











**WAY OF THE CROSS.**

There are many exercises of devotion which have for their object the Passion, Cross and Death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; chief among these has always been the devotion of the "Way of the Cross" or, as it is generally called "The Stations of the Cross."

The word "Station" is a term used in the military language of the Romans, meaning the outpost or protection erected at the entrance to a camp. The early Christians used the same term to mean a day of fast on which they were accustomed not to eat anything till three o'clock in the afternoon. But as fasting and prayer generally go together, the word "station" later came to signify not only a fasting-day, but also a day on which the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered by the Pope with greater than usual solemnities.

Today, however, "Station" is used to denote the fourteen representations of the different incidents that occurred in our Lord's Passion. The faithful make use of these representations or pictures to bring strikingly and vividly before their minds the cruel sufferings that Christ endured for us from the moment that He stood before Pilate waiting to hear His condemnation and doom until hands of pious persons laid Him sadly in the tomb.

Beginning with that unjust sentence pronounced upon Him, they go on to meditate Him carrying His cross for the sins of mankind. Staggering under the heavy weight He falls, but the soldiers with rude strokes He meets His blessed Mother force Him to rise and continue, and beholds her agony, which tends to increase His own sufferings. Fearing that our Lord would never reach Calvary alive, the Jews lay hold of Simon of Cyrene and compel him to carry the Cross after Jesus.

The face of Jesus was all disfigured with blood and dust; behold the brave Veronica making her way through the angry crowd, offers Him a towel with which He wipes His adorable face leaving on it the figure of His holy countenance. As a result of His increasing weakness He falls a second time, a fall which renews His pains. Amid blows and curses of the mob He still goes on and meets the women of Jerusalem who weep with compassion at seeing Jesus in such a pitiable state. At His third fall His weakness was extreme and the cruelty of His executioners without end. The wicked and sinful world has again caused this fall.

Finally the summit of Calvary is reached. With violence the soldiers stripped Jesus of His clothes. The garments having adhered to His sacred flesh, they dragged them off so roughly, that the skin came with them. Then Jesus is stretched on the cross; he extends His hands and offers to His Heavenly Father the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. The barbarians fasten Him with nails, then raise the Cross and with mockery and insults leave Him to die on this shameful gibbet. After three hours of agony His sacred head bows forward and He dies. Joseph and Nicodemus, faithful friends of Jesus, take Him down from the Cross and reverently place Him in the arms of His afflicted Mother. Finally, the disciples carry the body of Jesus to bury it in the sepulchre. The tomb is sealed and all withdraw in sorrow.

In this way the faithful passing from one representation to another meditate and pray until they have visited the fourteen Stations of the Cross. This method of showing devotion to sufferings and death of our Lord was instituted in the middle of the fourteenth century

by the Franciscans. But the custom of making what are in reality the different "Stations" takes its origin at the time when men lived who themselves followed Jesus to the scene of His death. The Christians in Jerusalem out of veneration for those Sacred spots which were sanctified by the sufferings of our Redeemer were accustomed to visit them and honor them by penance. Pilgrimages from the farthest corners of the earth were made to these holy places in Palestine by the devout faithful who treaded with tears of sorrow the paths made sacred by the blood of our suffering Jesus.

But a dark and gloomy period soon followed when the Holy Land had fallen into the hands of infidels. This had so aroused Christianity that kings and princes flew to arms and men sacrificed lives and treasures to regain the Holy City from the dominion of the Mohammedans. Churches and costly buildings were erected on the spots where the principal incidents of our Lord's life and Passion had occurred in order that the memory of them might ever be preserved sacred. Finally when the Mohammedans had for a second time taken hold of the Holy City, it was impossible for the Christians to travel in safety to the Holy Land to satisfy their devotion.

Then it was that the exercise of the Way of the Cross was introduced as a substitute. The Franciscan Friars, mentioned above, began to erect pictures representing the most moving and remarkable events in our Lord's Passion, from His sentence in the hall of Pilate to His burial; there were hung about the walls in their churches and rounds were made by pausing at each picture for several minutes in prayerful meditation. By visiting these pictures in their order and praying before each one, they were able in some way to imitate the devotion of the Christians who made pilgrimages to the Holy Land, but in a manner fast less long and painful.

The Franciscans at first erected these Stations in their own churches and Pope Benedict XIII in 1726 declared that in visiting these stations "the faithful, like the devout pilgrims, who go in person to visit the holy places in Jerusalem, do themselves also make this journey in spirit, while they meditate on all that our Lord Jesus Christ vouchsafed to suffer for our eternal salvation at those holy places in the last hours of His life."

Before the close of the 17th century, the erection of Stations was not general; today, however, there is scarcely a church or chapel to be found that does not possess the Stations of the Cross. The Stations usually begin at the Gospel side and represent the figure of Christ as moving along on His dolorous journey toward Calvary.

Such is in brief the history of the origin of the Stations of the Cross. This devotion may be performed publicly or privately and the Sovereign Pontiffs have attached many indulgences to the practise of it. When it is performed publicly, usually a stanza of the hymn "Stabat Mater" is sung while the procession moves from one Station to the other. The indulgences may be gained by anyone who is in the state of grace by making the round of the fourteen stations and meditating for a short time on the mystery that the station represents.

As we pass from one Station on to the next, let us meditate on the various stages of our Lord's sufferings. Often in our past lives we have offended Him by sin. We must, therefore, be truly sorry and repent of these sins. Then taking up the Cross and imitating Him we must with patience and with meekness try to carry it to the end of our lives.

**A. Bratina.**

**LENT.**

The Holy Season of Lent is with us again. The great fast of forty days has been proclaimed, and the trumpet sounding throughout the Holy Church in the words of the prophet Joel calls the faithful to despise the vain pleasures, joys and attractions of this world and to be converted with all their heart to the Lord, their God "in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning." "Rend your hearts," says the prophet Joel, "and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God; for He is gracious and merciful, patient and rich in mercy, and ready to repent of the evil."

In the Latin language this season is called "Quadragesima," meaning "fortieth," and expresses clearly the number of days of the fast. It brings to our minds the incident narrated in the Gospel of St. Matthew that Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert where he fasted forty days and forty nights.

The intention of the Church in instituting this holy season has been to make it a time of amendment, consecrated to prayer and recollection, to penance, fasting and recollection. Thus she has endeavored to honor the 40 days' solitude and fast of our Lord in the desert and to prepare us the more worthily for Easter — for the passage from death to life, that is, from an imperfect to a holier life.

The Church begins Lent with Ash-Sunday, so-called from the ceremony of springling ashes upon the heads of the faithful. In the Old Testament we read that King David, having sinned grievously, mingled ashes with his bread in order to appease God's anger, that Job sprinkled his flesh with ashes. So the Christian recalling his past sins, humbles himself before God; he recalls that although his sins have been forgiven, the punishment of sin, that is, death, must yet be endured. Therefore he bows his head that the Priest of God may put the ashes upon it, and with humble heart he hears the sentence of death pronounced upon him: "Remember, man, that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return."

In order to make known to us the grief in which our Holy Mother the Church is plunged when contemplating the sorrows of her Divine Spouse, she omits all canticles of joy from her services, and all the pomp by which she loves to honor God. There are no flowers on the altar; the Priest of God appears in the sanctuary clad in the penitential color of violet; the eye beholds signs of penance on all sides and the ear no longer hears the glad tones of the organ, the joyous "Alleluia" or the angelic hymn "Gloria in excelsis." Yes, sorrow is the distinguishing mark of this holy season and the Church in her ceremonies endeavors to make it stand out prominent, so that it can strike the imagination of all her children and move them to grief for sin which flooded our Lord's soul with unspeakable agony.

The Church insists upon penance because from Holy Scripture we see that God demands it. Her discipline of penance is mainly under the form of fast-

ing. Although fasting is an abstinence that man voluntarily imposes upon himself in expiation for his sins, during Lent it is practiced in obedience to the general law of the Church. According to the Fathers and Doctors of the Church the institution of this fast dates back to the time of the Apostles themselves, who decreed that the great festival of Easter should be preceded by a universal fast, a fast which lasts for the space of forty days.

This fast obliges all those who have attained the age of twenty-one, and consists in the partaking of one full meal in the day, with a partial meal in the evening not exceeding eight ounces, which is called a "Collation."

Penance is necessary for all. We must all practice self-denial and perform acts of mortification. What season can be more suitable for these pious practices than the season of Lent? Let us not think that this will make us unhappy. No, it will make us the happier for we will store up for ourselves greater treasures in heaven and we shall acquire a spiritual peace and joy that those only know who mortify themselves and follow Jesus Christ.

**A. Bratina.**

**DEFINITIONS OF HOME.**

The golden setting in which the brightest jewel is "mother." A world of strife shut out, a world of love shut in.

Home is the blossom of which Heaven is the fruit.

Home is a person's estate obtained without justice, kept without disquietude; a place where time is spent without repentance and which is ruled by justice, mercy and love.

A hive in which like the industrious bee, youth garners the sweets and memories of life for age to meditate and feed upon.

The best place for married man, after business hours.

Home is the coziest, kindest, sweetest place in all the world, the scene of our purest earthly joys and deepest sorrows.

The place where the great are sometimes small and the small often great.

The father's kingdom, the children's paradise, the mother's world.

The jewel casket containing the most precious of all jewels — domestic happiness.

**God will deliver you.**

What would you do if you were never to be delivered from your trials? You would say to God: "I am Thine; if my miseries are pleasing to Thee multiply them, prolong them." Make friends with your trials, as if you were always to live together, and you will find that when you no longer think of them and cease to be anxious, God will deliver you from them. St. Francis de Sales.

**ST. JOSEPH'S LILIES.**

St. Joseph tends the lilies, That grow for Paradise, And keeps them ever pleasing To God's Most Holy Eyes. He shields them all from danger, These spotless blossoms rare That shed like fragrant incense, Perfume upon the air. Their beauty shall not perish, When autumn bids them die, For Joseph's hand shall gather And hear them to the sky. Where he, with Blessed Mary, Shall give these lilies fair, Christ, the Spouse of Virgins, Who reigns in glory there. Catholic Observer.

Little Bob (about to go out with mother) — "Mamma, you must take some money with you."

Mother — "No, Bob, I'm not going to use any."

Little Bob — "Yes, you must have money for chocolate; I might start crying on the street you know."

Father (angrily) — "What!

kissing my daughter, I'll teach you."

Suitor — "It isn't necessary; I've just learned how."

**Not his fault.**

Mother: "There were two apples in the cupboard this morning; now there is only one. How do you account for that?"

Boy: "It was dark in the cupboard, and I didn't notice the other one."

Old Gentleman: "Little boy, do you know who I am?" Little Boy: "No, sir. But mother's inside; perhaps she can tell you."

Teacher: — "Spell 'cloth,' James."

James — (Silent.)

Teacher: — "What is your made of?"

James: — "Father's old pants."



**LIFE AND LABORS**  
OF  
**Rt. Rev. FREDERIC BARAGA,**  
First Bishop of Marquette, Mich.  
BY  
P. CHRYSOSTOMUS VERWYST,  
O. F. M.,  
OF LOS ANGELES, CAL.

They came to the River Sava, which had to be crossed. As there was no bridge anywhere nearby, the sacristan took Baraga on his shoulder and carried him across the river without feeling any weight.

The only priest in the whole neighborhood, who befriended Baraga and who was heart and soul with him, was Rev. Augustin Sluga, the last member of the suppressed Cistercian Abbey of Landstrasse in Dolenjsko. He was at the time parish priest of Kranj, and also dean of that district. Baraga found in him a true friend and protector. The latter invited him to preach, during three consecutive days before Ash Wednesday, 1827, in the parish church of Kranj on the Holy Eucharist, which he did before an immense concourse of people, to the great mortification of his envious colleagues in the ministry. They wrongly accused him to his Bishop, Rt. Rev. Anton Aloys Wolf, who removed him from St. Martin and sent him to Metlika, near the boundary of Croatia, in June, 1828. His friend, Rev. Augustin Sluga, died at the ripe age of eighty-nine, on the 19th of July, 1842, being at the time honorary Canon of the Cathedral Chapter at Ljubljana.

As to Baraga's personal wants in those days, they were few and easily supplied. His meals were extremely frugal; he seldom ate meat, and then but little; he never drank wine. He generally slept on hard boards, and had very little furniture in his room. He gave all he had to the poor and for beautifying the House of God. He was remarkably kind to children, especially to those who were poor. On great feast days his sister Amalia used to send him from Trebnje all kinds of confectionery, not a bit of which he would put in his own mouth, but would divide these sweetmeats among the children, the poor and the sick. The latter he visited very often and consoled and helped them in every way possible.

**CHAPTER XIV.**

**Father Baraga's Labors at Metlika. He Resolves to Devote Himself to the Indian Missions of America; is Received into the Diocese of Cincinnati, O. Scene at his Departure from Metlika.**

In Baraga's time the parish of Metlika was large, with more than 6,000 souls and twenty or more stations with chapels. The people were very kindhearted, but sadly neglected and very ignorant as to their religion.

In this place Baraga labored with his customary zeal and forgetfulness of self. God visibly blessed his labors. One of his first cares was to procure a beautiful set of stations or Way of the Cross for the parish church of that city, to promote

devotion to the Passion of our Lord. In due season they arrived and were carried in solemn procession through the streets of Metlika from the parsonage to the church. They were solemnly blessed and erected in the month of October, only four months after his arrival in that city. Father Baraga himself describes vividly this celebration in a letter to Amalia:

"When we arrived at the church, the men, who carried the pictures, placed themselves two and two at the places where the pictures were to be hung. Then I ascended the ladder and it was a real joy for me to hang up the pictures with my own hands. Oh, dearest Amalia! I cannot tell you how the hearts of my people beat with joy at this unusual solemnity. I have often shed tears, but our people never shed tears so readily and so abundantly as on that Sunday. Now let me tell you how we finished this solemnity. In my inexpressible delight I ascended the pulpit and out of devotion for the Way of the Cross, I spoke with such fervor that very soon all my hearers were in tears, and many have declared afterward that this day would remain for all time in the memory of the people of Metlika. Everlasting praise to the Heavenly Father, whose hand was opened with such fatherly mercy at this celebration, for it is He that effected all this. Our country people cannot control themselves, so great is their delight at the sight of the holy stations, and they often ask when the priest will pray the stations with them."

Scarcely had this one wish of Baraga's been fulfilled, namely, to see the Way of the Cross erected in the parish church of Metlika, when he turned his attention to other needs of the church. The high altar, as well as the side altars of the parish church were in need of renovation, new vestments, and other church utensils had to be bought for the churches under his care. All these things were procured in a short time, mostly at his own expense. At the same time he found time to publish a work, entitled: "Visits to Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament," a translation of a similar work of St. Alphonsus Liguori. All this shows how much a zealous servant of God can undertake and accomplish, who has God's interests and the salvation of souls at heart.

Whilst Father Baraga was thus laboring with all the earnestness and energy of his noble soul for the salvation of his countrymen, the thought of so many poor pagans living in the darkness of heathenism, in ignorance and sin awakened gradually in his heart an earnest desire to devote himself to their

conversion. It cannot with certainty be said when and where this thought of going to the pagans first originated in his mind. Certain it is that it was dormant several years before he finally revealed it to others. The author of the Slovenian Life of Baraga remarks:

"Taking into consideration that already at St. Martin's he usually slept on bare straw or on a board; that he would not shrink neither from great cold nor excessive heat; that he not only abstained entirely from wine, but that very often his breakfast and supper consisted only of bread and water; from these and many other such fasts and mortifications in eating and drinking, we must conclude that this resolution must have been growing for several years even if he had not so declared in a letter to his sister. For this reason he kept silent and did not reveal this his heart's desire to anyone, until from various indications he had been fully convinced that his wish in this matter perfectly agreed with the will of God, and that it was God who was calling him thither where his own heart's longing was directed."

In the year 1829 a society was organized in Vienna, Austria, which had for its avowed object the supporting of the North American missions. This society was called "Die Leopoldinen-Stiftung" (Leopoldine Society). It was approved by Pope Leo XII, who, eleven days before his death, issued in its favor an Apostolic Brief and granted certain indulgences to its members. His Imperial Highness, Archduke Rudolph, Cardinal Prince Archbishop of Olmutz deigned to act as its supreme head and superintendent, and he appointed the Prince Archbishop of Vienna as its representative. The rule and regulations of the society were published in Vienna on the 13th day of May, 1829. This society has done immense good to the struggling church of our country. Year after year large contributions were sent to the poor bishops, missionaries and religious societies. In the appendix of this work the reader will find a detailed statement of the contributions sent to this country between 1829 and 1868.

Father Baraga looked upon the establishment of this society in his country as one of the many indications of his vocation to the Indian missionary field. He, therefore, made known the secret wish of his heart, namely, to go to the Indians, to his bishop and to the managers of the Leopoldine Society, all of whom highly approved of his design. Full of joy at the successful outcome of his request, he immediately wrote from Metlika to his sister Amalia, under date of November 4th, 1829:

"You say the truth when you write that the will of God is seen plainly in my choice to go on the mission. Therefore I most firmly hope and I am immensely rejoiced that God has looked upon me with a truly great love and that He has heard my most fervent prayers and supplications, which are of several years' duration! From all that has happened in such an extraordinarily short time, I hope to foresee that it will be through the will of God that I go to the mission. I prayed to God, especially when going to Ljubljana, and later until I received my answer from Vienna and the bishop's representative, to so guide and dispose my spiritual and temporal superiors, whose hearts are in His hands, that by their decision His most holy will might be made known to me, which I could not know in any other way.

(To be continued)



