For everywhere guards lifted swords, they pushed and poked at will.
The boy quickly jumped from wall to wall as he climbed up the hill.

Squinting past the now quiet mass the boy saw two men on path.
Sweat on their bodies they lifted beams under uniformed wrath.
The soldier with his whip now in his hand cried out, "That makes two!"
The smaller man fell from cruelty, knowing more they would do.

The triumphant chant of victory now down the winding street
The mob following the fallen man is lost with His defeat.
The boy unknown to city life was amazed at this painful way,
The man down, broken in pain, the boy had to watch, had to stay.

Covered in bruises and blows, the smaller man's clothes had such stain.
A red colored hue, "Oh no," said the boy, "that's blood from his pain."
The boy looked at the guards that kicked and spat on the man on the ground.
This man accused, beaten, abused, began to stand without sound.

The boy sat down hard as he watched the hurt man lift his arms straight.
A Roman soldier held out his hands, all watched the smaller man's fate.
But the boy knew it was more than that as the man slowly stood.
"Dear God!" He exclaimed as he prayed. "Stop this, I know that you could."

Standing no more the boy half turned away with his whole heart's ache.
But he glanced at the man who stared at him, this was no mistake.
Together they stood with their tears mixed with the thick of the dust.
United somehow, but unknown to boy, just a sense they must.

Up ahead on the hillside top there were two crosses that stood,
The man would be three; the boy ached as he really understood.
But why now? Had not all his punishment already been done?
Who was leader of this who could make it all come undone?

Now at once the man's eyes claimed the fear the boy held on to.
With Yarmulke on head, the boy praised, bowed to Messiah's view.
The boy was filled with glorious peace from deep inside his core
The man continued on as he stumbled down the path once more.

The boy ran past Market Square to where his mother was at rest.
He rushed to her, wrapped his arms around and cried onto her chest.
The whole story, His glory, he told of the man who would die.
With her son's help she knelt down and they prayed to God on high.

STATION 8

JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

I walk behind the women of Jerusalem, unsure why we follow along.
This man who is bruised beyond recognition, seems wrong
For women to mourn for this thief as we now tread down the path
With guards slamming shields, showing swords, their growing wrath.

The women lament, their linen garbs drag on the hard, filthy ground.
Some beat their chest, some moan, some shake, all weeping their own sound.
Quietly quiet, I listen with shivers in midday heat,
Adorned with gold, dressed in blue robes, I walk with soft sandaled feet.

Most women carry a painful stare as they bow their heads to man ahead.
His body seen before the cross is mangled, bloody red.
Yet with the torture He's endured He stops and turns to the women here.
His eyes are deep reflections of the women's hurt, their tears, their fear.

The women cease their tears so to cry out "Savior!" to His face.
He nods His head and then begins to speak with a Godlike grace.
I curve my neck so as not to see but to hear his words more clearly,
Addressing them as Daughters of Jerusalem, He warns them dearly.

He tells the woe of cheapened lives, unwanted babes, ignored old.
Warning women of future crimes, such hate fueling those so cold.
With privileged air I stare down at these women who ever could be wild.
I stroke my stomach enlarged just so, and think to growing child.

This man foretells when people cheer for the barren in city,
Where the failing of humanity becomes normality.
Chills on limbs, I rub my fear from the way I feel of this belief,
He speaks as if to only me then He turns with my relief.

. "Dear sweet Jesus!" A woman runs with her child to His feet.
He touches head of child, smiles, then watches her retreat.
I watch the mourning, sad displays, as my babe stirs, kicks, then wakes.

Inside my womb my baby turns perhaps I have made mistakes.

With wealth of knowledge, tender thought, I watch Jesus go to cross.
Mist of tears fall from my face, with ladies I seem at a loss.
We come to the place with the painful disgrace of how we all fail.
One woman takes my hand in hers, as we start to pray, I wail.

STATION 9

JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

What love was there to hold Him up as He slumped to the cold ground?
Peter crept along the procession not wanting to be found.
He watched His Savior face to dirt, slashed, and pained, as He stayed low.
'Get up,' in silence Peter screamed. 'Dear Jesus, on must You go.'

Peter waited for miracles, signs from Lord to make things right.
Horror gathered in his sight with prophesy of last night.
Denial of precious Lord three times he had rapidly sworn
He then shed his tears, weeping wishes he had never been born.

Now Jesus on the ground, blood everywhere, three times on the soil.
Peter watched Simon lift cross with Jesus, muscles flexed, his toil.
He said, "That should be me holding Him up, oh why am I so weak?"
He kept his eyes glued to the scene, so pathetic, outcome bleak.

Peter stood with head held low, extreme pain from his misery.
Jesus had spoken truths then was punished, due to a decree.
With bitter tears Peter wished to run, to fight, aloud he wailed!
Three times the Lord had fallen, three more times that Peter had failed.

Three meant completeness, Peter thought as he heaved a tired sigh.
Once more through actions, not words, Jesus taught as He went to die.
For His death He foretold to disciples they now saw as true.
Peter wished for an attack, sword at side, an act for him to do.

Jesus rolled His eyes over the huge crowd, found Peter and stared.
Peter shook head in sorrow, Jesus took Peter's pain, and shared.
Such a warmth now wrapped softly around Peter's hurting heart.
Jesus closed His eyes then turned once more His walk to now start.

Determined Peter watched his Lord Savior start the march once more.

How much he wished that he had had will power the night before.

Away from the street still scared to meet a guard to take him in,
He slouched along to be near Lord even with all of his sin.

Hammer's pounding, crucified Jesus, the noise when nails in skin.

Peter fell to ground, face in dirt like Lord. He cried from within.

"Three o'clock," someone cried, "Death at long last," Voice filled to replete.

Peter pounded on his chest for his Lord's way was now complete.

STATION 10

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Four soldiers stood beside their work, laughing at crucifixion.

All were hot, sweating; they looked at Jesus with satisfaction.

Too much toil for one day's work, they shook their heads, all annoyed.

One soldier brightened up quickly with an idea he enjoyed.

The soldiers soon took Jesus' clothes; they stripped him of His garments.

Four equal shares save His vesture, no ideas made any sense.

For each soldier wanted the tunic, each wanted it for theirs.

One offered to cast lots for it and all became players.

They laughed as they looked at Jesus hanging upon the wood cross.

He gasped for more breath; His blood ran down, His words were at a loss.

Transfixed on the game the soldiers ignored the man they had hurt,

Continuing on with their game each wanting that linen shirt.

Two thieves on either side of Jesus watched the Guards in their fun.

In anguish they fixed upon the die until the game was done.

The thieves tried to speak to guards but the breath of each was torment.

One guard stood up pressed a thief's foot, the thief cried out his lament.

One soldier jumped with the tunic, he had won with toss of hand.

Three soldiers grumbled, then stood up to look at the ones they manned.

In anger one poked more feet and grinned with an evil-like leer,

Mary grimaced as she inched her way to Jesus to be near.

The soldiers sat then upon the ground, watching the hanging bleed.

Indifferent to pain, they waited out deaths of horrific deed.

Mary and Beloved John cried as they watched this very scene,

No haunted looks in guarded eyes, no frowns on face, just ever being mean.

With prayer and guidance from Jesus' eyes, Mary and John stayed back.
Their deaths, not part of this day, just love for what others did lack.
Mary and John watched as one guard held to the tunic with glee,
While Jesus and the two thieves were breathless in their misery.

STATION 11

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

The crowd pressed in as soldiers placed Jesus on top of the cross.
Whispers, murmurs, then words as sounds startled people at a loss.
In silence flowing through the crowd one man laughed with shaky voice.
Most knew Jesus had been tortured, nothing could they do, no choice.

Was He a criminal? Had He hurt all these here today?
Thoughts were formed as the hammer started, some began to pray.
The thudding sound helped hide some screams, some turned away to not see.
Some men still joked, laughed at the way Jesus lay in misery.

The soldiers took up the nails in hand and placed one on Jesus' feet,
One held Jesus down while the hammer and nail began to meet.
With forceful power the nails went in, blood oozing out so much pain.
They spread his arms apart to drive the rest, their shirts now with stain.

Mary wept for her only Son, Beloved John by her side.
Simon watched, sweat on skin, chills on back, scared as he freely cried.
A small boy on the wall felt sick inside, why would this be done?
Veronica closed her eyes so tight from the pain on God's Son.

Many left hill, walking toward temple, a most needed visit.
Some soldiers tried to hold their lunch, some others did not make it.
Jesus cried out to God to forgive these mortal men so strong.
They did not understand, they did not know they were doing wrong.

With nails in place soldiers lifted cross and struck it into ground.
Jesus was raised above all heads, the king of the Jews still crowned.
Almost complete, almost to God, Jesus took a deep breath.
The crowd now watched his end draw near, they saw Him go to His death.

STATION 12

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Dismay wraps it's daggered pain inside my wounded chest.
The wounds of my Lord sting me so as I pray to Him be blessed.
Agony from His every breath I watch Him try to breathe,
My throat is dry, my mind aches, my anger boils, I seethe, I seethe.

Crucified for contempt of His many virtues, healings, trust.
'Oh Please come down my dear sweet Savior! Oh come down please, You must.
Show these men, these guards, this crowd, that you are God's only true Son.'
I hurt, I strain in thoughts so cruel to me, what could I have done?

To Jesus' eyes I cast my pleas, on His face runs down a tear.
My sadness tears at His own heart, I must away my fear!
Beloved John He called me so, His friend, my God, my love.
I suffer with Him as He questions His Lord from high above.

I have heard my Jesus, prophesize His death would too soon come.
My fear, my faith, now all alone, must shake away my body numb.
I stand by Mother Mary, who I will care for every day.
She weeps, her eyes wounded holes of darkness. Yet again I pray.

His last words before He died was a psalm for us He sent.
In moments left in His own life He sung out for what was meant.
The psalm reached out to all our ears and most held heads down low.
For Jesus' faith in God was great even when people hurt Him so.

He's holding on while on a cross that only He can bear,
He's losing sight, not focusing; He's lost in His own prayer.
His eyes are wide to my surprise He speaks I turn to hear it.
His last words spoken: "Into your hands I commend my spirit."

Amazed I cry, as He is gone, I weep from shameful disgrace.
I rush to cross and look up at Jesus for signs of life, in case.
But He is gone, and Mary sobs then turns away from Son.
She walks away now, this was not the way it should have been done.

No chance to leave my Lord, yet unsure now what was next for me.
What was I to do without my Lord nearby? How would I be?
Marks on Jesus from guards gone, the hole of spear that lanced His side.
His face a stare, His body bruised, yet peace at last when He died.

I stood below the cross in fear that I could not continue
The love that Jesus spread so far, to all those He never knew.
With one final look to my dear Lord, I made my way to go.

He had taught me so many things yet love was the most to know.

I slowly went to leave my Lord, to take up my cross to bear,
This fear I carried may be hard but through it I could with prayer.
Inside my heart I knew was Jesus, holding me in His arms,
Still in His death He was my Savior keeping me from all harms.

STATION 13

JESUS' BODY IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Feasts began when darkness settled over the entire land.
From tents to inns, homes to palaces, all went as it was planned.
Festive spirits, entertainment, music's flair, all filled the air.
Knocking at the gates to palace, to find Pilate went Joseph there.

A distinguished Joseph by moon's light raced to find forgiveness.
This rich man from Arimathea Pilate meets with politeness.
Hidden behind a coat of wealth, a purse of coin, shoes that shined
As disciple of Jesus he would atone sins as others dined.

Softly he spoke a mercy's plea as he told of Jesus' death.
Unaware, amazed, Pilate then summoned Centurion in one breath.
Pilate waited for news, he looked at Joseph no longer bored.
Joseph asked on edge of beg for Jesus' body, he implored.

Centurion back Pilate agreed, Joseph bowed, left palace.
He walked the path that Jesus had done without any malice.
Illuminated by moon, fearful, Joseph walked up the hill.
"Oh poor Savior hanging there hurt so bad, this night so still."

At crest Nicodemus, a wealthy Pharisee, stood with gifts for tomb.
Joseph nodded to the man and both went to Jesus in their gloom.
Together they knelt at the bottom of the cross and prayed in His name.
Women wept beside the two, from Galilee they came.

In silent thoughts they rose and reached their hands to beams, to touch.
Nicodemus pushed, while women moaned, all loved Jesus so much.
Joseph and Nicodemus went to work to help Jesus down from the cross.
With might and strong will they began as a pair feeling Jesus' loss.

Joseph pulled at the bottom of the cross, twisted, loosened, gave.
Determined Joseph held tight to cross, set to ground, so very brave.

Down on the dirt He looked at man, His dear sweet Jesus lying there.
He touched the crown, cried out in pain, he watched that distant stare.

To hands and feet both crept with guilt, swallowed, went to pull out pain.
They cried aloud with each nail they gripped, each wrenching with the strain.
With tender touch they lifted Jesus now off the cross with care.
Gentle softness in Joseph's arms he carried Jesus from there.

Joseph attended to Jesus, wrapped him in linen tenderly.
Then to a place, a resting space he carried Jesus bodily.
The pain in his arms was great, the bruised man defeated by wood.
Joseph prayed to God as he found the tomb, doing best he could.

Joseph the distinguished man knew women followed along.
He closed the eyes of his Savior to try to change his wrong.
"I love You so my Savior dear and wish I had not so feared.
As disciple I go to spread Your word to me You have steered."

Wrapped in linen, gone from cross, Jesus lay in the tomb at last.
Joseph wept as he sat in prayer, regretting most of his past.
Casting off shoes that shined, purse of coin, his wealth for greediness.
He vowed to spread God's word to all, his fear turned to happiness.

STATION 14

JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

In prayer's trance Joseph sat as Nicodemus placed gifts at Savior's feet.
With the myrrh and aloes offering, his part in this complete.
A Pharisee of wealth he stood there blanketed in shadow's sight.
Hesitations of role here gave him to cower over plight.

Casting worried glance to Joseph, he waited conversation.
None came from man in prayer, Nicodemus set out his notion.
He brought the aloes, and the myrrh to women by Jesus' side.
In Jewish Custom they all went to work with oils, as they cried.

With burial cloths the women wrapped Him, flowing forth their tears.
Joseph stood to watch tender filled touches, heart out to these dears.
Nicodemus knelt down and bowed his head for his redemption.
Others then knelt on their knees to listen for God's intention.

Tired eyes burning red, puffiness, preparations now done

All prepare for the new tomorrow for the dawning of the sun.
Joseph rolled a stone across the opening as they went away.
All went down the hill for Sabbath, rest was ordered as they pray.

Two women stood apart from group watching the whole procession
They had stood outside the cave not wanting an intercession.
Mother Mary of God's Son watched with a shattered, broken heart.
Mary Magdalene held her hand, she resolved not to depart.

With boulder crossed from view of Jesus, both women now sat down.
No talk, no bother to engage the other, their eyes cast toward town.
Day was done, full moon this night, both heaved a heavy sigh.
On trembling feet they rose to go, both out of tears to cry.

Back on the path they followed toward the sleeping place of the night.
With memories scarred in their minds they revisited day's sight.
Their Jesus marked with pain, intense, disfigured as He walked.
The crowd laughed, threw rocks at Him as Jesus looked nobody talked.

Mary, and Mary walked back through, tracing feet on dusty street
They knew His blood was on this road as they walked feeling defeat.
With strength inside they both possessed because of Jesus' love,
They went to home, they went to rest, they both prayed to God above.