



Primary Stations of the Cross  
based on  
The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child  
*The Story of Jesus' Death is the Story of  
Our Lives*

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Article 14 and 30: You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion.

Article 40: You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in a justice system that respects your rights.

*We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.*

*Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*

### **1. Jesus is condemned.**

The people in power did not like what Jesus had to say. They did not like what he believed. They were angry that he spoke up for all the people that they had condemned: The poor and sick; widows and orphans; people who did things differently; people who broke the law. So in the end, they condemned him too. They turned their backs on him.

We can be quick to condemn people without even bothering to get to know them. Perhaps they speak a different language, look different from all our other friends, or go to a different church. All children everywhere have the right to follow their own religion, language and culture.

*Jesus, help us to respect all children of every culture and forgive us when we don't.  
May **your** story be **our** story.*

Article 36: You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation.

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*Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*

### **2. Jesus carries the cross.**

When Jesus carried his cross he felt the weight of it on his shoulders. He also felt the weight of sadness and disappointment. Judas his friend had accepted money to show the people in power where Jesus could be found. He felt used and let down. He felt as if he had been 'sold'.

Sometimes we use the kindness of our friends to get what we want from them, and then we forget all about them and let them down. Some children in our world are also used by others, to get something they want. Used to make clothes for little or no pay, which then make lots of money for those who sell them. Used to beg on the streets and forced to take the money to adults who use them. Used to work as soldiers in illegal wars.

*Jesus, help us to make their cross a little lighter by working to stop them from being used,  
and forgive us when we use our friends in smaller ways.  
May **your** story be **our** story.*

Article 37: No-one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

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### **3. Jesus falls for the first time.**

When Jesus fell to the ground he felt hurt, harmed and punished. Why did these people want to hurt him so much? No-one came to help him and he could not understand why he was being treated so badly, by the soldiers, but also by the crowd.

Some children in our world are physically harmed by adults or are treated in a cruel way. They are shut away in a room without food and left to feel ignored and alone. They feel that no-one will come to help them.

Jesus, help us in some small way to try to bring about an end to cruelty to children in our world; and forgive us when we see one of our friends hurting, but do nothing to help.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 18: You have the rights to be raised by your parents if possible.

Article 20: You have the right to have special care if you cannot live with your parents.

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*Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*

#### **4. Jesus comes face to face with his mother.**

How must Jesus have felt when his Mum stepped out of the crowd to look at him with love in her eyes? How did Mary feel? He was being punished and she couldn't help Him. All she could give Him was her love; something she had given Him since first she heard that she was going to have a baby.

Some children in our world are separated from their parents, by war, natural disaster or famine. Many agencies work hard to re-unite these children with their parents or find the right kind of people to be new 'parents' to them.

Jesus, help us to remember that we can help these agencies every time we support something like CAFOD. Help us to always be grateful for our parents and show them our love, and forgive us when we don't.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 39: You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.

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#### **5. Simon of Cyrene helps carry the cross.**

Imagine the moment: the relief Jesus must have felt when finally the soldiers got someone to help Him carry the cross; and the horror Simon must have felt when he was made to do this! But as Simon walked side by side with Jesus he realised that, even though he would have liked it better if someone else had helped instead of him, by helping Jesus he was being the best person he could be.

When we are in need of help we expect someone to be there for us. But some children in our world have no-one to help them, no matter how badly they are being treated.

Jesus, sometimes the children who need our help seem a long way from us. It feels too hard to help them. Help us to remember that by helping those closer to us who are hurting, like Simon we too can be the best person we can be. Forgive us when we aren't.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 24: You have the right to the best health care possible.

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## **6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.**

Jesus couldn't cope much longer. The blood from the thorns and his sweat were blinding his vision. Veronica could not bear to see him like this. How could she, a simple woman in the crowd, protect him a little from what he was facing. The simple action of wiping his face and clearing his vision, was such a tiny thing to do. But it was the best care she could give him at that time. Perhaps to her it felt like nothing and she felt as if it hadn't helped at all; but to Jesus that tiny action changed everything. Now he could see again. Now he could cope a little longer.

All children in the world have the right to the best health care possible in the circumstances in which they live. By encouraging our families to buy alternative Easter 'presents' which provide training to health staff in developing countries we can make sure this happens.

Jesus, help us to understand that it is more important to develop peoples' skills in health care than to eat one more Easter egg. Just a small amount of money can train people to save children's lives, or to give sight to children with diseases of the eye. This will bring vision, like Veronica brought to Jesus. Forgive us when we don't see clearly and forget that you are in everyone we meet.  
Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 26: You have the right to help from the government if you are in need.

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## **7. Jesus falls for the second time.**

When Jesus fell again beneath his cross He must have felt angry. Angry that those with the **real** power to help him stood by and did nothing. The soldiers, acting for the government, could easily have made his journey more bearable. Instead they looked away and refused to help.

Some children in our world live in countries where their poverty and their need are ignored by the government. Even in our own country we can see this happening today. No-one challenged the soldiers who ignored Jesus, but we can challenge the government who ignore us and our friends, both here in the UK and in other countries.

Jesus, help us to be brave and tell the leaders of all countries that they cannot refuse to help children in need. Give our teachers and families the skills to help us to do this. Forgive those leaders when they don't help us, and change their hearts to do so.  
Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 19: You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

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## **8. The women of Jerusalem weep for Jesus.**

Nobody who cares about their friends wants to see them being mistreated. These women had shared meals with Jesus, spent time with him and listened to his parables. Now they had to stand

by and watch him being mistreated, not only by the soldiers, but by the crowd. Not only was Jesus hurting in his body, but they could see that with every step he took the shame and humiliation he felt grew stronger and stronger. How they cried, to see him being treated so badly.

Some children in our world are treated very badly. Adults hurt them or do things to them which make them embarrassed and ashamed, even though, just like Jesus, they have done nothing wrong, and have the right to be protected from this treatment.

Jesus, help us to remember that the simplest actions can have the biggest impact. Like signing our name on a petition or filling in a campaign postcard to make sure these children get protection from bad treatment so that no children have to cry. Forgive us when we weep and stand by, forgetting we have the power to do something to help.  
Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 31: you have the right to play and rest.

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## **9. Jesus falls for the third time.**

Have you ever been so tired that you just can't move? Have you ever been so sad that you long to be able to be with your friends and play? When Jesus fell for the third time he must have felt that he would not make it back onto his feet. Laying there, perhaps he thought of all the good times he had had with children who had come to hear his stories and learn from him. Maybe he remembered telling his disciples, "Let the little children come to me". How he must have longed to be playing with those children now; but most of all, how much he must have longed to finally be able to rest.

Some children in our world do not know what it means to play, and don't get much rest. They are made to work for terrible pay, just to be able to help their families survive. Or they live in warzones, where the noise of fighting keeps them awake at night and they can't get any rest.

Jesus, help us to pray often for the children in our world who have no chance to play or to rest. Give strength to those who work for charities which try to bring an end to children being used as workers or to wars where children suffer and cannot rest. Forgive us when we take all our play and rest for granted and forget to be thankful for it.  
Jesus, May **your** story be **our** story.

Article 27: You have the right to..... clothing..... and to have your basic needs met.

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## **10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes.**

Just when Jesus is near the end of his suffering, he has the last basic right taken away from him: the right to simple clothing. When we are denied the basics, we are denied our dignity, the thing which makes us human.

Some children in our world are in such desperate need that they lack not only food, but also clothes, and it must seem to them that there is no hope. But with the help of relief agencies such as CAFOD these children can have their needs met and their families can learn new skills so that they can provide them with the basics of life.

Jesus, we thank you for the work of relief agencies who meet the basic needs of children in developing countries; and we pray that our families and friends may always support their wonderful work, through fundraising, action and prayer. Forgive us when we focus too much on the style and brand of our clothes, and forget that so many children in our world have no clothes of their own.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 7: You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

Article 8: You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.

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*Because by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*

### **11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.**

The crowd weren't happy. "INRI", the name nailed above Jesus' head on the cross, meant "The King of the Jews". "Why have you done this?" they asked Pilate. Although it looked like Pilate was giving Jesus recognition by using this name, he was in fact poking fun at him and the Jewish people. He was using a name to say that their 'King' was no better than a criminal, who was being put to death with other criminals.

Without a name, we cannot belong. When people cannot identify us they do not know how to respond to us. Children orphaned by war as babies may not know their name. They may not know their nationality or identity. Their whole future is placed in the hands of new carers and they grow up with new 'brothers and sisters'. They are given a name and allowed to belong. A name can also be used in a harmful way, just as Pilate did.

Jesus, help us to remember that all the children of the world belong to your family. You know us all by name and we are all your children. You have called us by our name; we belong to you. You love us. Forgive us when we fail to love our 'brothers and sisters' by using 'names' in a hurtful way. And forgive us when we forget that we all have your name in our identity as **Christians**.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 6: You have the right to be alive.

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### **12. Jesus dies.**

"My God, why have you abandoned me?" Even Jesus felt the pain of despair and total loneliness. Yet, in his despair he also prayed, "Father, into your hands I give my spirit." Although He felt alone, He knew that really His Father was with him and he placed all his trust in Him.

There is nothing more sad than when we hear of children around the world who have died because they didn't have access to the same rights as us. It feels so unfair. We can sometimes feel that God has abandoned them, and want to cry out as Jesus did.

Jesus, help us to remember that as children of God, we are never abandoned by Him. May we always trust in Him, just as you did. May we always remember that by your death you gave us life

that will last forever, and that the story of your death is the story of our lives. Forgive us when we don't live our lives to the full.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 15: You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.

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### **13. Jesus is taken down from the cross**

Joseph of Arimathea chose his own friends. He had been a secret friend of Jesus, always scared of what would happen to him if the Romans found out. But now he was very brave and made it clear that he was a friend of Jesus by asking for his body. He knew that there sometimes comes a time we need to stick up for our friends. He wanted Jesus to have a dignified burial, and made sure he gave this gift to his friend.

Too many children in our world don't know what it is to have a friend. They have to work, or fight in a war, or run away from their homes with their families and lose any friends they had had. We may feel that there is nothing that we are able to do to help these friendless children.

Jesus, help us to remember that, although we cannot be a physical friend to every child in the world, we can give them our friendship through our prayers for them. Help us to make the most of our right to choose our own friends by always being true to them and sticking up for them whenever they need us. Forgive us when we are too scared to do this.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

Article 16: You have the right to privacy.

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### **14. Jesus is placed in the tomb.**

After everything Jesus had been thorough, finally he had the dignity of privacy in death. Peace came to him at last. All the crowds were now beyond him, as he lay in the silence. There was nothing more, just himself.

The right to have our own space, and to be away from all that bothers us is one we can all see the importance of. Yet many children in our world are never left in peace for a moment and have nowhere to call their special, private place. They cannot leave all that bothers them behind, even for a few minutes, and this causes their lives to be constantly uneasy and stressful. They live their lives without ever getting the chance of a simple break from fear or distress.

Jesus, when we feel upset that we haven't got our own bedroom, or that our brothers and sisters never leave us in peace, help us to remember that our lives are simple and easy compared to the lives of some children in our world. Help us to remember that they all have the same right to privacy as we do. Forgive us when we take our own quiet moments in our own quiet places for granted. Help us to make the most of our privacy in productive ways for the good of others.

Jesus, may **your** story be **our** story.

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Our Father.....

Hail Mary.....

Glory Be.....

*Jesus, may the story of our lives reflect all that you taught us in the story of your death. And may we always fight for equal access to the same basic rights for all the children of our world. Amen.*