



STATIONS OF THE CROSS



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON



The Third Station - Jesus falls for the first time

*Images painted by David O'Connell (1898-1976),
with thanks to St Richard's Catholic Church, Chichester.*

Walk With Me

*Meditations on the Way of the Cross
edited by Fr Gerald Coates RIP*

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We sign ourselves with the Cross of Christ.

Father, in baptism we were signed with the Cross of Christ.

There is an urgency in our Christian lives
that allows no pause for we are indeed a pilgrim people.

We cannot stand still, we cannot remain the same.

As now we meditate again on the Way of the Cross
we continue on our journey, seeking yourself.

Be with us, Lord, as we accept the Cross that each of us must carry.

THE FIRST STATION

Jesus is Condemned to Die

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

The High Priest put a second question to him.

'Are you the Christ, the son of the Blessed One?'

'I am', said Jesus. *(Mark 14:60)*

Reflection

The Prisoner, looking beyond his captors, said little in his own defence, responding only in honesty and truth.

Because of this, they had already agreed his guilt.

Lord, we hear your voice declaring (for all who will listen) the mystery of Incarnation.

We seek your silent face and acknowledge our need for forgiveness.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE SECOND STATION

Jesus Accepts His Cross

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes, and led him away to crucify him.

(Matthew 27:31)

Reflection

Condemned, He was taken by force of arms at dawn. Having beaten him, they led him away for execution to a place beyond the city limits. Lord, you accepted your Cross and began your final journey; - it had to be done. May I accept my Cross, understanding that my journey cannot be made without it.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE THIRD STATION

Jesus Falls for the First Time

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard and a servant girl came up to him and said: 'You were with Jesus the Galilean'. But he denied it.
(Matthew 26:69, 70)

Reflection

Weakened, his footsteps faltered as he stumbled,
hand outstretched, fearful of the ground.

His friend watched the Galilean fall, and said –
nothing.

Lord, our lack of faith breaks the rhythm of our
footfall and the closing earth surrounds us.

There is darkness, loneliness and emptiness as we ask
'Where are you?'

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with
me what you will.



THE FOURTH STATION

Jesus Meets His Mother

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

At Cana, in Galilee, Jesus had said, 'Woman, why turn to me? My time has not come yet'. His Mother said to the servants 'Do whatever he tells you.' (*John 2:4,5*)

Reflection

Prevented by the force of arms from coming close, a Mother seeks her Son.

The disappeared one taken from her in the night.

Soon she will be left with only her memories.

Lord, how can a Mother see her Son suffer and not suffer herself?

Yet, step by step, she stayed with you, from a Stable to Nazareth and on to Cana.

Now in this press of Passover people, she is with you. In a short while, she will be found standing by the Cross.

Walk with me, Mary, on the path I must travel.

Stay with me.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you. Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

As they were leading him away, they seized on a man, Simon, from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country and made him shoulder the Cross and carry it behind Jesus.
(Luke 23:26)

Reflection

Unable to walk on alone, a man taken from the crowd is told to help him. There is no choice.

Condemned men must die – at the appropriate place – for the sake of the people. Lord, Simon was a face from the crowd, an extra shoulder and a pair of hands to share the load.

May we give to others a lift on the way, expecting nothing, offering everything.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE SIXTH STATION

Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

Large numbers of people followed him, and of women, too, who mourned and lamented for him.
(Luke 23:27)



Reflection

Sweating with exhaustion from his ill treatment, he pauses for breath.
A woman, ignoring personal risk, wipes his face with a cloth.
Her kindness done, she becomes again another person, one among many, -
street side faces on a Friday morning.
Lord, who she was, where she came from, does not matter.
She cared enough to risk all – and asked nothing in return.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.
I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.
Never permit me to separate myself from you again.
Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.

THE SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Falls for a Second Time

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

When he went out to the gateway, another servant girl saw him and said to the people there: 'This man was with Jesus the Nazarene.' And again with an oath he denied it. *(Matthew 26: 71, 72)*

Reflection

Broken by pain, he falls again.
The Nazarene, eyesight blurred, momentarily sees his friend gazing at him.
But neither can speak, He turns and is gone.
Lord, Peter was a fearful man and he acted out of fear.
His denial was our denial, day after day, year after year.
Sometimes we too claim that we do not know you, fearful of the cost.
Maybe tomorrow Lord, maybe it will be easier then.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.
I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.
Never permit me to separate myself from you again. Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE EIGHTH STATION

Jesus Comforts the Women of Jerusalem

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

Jesus turned to the women and said: 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me: weep rather for yourselves and your children.'
(Luke 23:28)

Reflection

Protesting at his treatment by the authorities, the Women of Peace gather by the road. A passing word, and they move him on.

The women are left weeping, confused.

Lord, too often women have raised their voices at the folly of men.

Too often they have been ignored.

May we, their children, listen to their words and their cries: and hearing them, hear you.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE NINTH STATION

Jesus Falls for a Third Time

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

A little later, the bystanders came up and said to Peter, 'You are one of them for sure! Why your accent gives you away.' Then he started calling down curses on himself and swearing 'I do not know the man.' (*Matthew 26:73, 74*)

Reflection

Beaten, but now within sight of the Hill, face down in the dust.

Unrecognisable.

Voiceless.

Lord, time and again we almost make it, and turning, dejected and disheartened, we realise our failure.

Even then, Lord, you are with us. It's time we were moving, it's time to start again.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE TENTH STATION

Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture readings

I can count every one of my bones and there they glare at me, gloating.
(Psalm 22:17-18)

The shared out my clothing among them. They cast lots for my clothes.
(John 19:24)

Reflection

Stripped, he is prepared for public shame. Bruised, he is silent.

With shoulders bared he accepts the inevitable.

Besides, the crowd are waiting.

Lord, strip me of all I carry; strip me of everything that prevents me from carrying my Cross. And when I am stripped be there to sustain me.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.

I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

When they reached the place called the Skull, they crucified him there. *(Luke 23:33)*

Reflection

Nailed to the wooden frame that stretched wide his arms and secured his feet, there, on the Hill, he is raised above the people.

Lord, the hammering of nails has echoed across this earth as we repeatedly crucify you. Man against man, nation against nation.

Yet from that Cross of Suffering with failing voice you called, 'Father forgive them for they do not know what they do.'

Father, forgive us.

Let us pray

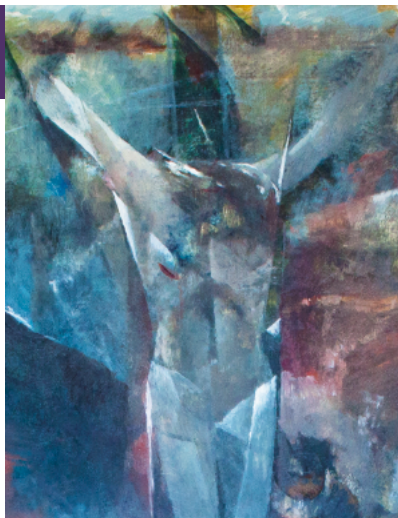
I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.
I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE TWELFTH STATION



Jesus Dies on the Cross

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

It was now about the sixth hour and with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.

The veil of the temple was torn right down the middle and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said 'Father into your hands I commend my spirit'.

With these words he breathed his last. (*Luke 23:44-46*)

Reflection

Naked on the Cross, he gazed at those whose fists were raised in anger, until he could see no more. There, in the late afternoon, with head bowed, body and spirit exhausted, he ceased the struggle. It was done.

Lord, how are we to understand those hours late on a Friday before Passover?

How can we share the emptiness of those who walked with you, seeing you now defeated, hung between thieves? So this was where all the hours and days of walking and talking finally ended.

Defeat on a Hill – and a satisfied crowd – Finished.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.
I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.
Never permit me to separate myself from you again.
Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.

THE THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

Take care of every bone
The Lord will not let one be broken.
(*Psalm 34:20*)

Reflection

Lifeless, his savaged body lay, once again,
in the caring arms of his Mother.

Journey over. Task complete.

Failure in the sight of men.

Lord, the final act of your friends was to
accept your lifeless body for burial.

Accept, Lord, our failures, our mistakes and
our careless ways. Bury them, Lord, with the
suffering of your Cross.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.
I repent with my whole heart for having
offended you.

Never permit me to separate myself from
you again.

Grant that I may love you always and then
do with me what you will.



THE FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You,

R. Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with spices in linen cloths, following the custom of Jewish burial. (*John 19:40*)

Reflection

Burial did not take long. Laying him out nearby (before the last light and the coming Festival) they covered him with a cloth. 'It is time we were gone.' Turning into the dusk they left him.

Lord, it is over, the Way of the Cross has been walked. The story has been told and prophecy fulfilled. 'What now?' they must have said to one another as they walked into the chill night air.

Let us pray

I love you Jesus, my Love, above all things.
I repent with my whole heart for having offended you.
Never permit me to separate myself from you again.
Grant that I may love you always and then do with me what you will.



THE FIFTEENTH STATION (OPTIONAL)

He is Risen

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

R. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture reading

They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body. *(Luke 24:2-3)*

The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground but the men said to them. "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." *(Luke 24:5)*

Reflection

Gone? No body left to care for, no rituals to follow. A callous trick, a final humiliation?

Can it be true, risen? Is it possible? So much to take in, is there really hope?

Risen?

Let us pray

Lord, we believe that you rose from the dead, but sometimes we find it hard to hope. Sometimes your love and salvation seem out of reach.

Be with us, and through your Holy Spirit, guide us to know your constant saving presence with us.



CLOSING PRAYER

Father, we have shared again the Passover journey of your Son.
We have followed his Way of the Cross.
As Christian people we understand that must be our way too.
Help us through this Prayer of the Cross to seek your will for us.

We sign ourselves with the Cross of Christ
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

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