

DD 19 - Jesus' Last Days: The *Via Dolorosa*

Also known as:

- Stations of the Cross
 - Way of the Cross
 - Way of Sorrows
 - *Via Crucis*
- **A Catholic pilgrimage route and practice**
 - Stations of the Cross can be anywhere in the world – inside and outside.
 - Many European towns established “The Way of the Cross” in their towns, long before Jerusalem.
 - Each stop is a memorial to an event, not necessarily the actual location of that event. Only in Jerusalem is it possible that their might be coordination of the event and the location on which it occurred.
 - from the former Antonia Fortress (Pilate’s Jerusalem headquarters) to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre — about 2,000 feet
 - Route and 14 stops established in current form in 18th c.; has changed over the years.
 - There is no “official” set of scriptures and prayers.
 - The goal of walking the stations is not -seeing or historical accuracy but spiritual devotion and connection
 - Each station includes a related scripture and prayer
 - variation of the [prayer](#) “We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.”
 - Takes about 3.5 hours to walk it devotionally.
 - Some stations have no scriptural basis; only RC tradition
 - Some stations’ locations are more traditional than historical—little archeological evidence.

Traditional Stations:

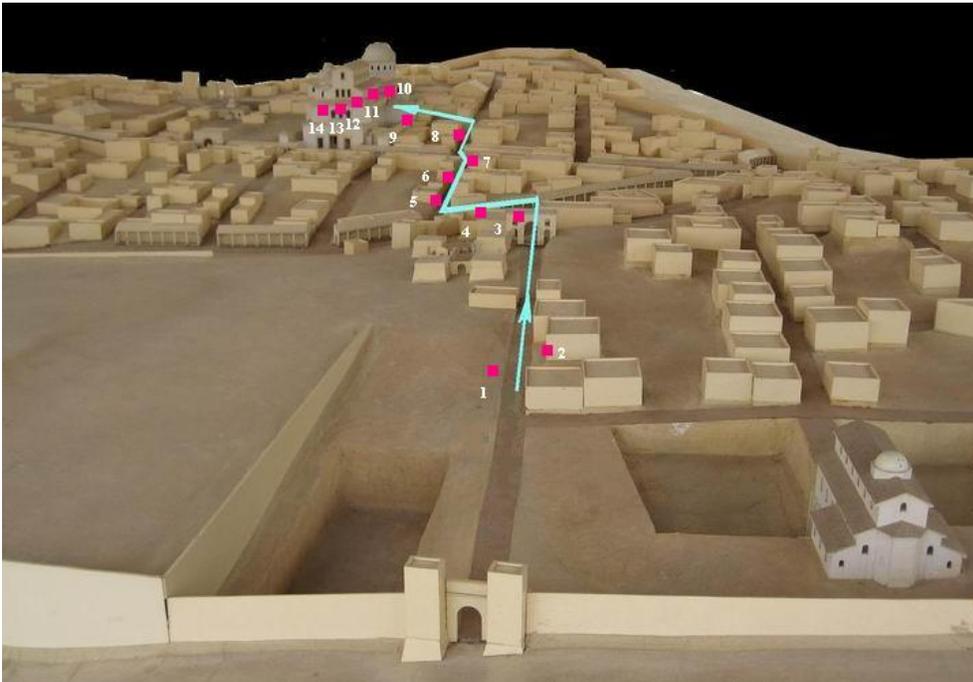
- (1) Jesus condemned to death
- (2) made to bear his cross
- (3) falls the first time
- (4) meets his mother
- (5) Simon of Cyrene made to bear the cross
- (6) Veronica wipes Jesus' face
- (7) falls the second time
- (8) women of Jerusalem met by Jesus
- (9) falls the third time

Stations inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (We'll study these next time)

- (10) stripped of his garments,
- (11) nailed to the cross,
- (12) dies on the cross,
- (13) taken down from the cross
- (14) placed in the sepulchre (a/k/a tomb)



"There is no appearance of streets at all" (Mark Twain)



The Current Route

Station I – Jesus condemned to death





Scriptures:

*“So they bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate the governor.”
(Matt 27:2)*

John 18-28: "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas [House? Sanhedrin?] unto the hall of judgment" [Pilate's hall].

John 19:16: "Then [Pilate] delivered him therefore unto them to be crucified".

Mark 15: 1-15 – 15As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. 2Pilate asked him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ He answered him, ‘You say so.’ 3Then the chief priests accused him of many things. 4Pilate asked him again, ‘Have you no answer?

See how many charges they bring against you.’ 5But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

6 Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. 7Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. 8So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. 9Then he answered them, ‘Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?’ 10For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. 11But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. 12Pilate spoke to them again, ‘Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?’ 13They shouted back, ‘Crucify him!’ 14Pilate asked them, ‘Why, what evil has he done?’ But they shouted all the more, ‘Crucify him!’ 15So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

- Condemned by...
- And his Jerusalem headquarters was where?
 - This was also the Jerusalem palace of Herod Antipas

The Roman prefect’s headquarters was known as the *praetorium*, variously translated as "common hall", "governor's house", "judgment hall", "Pilate's house", or "palace". (see Gospel of John 18:28, Mark 15:16)

- Station #1 : Antonia Fortress where Jesus was sentenced to death
 - Now: Ottoman-era Muslim school in Muslim Quarter of Old City
 - every Friday the Franciscan brothers begin the stations here

Station II – Jesus carries His cross



Second Station

- in front of Franciscan Monastery of the Flagellation; beside Church of the Condemnation
- Traditionally where 1) Jesus took up the **cross**, 2) after being **flogged** and 3) **crowned** with thorns.

Scriptures:

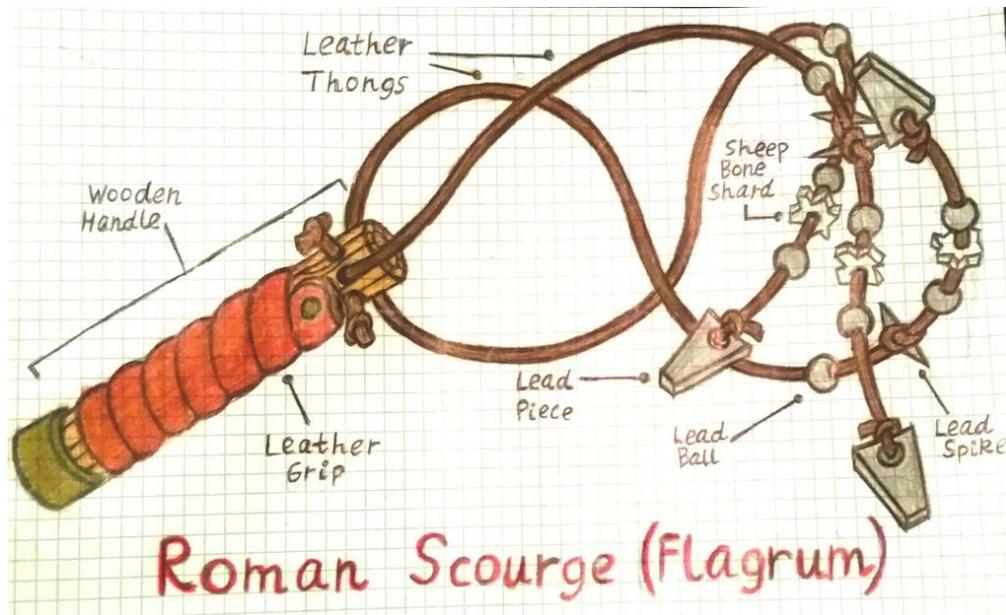
“Then they led him away to crucify him.” (Matt 27:31)

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge’s bench at a place called **The Stone Pavement**, or in Hebrew *Gabbatha*. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, ‘**Here is your King!**’ They cried out, ‘Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!’ Pilate asked them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but the emperor.’ Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

John 19:1 Then Pilate took Jesus and **flogged** him.

So they took Jesus; and **carrying the cross by himself**, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. John 19: 13-17

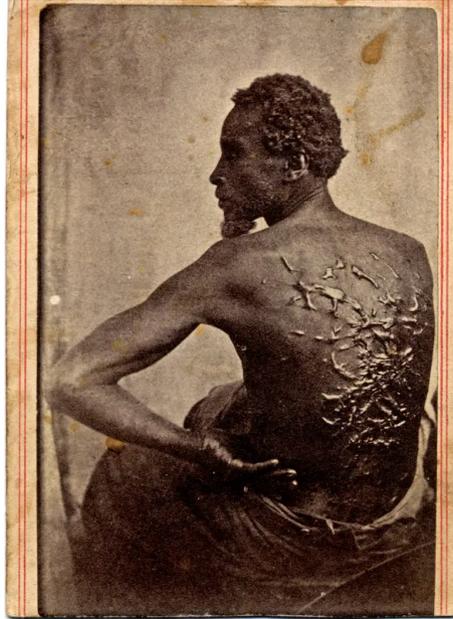
When they had plaited a **crown** of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee and mocked him, saying Hail, King of the Jews!" Matthew 27:29



Tool for Flagellation: Scourge

- Not simply a whipping or beating
- Employed lead, leather, and bones to flay the skin and increase blood loss
- Leads to shock, permanent scarring, slow bleeding to death

"Whipped Peter," 1863



Crown of Thorns



Photo by Philippe Antonello for Icon Productions used here non-commercially

Ziziphus spina-christi,

- "Christ's thorn jujube"
- evergreen tree native to the Levant



The "Ecce Homo" Arch



John 19:5 – *So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, ‘Here is the man!’*

- Roman triumphal arch built by Hadrian (2nd century CE)
- This central arch was flanked by two smaller arches, one of which can still be seen inside the Ecce Homo Church.



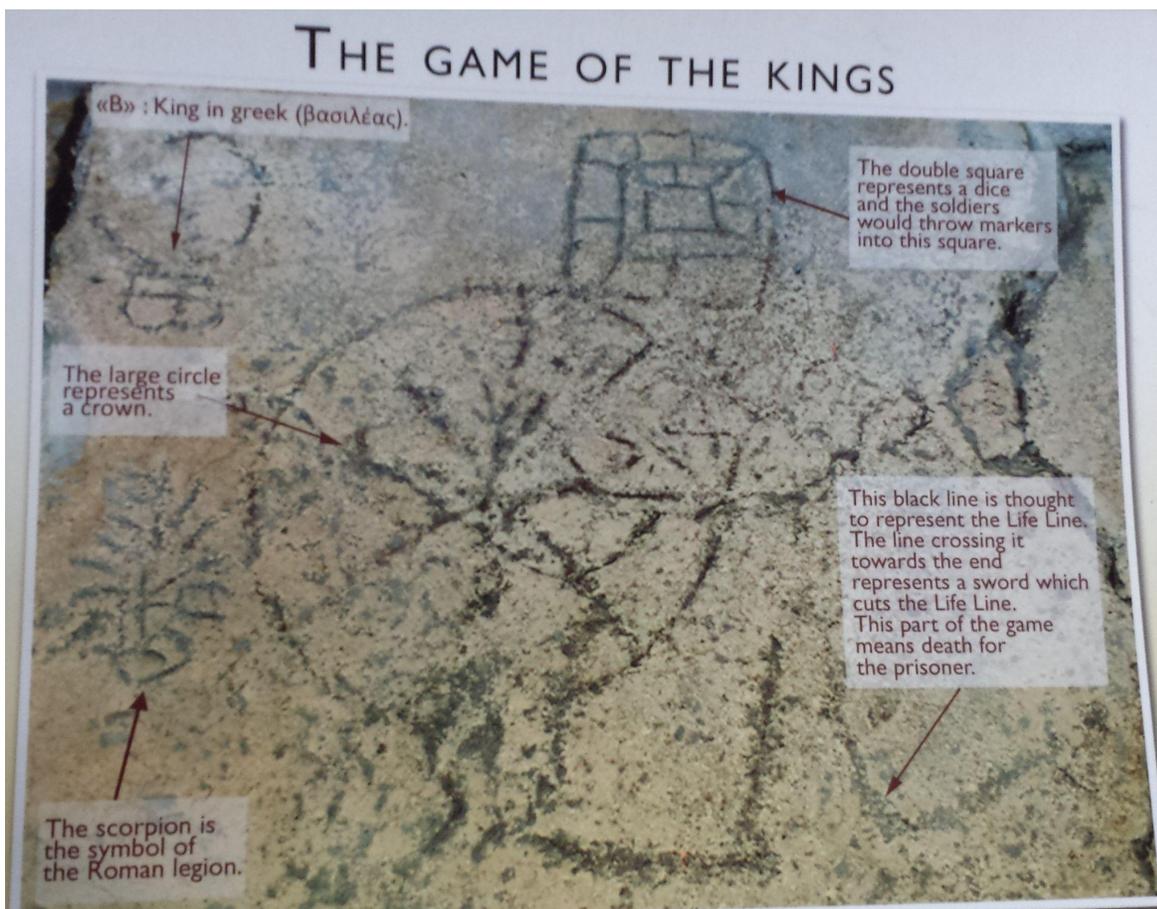
Jesus in Pilate's Hall of Judgment

Lithostrotos

- in John 19:13: where the last part of Jesus' trial took place.
- in Greek (λιθόστρωτος) means "stone pavement".
- under the convent of the Sister of Zion in Muslim quarter
- actual *Praetorium* would have most likely been in a different spot

John 19:13 – *When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha).*





- Discovered 1857
- large flagstones,
 - some with Roman game boards chiseled on them,
 - pavement dates to Roman times.
 - identified as the “stone pavement” mentioned in John 19:13. Likely dates from a different time

What Did Jesus Carry?

- horizontal beam
- Vertical beam was already in the ground
- Romans used permanent uprights along busy roads; incl. tall tree stumps

Station III – Jesus falls the first time



Scripture: There is no exact corresponding scripture.

Location:

- outside Armenian Orthodox Catholic Church
 - sometimes called the 'Polish chapel' as it was renovated with the financial help of the Polish army in the late 40s of the 20th century.
- Between the third and fourth station, well preserved stones remain from a Roman street, probably the "secondary" Cardo of Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem).
 - Jesus could have walked here.

Station IV – Jesus meets his mother



Scripture: There is no exact corresponding scripture.

- Closest scripture: John 19:26-27 – “When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here

is your son,” (Jn 19:26) — This incident takes place, however, when Jesus is already on the cross.

Location: in front of the Armenian Church of Our Lady of the Spasm from 1881.

Station V – Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross



“As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross.” (Matt 27:32)



According to Christian **tradition** this hollow was an imprint made when Jesus stumbled and rested his hand upon the wall to keep his balance, and the touch of centuries of pilgrims has smoothed out the stone and made the depression deeper.

Location:

- Franciscan chapel built in 1895, on the first Franciscan site in Jerusalem founded in 1229-1244.
- The “Jerusalem cross” (one large cross with four smaller crosses); Franciscan symbol



Station VI – Veronica wipes the face of Jesus



Scripture: There is no corresponding scripture. Closest:

“A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him.” Luke 23:27)

Location: small Greek Catholic chapel, “The Holy Face”

Tradition: “When the Savior passed there, she came out, full of womanly compassion, and spoke pitying words to him, undaunted by the hootings and the threatenings of the mob, and wiped the perspiration from his face with her handkerchief. The print of the Savior's face remained upon the handkerchief, a perfect portrait, and so remains unto this day.

Handkerchief relic – in Paris, Milan, or Rome...

Station VII -Jesus falls the second time

Scripture: There is no corresponding scripture.

Location:

- Near bustling Souq Khan Al Zeit St
- small chapel
- In the 1st century, this was the edge of the city; a gate led out to the countryside;
- where Jesus passed through the Gate of Judgment,



Behind the doors is a small Franciscan chapel,

The station is marked by a large Roman column placed in the Franciscan chapel, which once stood on the ancient thoroughfare, the Cardo Maximus, the main route of Roman Jerusalem.



Station VIII – Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem



In Jesus' time, the place we are standing at right now The New Testament recounts: "And there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turned unto them and said, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children*" (Luke XXIII:27-28).



- stone is carved with a Latin cross
- Roman Letters IC and XC
 - representing the first and last letters of the Greek words IHCOYC and XPICTOC meaning “Jesus” and “Christ” respectively.
- Below is the word NIKA – a Romanized version of the Greek NIKI, meaning ‘victory’.
- Full slogan means: “Jesus Christ Conquers”

INRI=Jesus Nazareth King Jews

Typical 8th Station Prayer

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

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

Jesus, as you carry your cross you see a group of women along the road. As you pass by you see they are sad. You stop to spend a moment with them, to offer them some encouragement. Although you have been abandoned by your friends and are in pain, you stop and try to help them.

As a child, sometimes I think a lot about myself. I think about what I want and would like people to spend their lives pleasing me.

As an adult, sometimes I act like a child. I become so absorbed in myself and what I'd like that I forget about the needs of others. I take them for granted, and often ignore their needs.

Help me think more about others. Help me remember that others have problems, too. Help me respond to them even when I'm busy or preoccupied with my own problems.

My Jesus, Who didst comfort the pious women of Jerusalem who wept to see Thee bruised and torn, comfort my soul with Thy tender pity, for in Thy pity lies my trust. May my heart ever answer Thine.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory be to the Father....

Leader: Jesus Christ Crucified.

All: Have Mercy on Us.

Leader: May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, Rest in peace.

All: Amen.

Station IX- Jesus falls the third time



Scripture: There is no corresponding scripture.

Location: Coptic (Egyptian) Orthodox Church of St. Helen



- cross on pillar – where may have Jesus steadied himself (?); note the dark coloration from handprints.
- green door leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Stations 10-14 – (To Be continued) – Inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre