

First Station

## Jesus Is Condemned

Every day in our world people are condemned. We hear about it on the evening news. Every time someone is rejected for being black or Asian, Hispanic or Jewish, every time an old person has to huddle on a street corner to keep warm or search in a garbage can for food, every time a handicapped person is made to feel unwelcome, someone is being condemned. You see it at school too. There are kids who are constantly the butt of jokes. They look funny or talk funny, and they don't know how to dress. They just don't fit in.

Jesus was one of those who didn't fit in. He did and said things that upset the people with the power. The religious leaders wanted him out of the way and Pilate the judge went along with them. Jesus was condemned to die on a cross.

(Pause for silent reflection.)

Jesus, forgive us for the times we have condemned you in others through our silence and indifference. Help us to love and welcome all others as you did. Teach us how to follow you.



Every time someone is rejected for being black or Asian, Hispanic or Jewish, that person is being condemned. Give us the courage, Jesus, not to condemn others.



Help us to be sensitive to the burdens others carry, Jesus. Give us the courage not to walk away from them.

## Second Station

# Jesus Carries the Cross

All around us people are carrying heavy burdens. Some of these burdens we know about, like the ones our parents or friends carry. Some burdens we don't know about, like the ones carried by teachers or other kids in our classes. Too often we can't be bothered with what goes on in other people's lives. We allow ourselves to be deaf and blind to their pain. We think it's easier that way. We think we have enough to do just taking care of ourselves.

Jesus was forced to carry the burden of the cross. Surely there were those in the crowd who knew him. They saw the soldiers drop the cross on his shoulders, but they were worried about themselves. They didn't protest the rough treatment he received; they didn't come forward.

(Pause for silent reflection.)

Jesus, forgive us for the times we have walked away from the burdens of others. Help us not to be deaf and blind to their pain. Teach us how to follow you.

Third Station

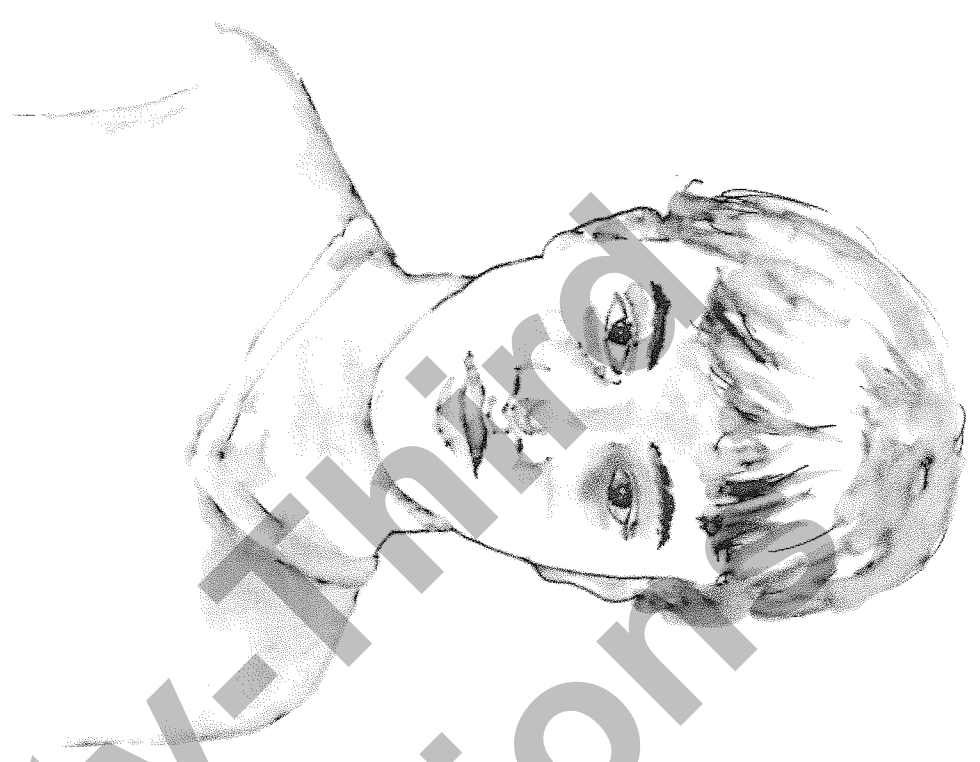
## Jesus Falls the First Time

The worst thing that can happen to us is to fall flat on our faces in front of others: when we do or say something stupid, when we're not accepted for who we are, when we're laughed at for not looking right or dressing right. To be shut out is the worst way to fall flat. At school games or dances, we know there are kids who are on the outside looking in. But we don't invite them in. What would our friends think?

Jesus fell flat in front of the soldiers, in front of people who had believed in him, in front of his own mother. He was in this situation because he had spoken out and taken risks for others. Look where it got him. What must he have been thinking as he lost control and fell under the cross?

(Pause for silent reflection.)

Jesus, forgive us for the times we have shut others out and refused to help. Help us to be aware of their needs and to respond to them. Teach us how to follow you.



To be shut out is the worst way to fall flat. Give us the courage, Jesus, to reach out to those who are on the outside looking in.