



JOE CATHOLIC explores THE WAY OF THE CROSS

THE WAY OF THE CROSS IS WELL KNOWN TO CATHOLICS AND CHRISTIANS AROUND THE WORLD. IT'S NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR WHEN THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS WERE FIRST BEGUN AS A PRAYERFUL DEVOTION, BUT THERE WAS A DESIRE AS EARLY AS THE 5TH CENTURY TO REPRODUCE THE HOLY SITES OF JERUSALEM FOR THOSE WHO COULDN'T MAKE THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND.

ST. PETRONIUS OF BOLOGNA, ITALY, BUILT A SERIES OF CHAPELS TO REPRESENT THESE SITES AND MAY WELL BE WHERE THE STATIONS LATER DEVELOPED. BY THE 1300'S THE FRANCISCANS, WHO HAD CARE OF THE HOLY PLACES IN JERUSALEM, LIKELY VENERATED THE PATH BEGINNING FROM PONTUS PILATE'S HOUSE ALL THE WAY TO CALVARY, TRACING JESUS' JOURNEY FROM HIS WRONGFUL SENTENCE OF DEATH ALL THE WAY TO THE SITE OF HIS CRUCIFIXION TO SAVE US.

CAN YOU NAME ALL FOURTEEN STATIONS? DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE STATION YOU LIKE TO LOOK AT IN YOUR PARISH?

WHICH STATION IS JOE ENCOUNTERING HERE?

AN ENGLISH PILGRIM NAMED WILLIAM WEY, WHO VISITED JERUSALEM IN 1458, IS ONE OF THE FIRST TO MENTION "STATIONS" OR STOPPING POINTS ALONG THE VIA SACRA OR HOLY WAY IN JERUSALEM.

THE NUMBER OF STATIONS DIFFERED FOR QUITE A WHILE, BUT IS NOW TRADITIONALLY FIXED AT FOURTEEN, CULMINATING WITH JESUS BEING PLACED IN THE TOMB; READYING US FOR EASTER MORNING.

IT BECAME COMMON PRACTICE TO PUT STATIONS INSIDE CHURCHES BY THE 17TH CENTURY SO THE FAITHFUL COULD MEDITATE ON THIS LAST JOURNEY OF CHRIST ON EARTH.