 Reading time: 10 min.

The “Roman Stations” are an ancient liturgical tradition that, during Lent and the first week of Easter, associates each day with a specific church in Rome, within a pilgrimage journey. The term “statio” (from the Latin stare, to stop) refers to the idea of a communal pause for prayer and celebration. In past centuries, the Pope and the faithful would move in procession from the church called “collecta” to the station of the day, where the Eucharist was celebrated. This rite, while having roots in the early centuries of Christianity, retains its vitality even today, when the indication of the station church still appears in liturgical books. It is a true pilgrimage among the basilicas and shrines of the Eternal City that can be undertaken in this jubilee year not only as a path of conversion but also as a testimony of faith.

Origin and diffusion

The origins of the Roman Stations date back at least to the 3rd Century, when the Christian community was still undergoing persecutions. The earliest testimonies refer to Pope Fabian (236-250) who would visit places of worship established near the catacombs or the burial sites of martyrs, distributing to the needy what the faithful offered as alms and celebrating the Eucharist. This custom strengthened in the 4th Century, with the freedom of worship granted by Constantine: large basilicas were built, and the faithful began to gather on specific days to celebrate Mass at sites linked to the memory of the saints. Over time, the itinerary took on a more organic character, creating a true calendar of stations that touched on the various districts of Rome. The communal dimension – with the presence of the bishop, clergy, and people – thus became a visible sign of communion and testimony of faith.

It was Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) who gave structure and regularity to the use of the Stations, especially during Lent. He established a calendar that, day by day, assigned a specific church for the main celebration. His reform did not stem from nothing, rather organized an already existing practice. Gregory wanted the procession to start from a minor church (*collecta*) and conclude in a more solemn place (*statio*), where the people, united with the Pope, celebrated the penitential rites and the Eucharist. It was a way to prepare for Easter. The very journey indicated the earthly pilgrimage towards eternity, the churches with their sacred architecture and works of art served a pedagogical function in an era when not

everyone could read or access books. The relics of the martyrs preserved in those churches testified to the faith lived to the point of giving life, and their intercession brought graces to those who requested them. The celebration of the Sacrifice of the Mass sanctified the participating faithful.

During the Middle Ages, the practice of the Roman Stations spread more and more, becoming not only an ecclesial event but also a significant social phenomenon. The faithful, in fact, who came from different regions of Italy and Europe, joined the Romans to take part in these liturgical gatherings.

Structure of the station celebration

The characteristic element of these celebrations was the procession. In the morning, the faithful gathered in the church of the *collecta*, where, after a brief moment of prayer, they would set off in procession towards the station church, singing litanies and penitential hymns. Upon arrival, the Pope or the appointed prelate would preside over the Mass, with readings and prayers specific to the day. The use of litanies had a strong spiritual and pedagogical sense: while physically walking through the streets, prayers were offered for the needs of the Church and the world, invoking the saints of Rome and all of Christianity. The celebration culminated in the Eucharist, giving this “pause” a sacramental value and ecclesial communion.

Lent became the privileged time for the Stations, starting from Ash Wednesday until Holy Saturday or, according to some customs, until the second Sunday after Easter. Each day was marked by a designated church, often chosen for the presence of important relics or for its particular history. Notable examples include *Santa Sabina on the Aventine*, where the Ash Wednesday rite usually begins, and *Santa Croce in Gerusalemme*, linked to the veneration of the relics of the Cross of Christ, a traditional destination for Good Friday. Participating in the Lenten Stations means entering a daily pilgrimage that unites the faithful in a path of penance and conversion, supported by devotion to the martyrs and saints. Each church tells a page of history, offering images, mosaics, and architectures that communicate the evangelical message in a visual form.

One of the most significant features of this tradition is the connection with the martyrs of the Church of Rome. During the period of persecutions, many Christians died for their faith. In the Constantinian and subsequent eras, basilicas or chapels were erected over their tombs. Celebrating a *statio* in these places meant recalling

the testimony of those who had given their lives for Christ, reinforcing the belief that the Church is built also on the blood of the martyrs. Each liturgical visit thus became an act of communion between the faithful of yesterday and those of today, united by the Sacrament of the Eucharist. This “pilgrimage to the memory” connected the Lenten journey to a history of faith passed down from generation to generation.

From decline to rediscovery

In the Middle Ages and the following centuries, the practice of the Stations experienced alternating fortunes. Sometimes, due to epidemics, invasions, or unstable political situations, it was moderated or suspended. However, liturgical books continued to indicate the Station Churches for each day, a sign that the Church at least preserved the symbolic memory of them. With the Tridentine liturgical reform (16th century), the centrality of the Pope in such celebrations became less frequent, but the practice of citing the Station Church remained in official texts. With the renewed interest in Christian history and archaeology, the station tradition was rediscovered and proposed as a path of spiritual formation. In modern times, especially starting from Leo XIII (1878-1903) and subsequently with the popes of the 20th Century, there has been a growing interest in recovering this tradition. Various religious orders and lay associations have begun to promote the rediscovery of the “pilgrimage of the stations,” organising communal moments of prayer and catechesis in the designated churches.

Today, in an era characterised by frenzy and speed, the *statio* proposes rediscovering the dimension of “pausing”: stopping to pray, contemplate, listen, be silent, and meet the Lord. Lent is by definition a time of conversion, of more intense prayer, and of charity towards others. Undertaking a journey among the churches of Rome, even just on some significant days, can help the faithful rediscover the meaning of a penance lived not as a renunciation in itself but as an opening to the mystery of Christ.

Even today, in the Roman Calendar, the Station Church is indicated for each day. This recalls the unity of the people of God, gathered around the successor of Peter, and the memory of the saints who have spent their lives for the Gospel. Anyone who participates in these liturgies – even occasionally – discovers a city that is not just an open-air museum but a place where faith has been expressed in an original and lasting way.

Those who wish to rediscover the profound meaning of Lent and Easter can thus allow themselves to be guided by the station itinerary, joining their voice to that of the Christians of yesterday and of today in the great chorus that leads to the Easter light.
We present below the itinerary of the Roman Stations, accompanied by the list of churches and their geographical location. It is important to note that the order of the list remains unchanged each year. Only the start date of Lent varies, and consequently, the subsequent dates. We wish a fruitful pilgrimage to those who wish to undertake, even if only in part, this journey in the Jubilee year.

			Roman Station	**Saints and Martyrs with Relics or Preserved Remains**
1	03.05	Wed	St. Sabina on the Aventine Hill	Saint Sabina and Saint Serapia, martyr (d. circa 126 AD); Saints Alexander, Evens and Theodulus, martyrs
2	03.06	Thurs	St. George at the Velabrum	Saint George, martyr (d. 303)
3	03.07	Fri	Sts. John and Paul on the Caelian Hill	Saints John and Paul, martyrs (d. 362); Saint Paul of the Cross (d. 1775), Founder of the Congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ (the Passionists)
4	03.08	Sat	St. Augustine in Camp Martius	Saint Monica (d. 387), mother of Saint Augustine; relics of Saint Augustine

5	03.09	Sun	St. John Lateran	The heads of Saint Peter and Saint Paul: these relics are preserved in silver busts placed above the papal altar, visible through a gilded grille; the Holy Stairs (in the nearby Chapel of the Sancta Sanctorum); the Last Supper Table – the table on which the Last Supper was celebrated, according to tradition (a significant relic located on the altar of the Blessed Sacrament)
6	03.10	Mon	St. Peter in Chains on the Oppian Hill	The chains of Saint Peter; relics attributed to the Seven Maccabean Brothers, figures from the Old Testament venerated as martyrs
7	03.11	Tue	St. Anastasia on the Palatine Hill	Saint Anastasia of Sirmium (d. 304); relics of the Holy Mantle of Saint Joseph; part of the Veil of the Virgin Mary
8	03.12	Wed	St. Mary Major	The Sacred Wood of the Cradle (the manger of the Christ Child); Panniculum (a small piece of cloth, part of the swaddling clothes with which the newborn Jesus was wrapped); Saint Matthew, Apostle (d. 70 or 74); Saint Jerome (d. 420); Saint Pius V, Pope (d. 1572)
9	03.13	Thurs	St. Lawrence in Panisperna	Site of the martyrdom of Saint Lawrence (d. 258); Saint Lawrence, martyr; Saint Crispina, martyr (d. 304); Saint Bridget of Sweden (d. 1373)
10	03.14	Fri	Twelve Holy Apostles at the Trajan Forum	Saint Philip the Apostle (d. 80); Saint James the Less, the Apostle (d. 62); Saints Chrysanthus and Daria, martyrs (d. c. 283)

11	03.15	Sat	St. Peter in the Vatican	Saint Peter (d. 67); Saint Linus (d. 76); Saint Cletus (d. 92); Saint Evaristus (d. 105); Saint Alexander I (d. 115); Saint Sixtus I (d. 126–128); Saint Telesphorus (d. 136); Saint Hyginus (d. 140); Saint Pius I (d. 155); Saint Anicetus; (d. 166); Saint Eleutherius (d. 189); Saint Victor I (d. 199); Saint John Chrysostom (d. 407, relics in the Choir Chapel); Saint Leo I, the Great (d. 461); Saint Simplicius (d. 483); Saint Gelasius I (d. 496); Saint Symmachus (d. 514); Saint Hormisdas (d. 523); Saint John I (d. 526); Saint Felix IV (d. 530); Saint Agapetus I (d. 536); Saint Gregory I, the Great (d. 604); Saint Boniface IV (d. 615); Saint Eugene I (d. 657); Saint Vitalian (d. 672); Saint Agatho (d. 681); Saint Leo II (d. 683); Saint Benedict II (d. 685); Saint Sergius I (d. 701); Saint Gregory II (d. 731); Saint Gregory III (d. 741); Saint Zachary (d. 752); Saint Paul I (d. 767); Saint Leo III (d. 816); Saint Paschal I (d. 824); Saint Leo IV (d. 855); Saint Nicholas I (d. 867); Saint Leo IX (d. 1054); Blessed Urban II (d. 1099); Blessed Innocent XI (d. 1689); Saint Pius X (d. 1914); Saint John XXIII (d. 1963); Saint Paul VI (d. 1978); Blessed John Paul I (d. 1978); Saint John Paul II (d. 2005); a fragment of Saint Andrew’s Cross; the lance of Saint Longinus; a fragment of the Cross of Christ

12	03.16	Sun	St. Mary in Domnica at Navicella	Saint Lawrence, martyr (d. 258); Saint Ciriaca, martyr
13	03.17	Mon	St. Clement in Lateran	Saint Clement I, Pope and martyr (d. 101); Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and martyr (d. c. 110); Saint Cyril (d. 869), Apostle of the Slavs
14	03.18	Tue	St. Balbina on the Aventine	Saint Balbina, Virgin and Roman martyr (d. 130) already venerated in early Christian times Saints Felicissimus and Quirinus (her father) associated with the martyrdom of St. Balbina
15	03.19	Wed	St. Cecilia in Trastevere	Saint Cecilia (d. 230); Saint Valerian, Cecilia's husband, converted to Christianity and martyred (d. 229); Saint Tiburtius, brother of Valerian and companion in martyrdom; Saint Maximus, the soldier or official in charge of the execution of Valerian and Tiburtius, who later converted and was in turn martyred; Pope Urban I (c. d. 230), who is said to have baptised Cecilia and her husband Valerian
16	03.20	Thurs	St. Mary in Trastevere	Saint Julius I, Pope (d. 352); Saint Callixtus I, Pope and martyr (c. d. 222); Saints Florentinus, Corona, Sabinus and Alexander, martyrs
17	03.21	Fri	St. Vitalis in Fovea	Saints Vitalis (d. 304), Valeria (2nd century), Gervasius and Protasius (2nd century)

18	03.22	Sat	Sts. Peter and Marcellinus in Lateran	Saints Marcellinus and Peter, martyrs (d. 304); Saint Marcia, martyr associated with Saints Marcellinus and Peter
19	03.23	Sun	St. Lawrence Outside the Walls	Saint Lawrence (d. 258); Saint Stephen, Protomartyr (1st century); Saint Hippolytus (3rd century); Saint Justus, martyr (d. 167); Pope Saint Sixtus III (d. 440); Pope Saint Zosimus (d. 418); Blessed Pius IX, Pope (d. 1878)
20	03.24	Mon	St. Mark on the Capitoline	Saint Mark, Evangelist and martyr (1st century); Pope Saint Mark (d. 336); Saints Abdon and Sennen, Persian martyrs (3rd century)
21	03.25	Tue	St. Pudenziana at the Viminal	Saint Pudenziana, martyr (2nd century); Saint Praxedes, his sister (2nd century)
22	03.26	Wed	St. Sixtus (Sts. Nereus and Achilleus)	Saint Sixtus I, Pope (d. 125); Saints Nereus and Achilleus (d. 300); Saint Flavia Domitilla, martyr (1st century)
23	03.27	Thurs	Sts. Cosmas and Damian on the Via Sacra	Saints Cosmas and Damian, physicians and martyrs (d. 303); Saints Antimo and Leonzio, brothers and martyrs
24	03.28	Fri	St. Lawrence in Lucina	The gridiron of Saint Lawrence on which the Saint is said to have been burned alive; a vase containing St. Lawrence’s burnt flesh
25	03.29	Sat	St. Susanna at the Baths of Diocletian	Saint Susanna, virgin and martyr (d. 294)

26	03.30	Sun	Holy Cross in Jerusalem	Fragments of the True Cross, part of the Titulus Crucis (the inscription “I.N.R.I.”); nails from the Crucifixion and some thorns from the Crown; a fragment of the cross of the Good Thief, Saint Dismas; the phalanx of Saint Thomas the Apostle (1st century)
27	04.31	Mon	Sts. Four Crowned on the Caelian Hill	Saints Castor, Sinfroniano, Claudius and Nicostratus, martyrs (4th century)
28	04.01	Tue	St. Lawrence in Damaso	Saint Lawrence, martyr (d. 258); Saint Damasus, Pope and martyr (d. 384); Saints Jovinus and Faustinus, martyrs
29	04.02	Wed	St. Paul Outside the Walls	Saint Paul the Apostle (d. 67); the chain of Saint Paul; the staff of Saint Paul
30	04.03	Thurs	Sts. Sylvester and Martin on the Mountains	Saints Artemius, Paulina and Sisinnius, martyrs; Blessed Angelus Paoli (d. 1720)
31	04.04	Fri	St. Eusebius on the Esquiline Hill	Saint Eusebius, presbyter and martyr (d. 353); Saints Orosius and Paulinus, priests and martyrs
32	04.05	Sat	St. Nicholas in Prison	Saint Nicholas of Bari (d. 270); Saints Marcellinus and Faustinus, martyrs (d. 250)
33	04.06	Sun	St. Peter in the Vatican	
34	04.07	Mon	St. Chrysogonus in Trastevere	Saint Chrysogonus, martyr (d. 303); Saint Anastasia, martyr (d. 250); Saint Rufus, martyr (1st century); Blessed Anna Maria Taigi (d. 1837)

35	04.08	Tue	St. Mary on Via Lata	Saint Agapitus, martyr (d. 273); Saints Hippolytus and Darius, martyrs (4th century); a fragment of the True Cross
36	04.09	Wed	St. Marcellus on the Corso	Saint Marcellus I, Pope (d. 309); Saint Digna and Saint Emerita, martyrs
37	04.10	Thurs	St. Apollinaris in Campo Marzio	Saint Apollinaris (2nd century); Saints Eustratius, Bardarius, Eugenius, Orestes and Eusenio, martyrs
38	04.11	Fri	St. Stephen on the Caelian Hill	Saint Stephen, Protomartyr (d. 36); Saints Primus and Felician, martyrs (d. 303); fragments of the True Cross
39	04.12	Sat	St. John at the Latin Gate	Bone fragments or small reliquaries containing parts of the body or personal objects attributed to Saint John the Evangelist (d. 98); Saints Gordianus and Epimachus, martyrs (4th century)
40	04.13	Sun	St. John Lateran	
41	04.14	Mon	St. Praxedes on the Esquiline	Saint Praxedes, martyr (2nd century); Saint Pudens, martyr (2nd century); Saint Victoria, martyr (d. 253); the Column of the Flagellation
42	04.15	Tue	St. Prisca on the Aventine	Saint Prisca, one of the first Christian martyrs (1st century); Saints Aquila and Priscilla, Christian spouses; fragments of the True Cross
43	04.16	Wed	St. Mary Major	

44	04.17	Thurs	St. John Lateran	
45	04.18	Fri	Holy Cross in Jerusalem	
46	04.19	Sat	St. John Lateran	
47	04.20	Sun	St. Mary Major	
48	04.21	Mon	St. Peter in the Vatican	
49	04.22	Tue	St. Paul Outside the Walls	
50	04.23	Wed	St. Lawrence Outside the Walls	Saint Lawrence, martyr (d. 258); Saint Stephen, Protomartyr (d. 36); Saint Sebastian, martyr (d. 288); Saint Francis of Assisi (d. 1226); Pope Saint Zosimus (d. 418), Pope Saint Sixtus III (d. 440), Pope Saint Hilary (d. 468), Pope Saint Damasus II (d. 1048); Blessed Pius IX, Pope (d. 1878); fragments of the True Cross
51	04.24	Thurs	Church of the Twelve Apostles	Saint Philip the Apostle (d. 80); Saint James the Less (d. 62)
52	04.25	Fri	St. Mary ad Martyres (Pantheon)	Saint Longinus, the Roman soldier who pierced the side of Jesus Christ during the Crucifixion (1st century); Saint Bibiana, martyr (d. 362–363); Saint Lucia, martyr (d. 304); Saints Rasus and Anastasius, martyrs; during the consecration of the church in 609 A.D. by Pope Boniface IV, the bones of at least 28 groups of martyrs were transferred here from the Roman cemeteries

53	04.26	Sat	St. John Lateran	
54	04.27	Sun	St. Pancras	Saint Pancras, martyr (d. 304); fragments of the True Cross