

# **THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

The Stations of the Cross combine art and movement to recreate Christ's walk to Calvary within the walls of the church, allowing the faithful to make a "pilgrimage to Jerusalem" and be drawn closer to the Christ who walked there.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it." (Matthew 16:24-25)

Christ has humbled himself and become obedient to death. Let us follow the way of the cross. Amen.

*(Begin with Station 1)*

## **THE FIRST STATION**

### ***Jesus Prays Alone***



**Reading: Luke 22:39-46**

Then going out he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. When he arrived at the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not undergo the test." After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done." (And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.) When he rose from prayer and returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping from grief. He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test."

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Gracious God, while the disciples slept, Jesus, alone and in anguish, prayed for deliverance from death. You did not turn a deaf ear to his plea, but through his resurrection, made him victorious over death. Our future is often frightful and difficult to accept. We pray for deliverance from pain, from sickness, and from the loneliness that seems to separate us even from you. Listen to our prayers. Send your Spirit to comfort us and to help us trust in your will. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## THE SECOND STATION

### *Jesus Is Arrested*



#### **Reading: Luke 22:47-48, 52-54**

While Jesus was still speaking a crowd came, led by the man named Judas, one of the Twelve. He approached Jesus to embrace him. Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" But to those who had come out against him – the chief priests, the chiefs of the temple guard, and the ancients – Jesus said, "Am I a criminal that you come out after me armed with swords and clubs? When I was with you day after day in the temple you never raised a hand against me. But this is your hour – the triumph of darkness!" They led him away under arrest and brought him to the house of the high priest, while Peter followed at a distance.

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Father in heaven, because they were afraid of his power and message, they came armed to arrest Jesus. The disciples, fearful that they too would be arrested, abandoned Jesus and fled into the darkness. Armed with hatred, prejudice and suspicion, we often reject those who are different from us because of their color, nationality or opinions. Dispel the darkness from our eyes that we may recognize your presence in the people around us. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## THE THIRD STATION

### *The Sanhedrin Tries Jesus*



#### **Reading: Luke 22:66-71**

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes; and they led him away to their council, and they said, "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God." And



they all said, "Are you the Son of God, then?" And he said to them, "You say that I am." And they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips."

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Jesus, facing death you serenely proclaimed your true divine identity and announced your glorious return at the end of time in order to bring to completion the work that the Father had entrusted to you. We entrust to your mercy our doubts, our continual wavering between bursts of generosity and moments of lethargy, during which we allow the cares of the world to smother the spark that your glance or your word has ignited in our hardened hearts. Amen.

## THE FOURTH STATION

### *Pilate Tries Jesus*



#### **Reading: John 19:4-15**

Once more Pilate came out and said to the Jews, 'Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no basis for a charge against him.' When Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Pilate said to them, 'Here is the man!' As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify! Crucify!' But Pilate answered, 'You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him.' The Jews insisted, 'We have a law, and according to that law he must die, because he claimed to be the Son of God.' When Pilate heard this, he was even more afraid, and he went back inside the palace. 'Where do you

come from?' he asked Jesus, but Jesus gave him no answer. 'Do you refuse to speak to me?' Pilate said. 'Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?' Jesus answered, 'You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.' From then on, Pilate tried to set Jesus free, but the Jews kept shouting, 'If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar. Anyone who claims to be a king opposes Caesar.' When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judge's seat at a place known as the Stone Pavement (which in Aramaic is Gabbatha). It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. 'Here is your king,' Pilate said to the Jews. But they shouted, 'Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!' 'Shall I crucify your king?' Pilate asked. 'We have no king but Caesar,' the chief priests answered.

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Lord, you were condemned to death because fear of the gaze of others suffocated the voice of conscience. Give force in our lives to the quiet voice of our conscience, to your voice. To those who on Good Friday had shouted out against you, on the day of Pentecost their hearts were stirred by you and converted. And in this way you gave hope to us all. Give us, ever anew, the grace of conversion. Amen.

## THE FIFTH STATION

### *Pilate Condemns Jesus to Die*



#### **Reading: Matthew 27:1-2,22,24,26b**

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before

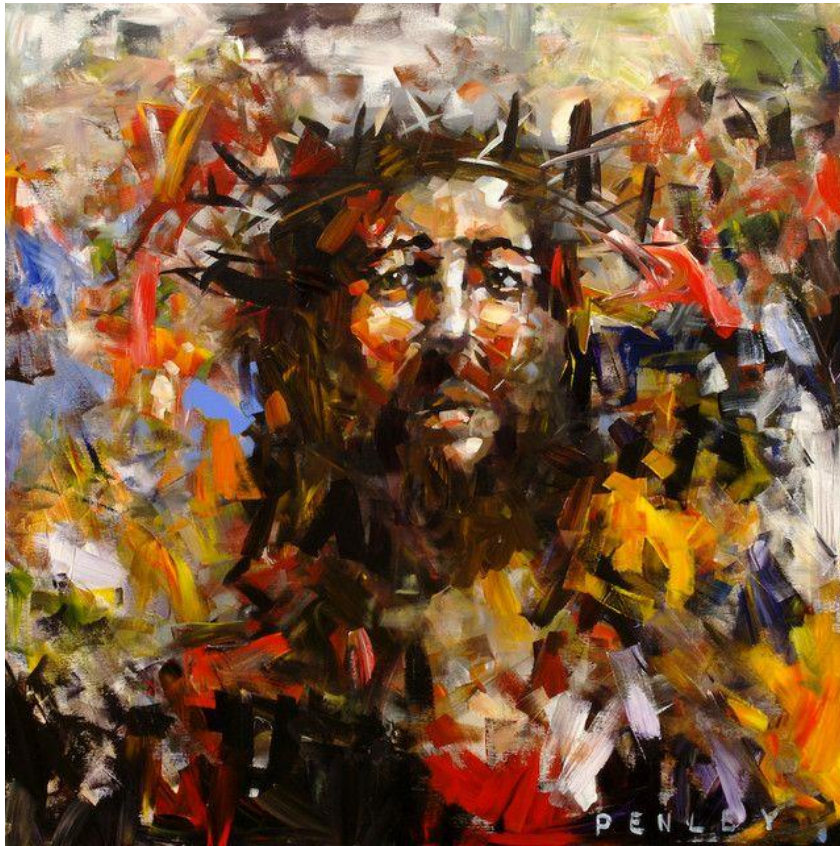
the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." After flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Almighty God, your Son was rejected and condemned to die by your own people. Grant that we may never reject his word of truth and salvation, but follow him all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE SIXTH STATION

### *Jesus Wears the Crown of Thorns*



#### **Reading: John 19:1-3**

Pilate's next move was to take Jesus and have him scourged. The soldiers then wove a crown of thorns and fixed it on his head, throwing around his shoulders a cloak of royal purple. Repeatedly they came up to him and said, "All hail, king of the Jews" slapping his face as they did so.

*(Pause for reflection)*



Prayer: Merciful God, though guilty of no crime, Jesus was scourged and crowned with thorns. Our King was whipped and mocked. It was to free us from sin and death that Jesus suffered the cruelties of his passion. Through our baptism you have chosen us as your people and have made us a royal nation, heirs of your kingdom. Through the sufferings of our Lord Jesus, give us the courage to face the hardships of our lives. Help us to see the effect of our sins and grant us your forgiveness. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## THE SEVENTH STATION

### *Jesus Carries the Cross*



#### **Reading: Matthew 27:27-31**

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt

before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Lord, you willingly subjected yourself to mockery and scorn. Help us not to ally ourselves with those who look down on the weak and suffering. Help us to acknowledge your face in the lowly and the outcast. You carried your own Cross and you ask us to follow you on this path. Help us to take up the Cross, and not to shun it. May we never complain or become discouraged by life's trials. Help us to follow the path of love and, in submitting to its demands, to find true joy. Amen.

## THE EIGHTH STATION

### *Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross*



#### **Reading: Luke 23:26**

As the soldiers led Jesus away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.

*(Pause for reflection)*



Prayer: Loving Father, you have called us into fellowship under the cross of your Son that we might bear your love to all in the world. Help us to be as willing as Simon to bear the burdens of those in need, that all may be called out of the darkness into the light of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE NINTH STATION

### *Jesus Speaks to the Women*



#### **Reading: Luke 23:27-28**

A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are but mortal flesh, and the span of our lives is very brief. Help us to see our frailty and affliction as a sharing in Christ's frailty and affliction, and through them, the path to life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE TENTH STATION

### *Jesus is Nailed to the Cross*





**Reading: Luke 23:39-43**

One of the criminals hanging in crucifixion blasphemed Jesus: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Then save yourself and us.” But the other one rebuked him: “Have you no fear of God, seeing you are under the same sentence? We deserve it, after all. We are only paying the price for what we’ve done, but this man has done nothing wrong.” He then said, “Jesus, remember me when you enter upon your reign.” And Jesus replied, “I assure you; this day you will be with me in paradise.”

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Eternal God, even in the midst of his pain and agony, Jesus spoke a word of comfort to the Thief, forgiving his sins and welcoming him to the Kingdom. Father, give us the strength to follow the way of Jesus. In the midst of our pains and agonies, help us continue to comfort your people, sharing with them your forgiveness, your healing and your life. One day may we all be united with you in the Kingdom. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## **THE TWELFTH STATION**

***Jesus Cares for His Mother***





**Reading: John 19:25-27**

Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home.

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Lord Jesus we remember that not only were you the Son of God, but you were also the son of Mary. She loved her boy and she was loved in return. May we show our love for You, in the way we love the family with whom you have blessed us. "We adore you Lord Jesus and we bless you, for by your very cross you have redeemed the world." In your name, Amen.

## **THE THIRTEENTH STATION**

### ***Jesus Dies on the Cross***



**Reading: Luke 23:44-46**

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: Who would have believed it, O God? Who would have thought that the Savior would die? Yet in the world's darkest hour, you snatched him out of the jaws of death, crushing sin and death underfoot. Keep us ever close to his cross and death, now and at the hour of our death; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **THE FOURTEENTH STATION**

***Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb***



**Reading: John 19:39-42**

Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. *He and Joseph* took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where *Jesus* was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

*(Pause for reflection)*

Prayer: God of hope, you have promised that if we are buried with Christ in the waters of Baptism, then we too will rise with him to new life. Make us ever mindful of our baptism and remove all stain of sin from us through repentance, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Closing Prayer**

Almighty God, we thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ, and for the gift of our salvation that he won for us through the way of the cross. Make our paths straight and keep our feet upon that way of the cross until you bring us safely into your heavenly kingdom; where you reign with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.