



Good Friday Prayer Vigil
Stations of the Cross
Central Lutheran Church

THE FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of thy Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Matthew 27:19-26. While Pilate was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man." Now the chief priests and elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "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." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and our children!" So Pilate released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Prayer: **Almighty God, whose most dear Son gave up the joy and glory he deserved in order to suffer pain and be crucified, mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find that it is the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Reflection: Jesus was innocent and yet He chose to take responsibility for the transgressions of humanity. How does the Savior's response speak to you today?

Silent Reflection

THE SECOND STATION: JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of thy Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: John 19:16-17. Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

Prayer: O Lord, **there are so many people who are carrying crosses. Strengthen us to help carry the load by sharing what we have. Help us to share Your name through acts of compassion with those who feel abandoned. Amen.**

Reflection: Christ carried the weight of His own Cross and yet his mind was fixed on those He was called to deliver. It can be easy in our lives to focus on the cares of our lives and forget about being a witness of the love of Christ to others. How can Christ's journey give you grace to care for others?

Silent Reflection

THE THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the World.

Scripture: John 19:1-3. Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, and striking him on the face and striking him on the face saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Prayer: O Lord, **whenever we fall down in service to You, help us to look up to the many acts of charity and mercy Your Son, Jesus, did. When we look up, help us to get up. Amen.**

Reflection: With the crown of thorns on His head and the beating of His body, and the emotional pain He had endured, Christ was exhausted by the weight of His Cross. And so, He had fallen. How have you been wounded by the betrayal of this world? How can this picture of Christ give you courage to rise again?

Silent Reflection

THE FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the World.

Scripture: John 19:25-27. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Prayer: **Jesus, watching the pain of those we love is often harder than bearing our own. Help us to reach out and comfort those who are suffering. Amen.**

Reflection: Mary, the Mother of Jesus, watched as her Son walked through the agony of this journey. How does this picture of heartbreak, and yet surrender, impact your life?

Silent Reflection

**THE FIFTH STATION:
SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS TO CARRY THE CROSS**

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of thy Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Mark 15:21. They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

Prayer: O Lord, **help us to remember that we are called to help each other along the way, even if it may mean carrying one another on this journey. Let us follow Your example of sacrifice. Amen.**

Reflection: Simon of Cyrene was called out of the crowd to help Jesus. Maybe he volunteered, maybe he was simply chosen by the Romans, either way, he plays a crucial role in assisting Jesus on this journey. When have you been asked to help someone carry their cross in life? How did you respond?

Silent Reflection

THE SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of thy Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Isaiah 50:4-9. The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he awakens--wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up.

Prayer: **O Lord, we marvel at Veronica's compassion in running to You to wipe Your face at the moment of suffering. Help us to act swiftly and reach out to those who are suffering from addiction, homelessness, poverty, mental illness, or physical abuse. Help us to recognize and respond with compassion to the pain in our midst. Amen.**

Reflection: St. Veronica stepped out courageously to help Jesus in this moment. Remember, it was a fearful thing to be a follower of Jesus at that time, and yet, she was moved with compassion to care for Him. How can this picture of love and courage change the way you interact with those around you?

Silent Reflection

THE SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of thy Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:4-6. Surely, he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Prayer: O Lord, **when the road to justice becomes littered with obstacles, help us to be determined to stay on course. And, when we fail, forgive our apathy and indifference, O Lord! Amen.**

Reflection: We all fall short, we all stumble and fall; this is why we need a Savior. How can the strength of Christ remind us to continue to follow the path of God throughout our life?

Silent Reflection

THE EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of the Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Luke 23:27-31. A great number of the people followed Jesus, 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. For the days are surely coming when they will say 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' Then they will begin to say the mountains, 'Fall on us; and to the hills.' Cover us. For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Prayer: **Lord God, even in Your suffering, You acknowledged those who held the lowest esteem in society. O Lord when we become caught up in our lives, help us to remember others and forgive us of our self-centeredness. Amen.**

Reflection: Even during His agony, Christ's attention was on others. How might we as Christ's Church receive strength to love and serve others, even during our own pain?

Silent Reflection

THE NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of the Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Psalm 38:17-22. For I am ready to fall, and my pain is ever with me. I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin. Those who are my foes without cause are mighty, and many are those who hate me wrongfully. Those who render me evil for good are my adversaries because I follow after good. Do not forsake me, O Lord; O my God, do not be far from me; make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation.

Prayer: Lord God, **on the road to Calvary, You fell down, but You got up again. When the arm of injustice knocks us down, O Lord, help us to stand up for justice. O Lord, forgive us our self-pity. Amen.**

Reflection: Christ fell not once, not twice, but three times on His journey to the cross. Is there an area of your life when you continue to stumble? Where can you turn to for help to overcome these struggles?

Silent Reflection

THE TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS CLOTHES

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of the Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: John 19:23-24. When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in on piece from the top. So, they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots."

Prayer: O Lord, **release us from the material trappings of this world and make us poor in spirit so that we may be rich in You. Amen.**

Reflection: Even after this long, painful journey, Christ faces even more agony--the burden of humiliation. Is there shame that you are carrying today? How can you receive freedom from that shame when you meditate on Christ?

Silent Reflection

THE ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of the Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Luke 23: 33-34. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing."

Prayer: Lord God, **as you were nailed to the cross on Good Friday, we pray that the sin of racism and all "isms" shall be nailed to die on your cross today. Amen.**

Reflection: Christ chose to pay the ultimate price for humanity. In this moment of agony, He chose forgiveness. Are there people you are holding unforgiveness or anger against? How can the grace of Christ enable you to forgive, just as you have been forgiven?

Silent Reflection

THE TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of the Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: 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.

Prayer: Lord God, **in dying you restored our lives. O Lord, we pray that we live a life committed to justice and not "just us."** Amen.

Reflection: In this moment of Christ's death, He saved us from our sin and through his death He gives us the gift of eternal life with Him and all the saints. How can you take time today to meditate on this great price that was paid for you?

Silent Reflection

THE THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN FROM THE CROSS

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of the Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: Luke 23:50-53. Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph who though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid.

Prayer: Your broken body was tenderly taken from the cross. O Lord, we pray that such love will move us to remove others from the crosses they bear. Amen.

Reflection: Mary, Mother of Jesus, and others with her at the Cross were brokenhearted, and yet, their love for Christ gave them strength to care for His body. How can you show that same love and care for someone else and their burdens?

Silent Reflection

THE FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

We adore Thee, O Christ, we praise Thee.

Because of the Holy Cross Thou has redeemed the World.

Scripture: John 19:38-42. After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission, so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and cloves, weighing about a hundred pounds. They 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 he 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 to rest.

Prayer: Acknowledging Your human dignity, Your friends have given You a proper burial. Lord God, forgive us our disrespect for human life. Help us prepare to share in your resurrection life as we seek to act justly in your name. Amen.

Reflection: In that moment, it seemed like utter defeat, as though all hope was lost, and yet, the Resurrection was just beginning. Reflect on your own journey, how has God turned seasons of pain into ones of great joy? Reflect on His goodness and mercy on your life today.

Silent Reflection

CLOSING PRAYER

O Lord, my voice joins in prayer with my brothers and sisters as we seek to know and to do Your will. In obedience to Your Word, we put self aside and cast out into the deep waters of Your love, mercy and grace.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us: **Our Father in heaven hallowed by your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

Cover images: Stations of the Cross from St. Martin's Church, Salisbury, United Kingdom. Images Open Access from www.wikimediacommons.org.