

Stations of the Cross

Good Friday 2020



Preamble:

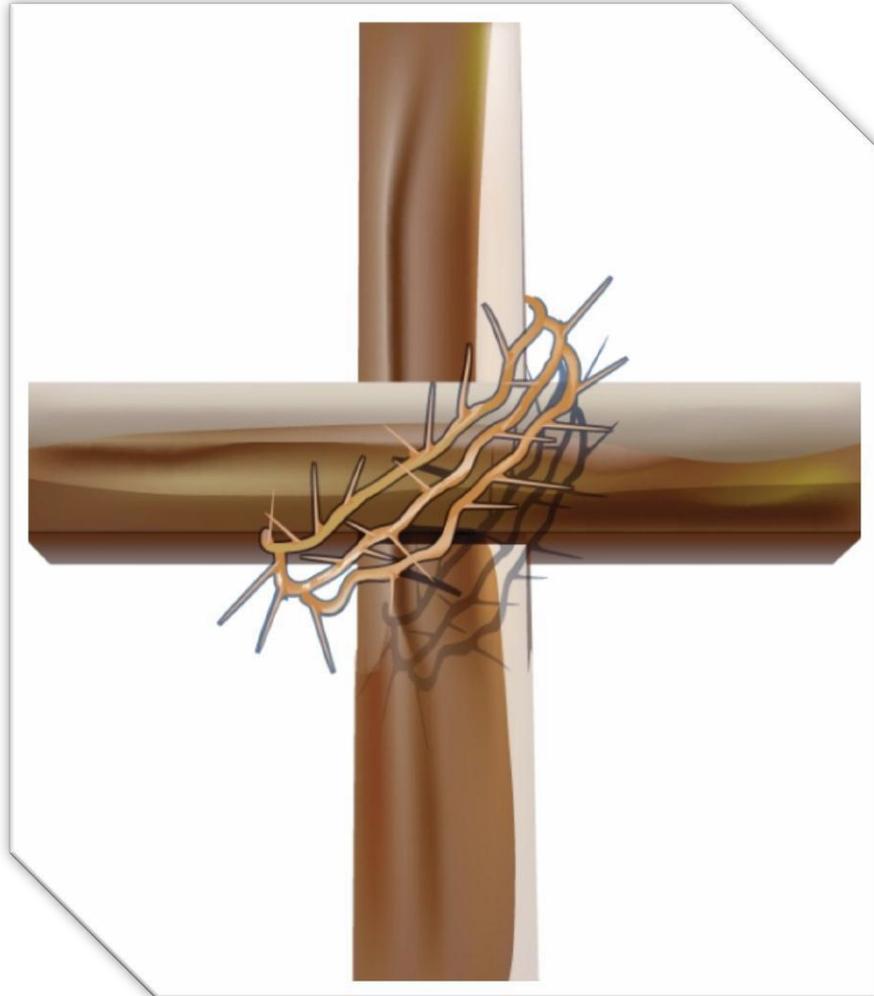
For many of us this journey with Jesus, remembering his suffering and death, has been the focal point of our Good Friday worship.

This year we may not be able to participate together at our local churches, however with a little creativity we could use this booklet as a personal meditation resource.

Perhaps sitting quietly at home with some inspirational music, or down at the beach, pausing at 'stations' in our own garden, or maybe even on our daily walk... using our imagination.

As we walk with Jesus, let us remember all who suffer in our world today.

Stations of the Cross for Our Time



AN INTRODUCTION:

We gather on this day as Christians united in prayer. In the midst of our busy lives we pause to pray as we reflect on the suffering journey of Christ.

Through these Stations of the Cross, Jesus is inviting us to journey with him and to reflect on his suffering as it continues in the lives of his people. In solidarity with all who suffer, let us pray that we will be open to whatever he wants us to see, hear and understand.

1: Jesus is Condemned to Die

We Remember
the Cross of Jesus

Jesus was captured at night, taken away by soldiers, stripped of his garments, interrogated, tortured, crowned with sharp thorns and now handed over to be condemned to death by Pontius Pilate – death on a cross.



Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

We Name the
Crosses of Today

Jesus is condemned unjustly by those who did not understand him. We continue to condemn people unjustly today.

We Pray

Jesus, what a terrible injustice to see you condemned to death. Your own people, the Roman judges and the soldiers didn't recognise that you were the Son of God. Give us the grace to see, respect and love you in all people, both innocent and guilty. Change our hearts that we may see with new eyes those we might otherwise condemn.

2: Jesus Takes Up His Cross

We Remember the Cross of Jesus Jesus was led away carrying the cross by himself. A cross is not just a piece of wood, it is everything that makes life difficult. Jesus carried the crosses of his life without complaint, as a poor person and as an itinerant prophet.

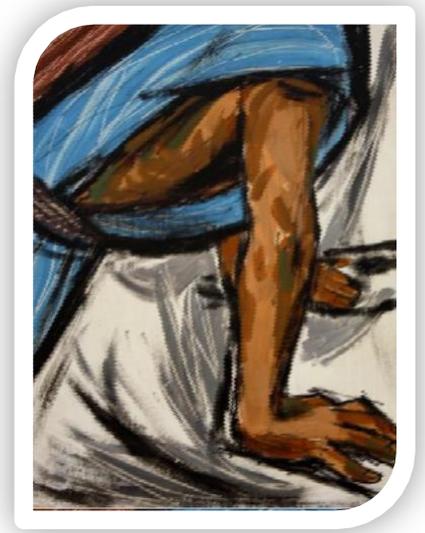


Response: *We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world*

We Name the Crosses of Today There are burdens that we all carry: some are very obvious and others we take great care to hide. The invitation of Jesus on the cross is to hand over these burdens to him.

We Pray **May we see your presence, Lord, in all the burdens we carry today. Help us to share our burdens more freely, not to be afraid to acknowledge our fears and our pain. May we be more aware of the crosses that others bear and make time to alleviate their burden. May your face shine on each one of us through the crosses we bear.**

3: Jesus Falls for the First Time



We Remember
the Cross of Jesus:

Jesus falls. Here Jesus shows us that being heroic does not mean staying on one's feet at all costs. Being heroic means getting up again after falling and starting off on the road chosen.

Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

We Name the
Crosses of Today:

Like the crowd, we often have only condemnation and rejection for those we see as sinners. We judge them without knowing about their trials.

We Pray:

Jesus, it's easy to see your image in saints. Help us to see you in the sinners too. You had a place in your heart for the divorced Samaritan woman; Zacchaeus; the good thief; and for those who crucified you. Give us this same compassionate heart.

4: Jesus Meets his Mother

We Remember
the Cross of Jesus:

When Jesus and his mother meet they just look at each other – words cannot express how they feel.



Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

We Name the
Crosses of Today:

Jesus carries the heaviest burdens: the loss of his family; the sundering of the earthly, loving relationship between mother and child. This was not of his making.

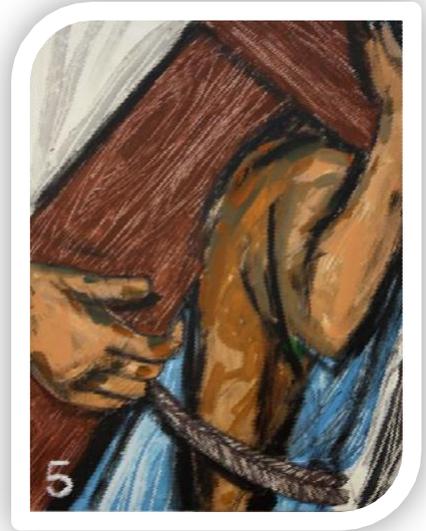
We Pray:

Jesus, we remember the gaze that rested between you and your mother. In that moment of pain there was also a moment of deep and enduring love. Jesus, give us the courage to bring that love into the deepest recesses of our homes, to our children and to our spouses, to those places of fracture and disharmony in our circle of relationships.

5: Simon Helps Jesus

We Remember the Cross of Jesus:

Simon the Cyrene, a stranger in the city, did not know Jesus. But that did not matter. What matters here is that in this moment of need Simon was capable of lending his shoulders to one whose own had given out, of offering his strength to one who had nothing left, of taking on himself the cross, which Jesus could no longer carry.



Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

We Name the Crosses of Today:

Look at Jesus who lies hidden and unknown beneath every person in need.

We Pray:

Lord, help us to grasp our opportunities to be a Simon in our world. In those times when we can help, let us have the generosity to do so. May we continue the spirit of Simon through our support of all who work to alleviate suffering in our world. Lord, may we have the humility to accept all the Simons along our road who reach out to help us in our moments of need.

6: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

We Remember
the Cross of Jesus:

Veronica was so moved by the sight of Jesus suffering that she courageously moved out from the crowd to wipe the blood and sweat from his face with a towel. The image of his face was transferred to the towel. It is a suffering face.



Response:

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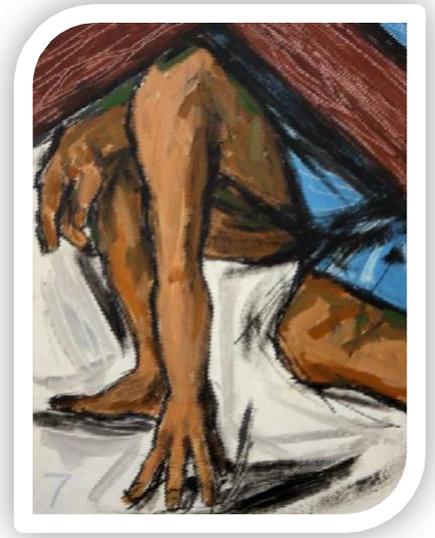
We Name the
Crosses of Today:

Today the visible face of Christ, the Church, stands before us still suffering.

We Pray:

Jesus, give us the courage of Veronica so that we may wash the face of Christ clean from the disfigurements of our sin. Give us the faith to continue to build your Church as a visible sign of your love and compassion.

7: Jesus Falls for the Second Time



We Remember
the Cross of Jesus:

Stretched to breaking point by his awful scourging, bowed under the weight of the cross, worn out by the abandonment of all his friends, Jesus stumbles again.

Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

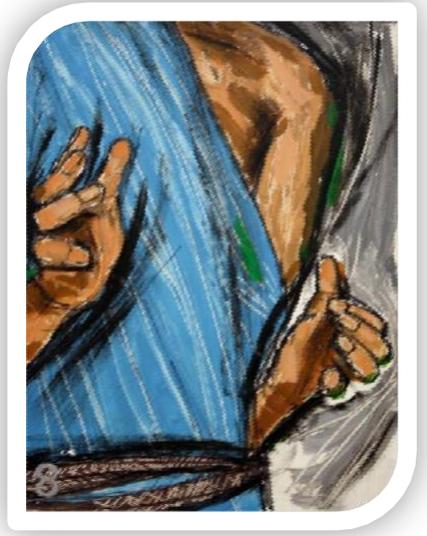
We Name the
Crosses of Today:

All around us people are overburdened by the crosses they carry; they struggle and sometimes fall. Jesus is with each one of us however we fall and there he chooses to love and save us.

We Pray:

Jesus, from deep within yourself, you found the courage and strength to get up once again and continue the journey. Give us your strength to keep going even when hope is dim.

8: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem



We Remember the Cross of Jesus

The women of Jerusalem wept when they saw how Jesus suffered. Jesus recognised their distress, he broke his silence for the first time, spoke to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children'.

Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

We Name the Crosses of Today:

Look at Jesus and listen to his message for us today.

We Pray:

Lord, open our hearts to the suffering of all people in our world. Give us the generosity of spirit to help us recognise their pain, the courage to challenge the systems that place intolerable burdens on them and the compassion to support them.

9: Jesus Falls for a Third Time

We Remember
the Cross of Jesus:

Jesus falls for a third time, broken and exhausted physically and emotionally. Lying on the ground, Jesus must decide – does he get up once more or does he just stop and give up? We see him rise again, and with all his power he continues on his journey. Jesus shows us that we can go on, even if nobody else thinks that it is possible.



Response:

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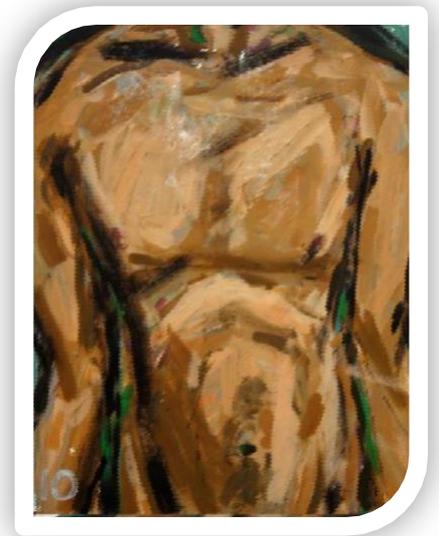
We Name the
Crosses of Today:

Many in our world today feel that they are at that moment of final falling, that their burden is too much to carry. They cannot bear any more. In Jesus we find our hope and our encouragement. Jesus is with us and Jesus is our strength.

We Pray:

Lord, we pray that, when our strength fails, when our hope fades, and when our spirit grows weary, that we will put our unbounded trust in you. In turn may we bring your love, in a word or action of comfort to another, in their time of depression or despair.

10: Jesus is Stripped of His Clothing



We Remember
the Cross of Jesus:

As the clothes were ripped from Jesus, he was stripped of his dignity in front of an irreverent mob. Jesus sacrifices everything. He holds nothing of himself back. He surrenders everything in order to ransom all.

Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

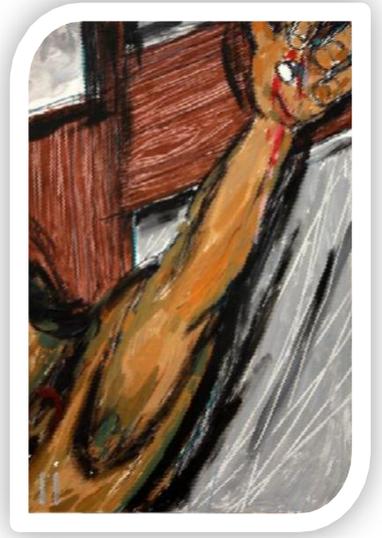
We Name the
Crosses of Today:

Look at Jesus and the absolute indignity inflicted upon him by society. Jesus continues to be stripped of his dignity in those who have their good name taken from them and the intimate details of their lives exposed through the media. Society takes on the role of judge and jury as we curiously devour the details.

We Pray:

Forgive us Lord for being an irreverent mob prying into people's lives. Forgive us for being consumers of gossip under the name of 'news'. Let us never expose anyone. May we respect the dignity of others and leave judgement to God. Let us see the good in those around us and so enable them to reach their full potential.

11: Jesus is Nailed to The Cross



We Remember the
Cross of Jesus:

Huge iron nails are hammered through his wrists and through his ankles. Iron through human flesh, the flesh must yield, there is no defence. Jesus, nailed to the cross, cannot move. The hand that has wiped blindness from the eyes; the hand that opened the seal of deafness; the hand that touched a heart and cured a leper; the hand that blessed children and those with a disability; the carpenter's hand is joined to the wood again. As the cross is put in place, he hangs there between us and God, a blood stained victim for love.

Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

We Name the
Crosses of Today:

Jesus continues to be crucified in those who die of hunger;
those who are damaged by war;
those marginalised in society;
those who are abused.

We Pray:

Jesus, we pray on behalf of those who cannot reach out to you at this moment. We pray for all victims of violence; those who suffer it and those who inflict it. We pray especially for children, for the elderly and for those too vulnerable to defend themselves. May victims of cruelty and oppression know that you are always with them.

12: Jesus Dies on The Cross

We Remember
the Cross of Jesus

As the life of Jesus ebbs away his words are not of condemnation or of pity for himself, but of forgiveness; 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do'. In the midst of his anguish and suffering Jesus calls upon his Father to forgive those who are putting him to death. This is the real challenge of the cross, forgiveness even of those who hurt us most.



Response:

We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world

We Name the
Crosses of Today:

As Jesus dies on Calvary, he challenges us to love our enemies, to let go of hurt, to ask for forgiveness and when we cannot find it in our hearts to forgive, to ask God to do it for us.

Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

We Pray:

Let us stand with those who watched and prayed in silence while Jesus breathed his last. As we cannot measure love, so we cannot dilute this ultimate act of love and forgiveness with words. Let our love span the silence. Lord! Let our love and forgiveness speak your praise.