

The Way of the Cross



PREFACE- Today we follow Jesus in the journey of love and sadness, the way of the cross. Why did Jesus make this journey? Because of our sin, and his love. When we turned against God in sin, and loved other things more than we loved him, we brought death into the world: but God did not abandon us to darkness and death. Though we did not love him, he loved us, and sent his Son to die the death our sin deserved, that we might obtain the eternal life that only he deserves. When we are sorry for our sins and believe and trust in Jesus to be our Savior, then we receive the forgiveness that only God can give, and by his Holy Spirit we learn to love him and to walk in his ways. In this way of the cross, may the Holy Spirit teach us to be sorry for our sins, to believe in Jesus for our salvation, and to love and serve each other as he has loved us.

Approach to the Cross

To be said responsively, as indicated:

O Lord Christ, Lamb of God, Lord of Lords,
Call us, who are called to be saints,

Along the way of thy Cross:

Draw us, who would draw nearer our King,
To the foot of thy Cross:

Cleanse us, who are not worthy to approach,
With the pardon of thy Cross:

Instruct us, the ignorant and blind,
In the school of thy Cross:

Arm us, for the battles of holiness,
By the might of thy Cross:

Bring us, in the fellowship of thy sufferings,
To the victory of thy Cross:

**And seal us in the kingdom of thy glory
Among the servants of thy Cross,**

O crucified Lord;
Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost
Livest and reignest one God
Almighty, eternal, world without end.

Amen.

AT EACH STATION, AFTER IT IS ANNOUNCED:

MINISTER: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

ANSWER: Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.

AT THE END OF EACH STATION IS SAID:

MINISTER: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

ANSWER: Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

FIRST STATION

Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;
All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Matthew 26:36-41

Reader: Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.”³⁷ And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled.³⁸ Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.”³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”⁴⁰ And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour?⁴¹ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

***Look at Jesus:* The night before he dies, Jesus goes to pray in a garden near Jerusalem. He asks three good friends to stay awake while he prays long and hard about what God wants him to do. He prays all night. Jesus checks on his friends three times, and each time they are fast asleep. Not even his best friends stay awake to pray with him. Jesus feels alone. He knows God wants him to suffer death on the cross for us. It will be like drinking a cup of bitter wine right to the bottom. Yet Jesus is ready to do whatever God wants, because God is his Father, and he trusts him. Jesus is ready to drink this bitter cup for us.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;
All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

SECOND STATION

Jesus is Betrayed by Judas & Arrested

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Mark 15:43-46

Reader: ⁴³ And immediately, while Jesus was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. ⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard.” ⁴⁵ And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, “Rabbi!” And he kissed him. ⁴⁶ And they laid hands on him and seized him.

***Look at Jesus:* It was Judas, one of Jesus’ friends and disciples, who betrayed him. The enemies of Jesus paid Judas thirty silver coins to lead the soldiers right to Jesus. Still acting like a friend, Judas kisses him on the cheek to show the soldiers who he is. Jesus does not fight. Even when he is betrayed by his friends, Jesus is ready to follow God’s plan and suffer for our salvation. In this way, Jesus fulfills what the prophet Isaiah foretold, “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

THIRD STATION

Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;
All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Luke 22:66-71

Reader: ⁶⁶ When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led Jesus away to their council, and they said, ⁶⁷ “If you are the Christ, tell us.” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will not believe, ⁶⁸ and if I ask you, you will not answer. ⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God.” ⁷⁰ So they all said, “Are you the Son of God, then?” And he said to them, “You say that I am.” ⁷¹ Then they said, “What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.”

***Look at Jesus:* Jesus is taken before the leaders of Jerusalem. They do not want to believe that he is the Christ – the anointed one God sent into the world to be its savior. When Jesus tells them that he is the Son of God, they accuse him of blasphemy and decide he must die. Jesus does not defend himself. He is ready to die for our sins. Jesus waits for God to prove him right. In this way, Jesus fulfills what the prophet Isaiah foretold, “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.”**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;
All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

FOURTH STATION

Jesus is Denied by St. Peter

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;
All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Matthew 26:69-75

Reader: ⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” ⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.” ⁷¹ And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” ⁷² And again he denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.” ⁷³ After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.” ⁷⁴ Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster crowed. ⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

***Look at Jesus:* Peter, one of Jesus’ very best friends, thinks he will be loyal to Jesus even if he has to die. But Jesus said that Peter would deny him three times, before the rooster crowed. When Jesus is arrested, Peter runs away. And when three different people ask Peter if he knows Jesus, Peter says no. He denied Jesus. When the rooster crows, Peter remembers what Jesus said, and is so sad he cries. Yet Jesus never gave up on Peter. When we deny him, may we too remember that God never gives up on us. Even when we are faithless, he remains faithful.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;
All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

FIFTH STATION

Jesus is Judged by Pontius Pilate

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

All: Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.

Mark 15:1-5, 15

Reader: And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. ² And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.” ³ And the chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ And Pilate again asked him, “Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.” ⁵ But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed. ¹⁵ So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

Look at Jesus: **Jesus stands before Pilate, who has power to put Jesus to death. The leaders of Jerusalem tell him that Jesus is a dangerous liar who must be killed. But Jesus is silent. He is ready to suffer for us, and he knows God will prove him right. Even Pilate knows that Jesus has done nothing wrong, but he is afraid of the leaders. Pilate sets the criminal Barabbas free, and sentences Jesus to die a painful death on a cross instead. In this way, Jesus fulfills what the prophet Isaiah foretold, “And they made his grave with the wicked... although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.”**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

All: Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

SIXTH STATION

Jesus is Scourged at the Pillar & Crowned with Thorns

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

John 19:1-3

Reader: Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. ² And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. ³ They came up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and struck him with their hands.

Look at Jesus: **When Jesus is handed over to the soldiers, they strip him of his clothes, beat him and put a crown of thorns on his head. The soldiers think it is silly that this man could be a king. They laugh and make fun of him. But because Jesus is our savior and king, he allows himself to be treated this way, he is ready to suffer all the shame and mockery our sins deserve.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Bears the Cross

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

John 19:6, 15-17

Reader: When the chief priests and the officers saw Jesus, they cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him.” ¹⁵They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” ¹⁶So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, ¹⁷ and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

Look at Jesus: **Even though he is already badly hurt, the soldiers put a heavy cross on Jesus’ shoulders. He is forced to carry it to the hill outside the city walls where he will be nailed to it and left to die. Jesus does not complain, he does not get angry, he accepts the heavy weight of the cross. Jesus loves us so much he has carried the heavy weight of sin’s punishment for us. In this way, Jesus fulfills what the prophet Isaiah foretold “Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.”**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

EIGHTH STATION

Jesus is Helped by Simon the Cyrenian to Carry the Cross

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Mark 15:21

Reader: And they compelled a passerby, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

Look at Jesus: **Jesus is weak and tired, and the soldiers know he cannot carry the heavy cross by himself. The soldiers look around and see someone who can help Jesus carry his cross. His name is Simon. Simon did not come to help Jesus, but suddenly that is what he does. Simon carried the cross for Jesus, but Jesus would soon carry the sins of the world on his shoulders.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

NINTH STATION

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;
All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Luke 23:27-31

Reader: And there followed Jesus a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him.²⁸ But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.²⁹ For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’³⁰ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’³¹ For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

Look at Jesus: **We might expect Jesus to tell the women that everything will be ok, but instead he warns them of the coming destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus warns them so that they and their children will flee the city before it’s too late. Even more importantly, Jesus warns them to flee from God’s judgment of sin and turn to him in faith. Let us listen to Jesus and trust in him for our salvation.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;
All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

TENTH STATION

Jesus is Crucified

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;
All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Luke 23:33-34

Reader: And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified Jesus, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.³⁴ And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Look at Jesus: **When the soldiers bring Jesus to the hill outside the city walls, they hammer nails into Jesus hands and feet, nailing his body to the cross. Then they lift him up to die, while everyone watches, and many people make fun of him. Jesus is full of pain, in his body and in his heart and mind. Yet Jesus does not get angry, he does not ask God to punish the people who hurt him. Instead Jesus asks God to forgive them. God cannot say “no” to this prayer. When we believe in Jesus as our savior, God forgives us, he saves us from the punishment our sins deserve, and he gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;
All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus' Promise to the Penitent Thief

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;
All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Luke 23:39-43

Reader: One of the criminals who were hanged railed at Jesus, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!”⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?”⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.”⁴² And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”⁴³ And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Look at Jesus: **The robbers on either side of Jesus did things that were very bad and are being punished for them. One of the robbers makes fun of Jesus, but the other robber does not. He admits that they deserve the punishment they are receiving, but Jesus does not. Because he believes in Jesus, he asks Jesus to remember him in his Kingdom. Jesus makes him a wonderful promise – not death, but life forever with God. It is a promise he makes to all who are sorry for their sins and call on him for life and salvation.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;
All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Speaks to His Mother & the Beloved Disciple

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

John 19:25-27

Reader: Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!”²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Look at Jesus: **While Jesus is on the cross, his mother, Mary, and his best friend, John, stand nearby. Jesus asks them to love and care for each other. Even when he is dying, Jesus is thinking of other people. He gives them to each other as a new family. Here at the cross, the friends of Jesus become a new family in him, sons and daughters, co-heirs with Christ and God as their Father.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus Dies on the Cross

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;
All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Luke 23:44-47

Reader: It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour,⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.⁴⁶ Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he gave up the ghost.

Everyone kneels and keeps silence for a short time.

Look at Jesus: **When Jesus dies, the sky gets dark and the ground starts to shake. People are very scared. They now see that Jesus is innocent and they have made a big mistake. They are afraid, but Jesus is now ready to die, and to give his life to the Father he knows and loves. Because he is the Son of God, no one takes his life from him. He has the power to lay down his life, and he has the power to take it up again. We know he is the Good Shepherd, we can trust him, because he lays down his life for the sheep.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;
All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is Placed in the Tomb

Minister: We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee;

All: **Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world.**

Matthew 27:57-60

Reader: When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away.

Look at Jesus: **After Jesus dies, people who love him wash his body, wrap it in clean linen, and lay his body to rest in a cave newly carved out of the rock. Just before night comes, they push a very large stone over the entrance to the tomb, so no one can go inside. Their hearts are broken, and they are without hope. They do not yet know that Jesus is now resting in the tomb, because he has finished everything he was sent to do. He has given his life for the world. He has taken all the punishment our sins deserve, and there is nothing to stop us from being accepted and forgiven by God as his own dear children. And there is nothing to stop Jesus from rising from the dead on the third day, to make all sad things come untrue.**

Minister: O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed the world;

All: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.**

After the final station, all enter chancel stalls or pews for the:

CLOSING PRAYERS

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the body: And the Life everlasting. Amen.

Minister: The Lord be with you.

Anwer: **And with thy spirit.**

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

AN OBSECRATION BEFORE THE CROSS

To be said responsively, as indicated.

Lord, by this sweet and saving Sign,
Defend us from our foes and thine.

Jesu, by thy wounded feet,

Direct our path aright:

Jesu, by thy nailèd hands,

Move ours to deeds of love:

Jesu, by thy piercèd side,

Cleanse our desires:

Jesu, by thy crown of thorns,

Annihilate our pride:

Jesu, by thy silence,

Shame our complaints:

Jesu, by thy parchèd lips,

Curb our cruel speech:

Jesu, by thy closing eyes,

Look on our sin no more:

Jesu, by thy broken heart,

Knit ours to thee.

Yea, by this sweet and saving Sign,
Lord, draw us to our peace and thine.

HYMN #337

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.