

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

FOR 12-STEP RECOVERY



DAYLESFORD ABBEY

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Stations of the Cross, the Way of the Cross, the Way of Sorrows, or the *Via Crucis*, all refer to the journey Jesus Christ travelled from the time he was condemned to death until his Body was placed in a burial tomb. Followers of Jesus have told the story of his Passion, Death and Resurrection while pilgrims who travelled to Jerusalem visited the sites where it is believed that Jesus was tried and executed. Journals have been discovered, dated as early as the fourth century, describing these pilgrims chanting psalms as they processed the *Via Dolorosa* (the Way of Sorrows) in Jerusalem. Liturgists view these processions as an embryonic form of the Stations of the Cross.

Many churches typically contain fourteen Stations but as an outgrowth of the Second Vatican Council, a fifteenth Station was added reflecting our Lord's victory over suffering and death and the Good News of Easter – the Resurrection. As we are a post Vatican Council II church, all of our Stations of the Cross, both inside the church and outside, reflect this more complete narrative. Today, Christians everywhere follow Jesus' final journey to unite their suffering with his in the hope of sharing in his Resurrection. In the words of St. Paul: "*I wish to know Christ and to be conformed into the pattern of his death, so that somehow I may come to know the power of his Resurrection.*" Phil 3:1

DISPOSITION FOR PRAYING THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Suffering – in one of its many forms - invades all of our lives; no one needs to search for it. We may attempt to deny or run from suffering but it cannot be avoided. What is demanded is the need to come to terms with suffering. It is in this context that we provide the Stations of the Cross for Various Circumstances. We invite you to pray these Stations as a means of uniting your personal trials with our Lord's, so that you too might share in his Passion so as to rejoice in his Resurrection.

We believe in a God who became incarnate through his Son, Jesus Christ, who chose to suffer for the sake of our redemption. This Passion is made visible in the physical Way of the Cross and metaphysically in the psychological, emotional and spiritual suffering that took place in the Garden of Gethsemane – which one might call the overture to the *Via Crucis*.

The radical symbol of the Cross - ubiquitous throughout the world - has lost much of its shocking, paradoxical impact. We see the Cross hanging on walls, towering above churches and suspended from one another's necks in precious gold. The Cross has become a thing of beauty - and it should - for without the sacrifice made on the Cross, there would be no hope of eternal happiness with God.

When we pray the Stations, it is not for the purpose of undertaking an historical remembering of what occurred, but to show us what is happening now - what is happening within each of us. The reason for praying the Stations of the Cross is to enter into the mystery of Jesus' gift of himself for us – to experience his means of transforming suffering through love. We do this “through, with, and in him”, step by step, learning how this plan of love can be carried out by us today. In one form or another, his trials are revealed in ours and our trials in his. This frames the spiritual pilgrimage which you are invited to undertake through your particular circumstances, in contemplation of the Passion of Jesus Christ inspired by our faith in the Resurrection.

Allow One Hour

“Could you not watch and pray with me for one hour?” MT 26:40

For the Cross of our Lord's Passion becomes our Tree of Eternal Life

ABOUT DAYLESFORD ABBEY'S STATIONS OF THE CROSS

THE ARBOR GATEWAY

Thresholds are primarily spiritual in nature, not simply physical. Thus, crossing a threshold confirms one's willingness to move from the natural world to the supernatural. Our gateway entrance marks passage through a holy doorway designed to symbolize one's decision to enter into the life of Jesus.

SAINT RAPHAEL

Raphael, which translates as "It is God who heals", is the archangel known for facilitating all manners of healing. He is one of only three of the seven archangels named in the Bible. Raphael is credited with driving an evil spirit from Sarah and restoring Tobit's vision through the use of a fish. Tobit 6:7 Raphael is the patron saint of pilgrims and the appropriate guide for all who travel the Stations - particularly those seeking physical, emotional or spiritual healing. Pilgrimages in early times were a dangerous consideration. Pilgrims made wills before their journey as there was no certainty of a safe return. Unlike tourists, pilgrims travel toward their center; while tourists travel away. As a guardian to pilgrims, Raphael is often depicted holding a staff as well as a fish. The mission of Daylesford Abbey is healing and reconciliation, thus providing a suitable home for St. Raphael.

THE TRAIL

Most Stations of the Cross are typically laid out so that one follows a trail where station posts are staked and one pauses to pray. The Abbey's Stations are designed with alcoves where one must physically exit the trail - a place of certainty - so as to enter the spirituality of each Station's mystery. Physically, one interrupts their journey to undergo an experience of potentially unitive and transformative change.

THE STATION FRAME

Wood is a powerful, consistent symbol throughout Scripture: the tree in the Garden of Eden, Noah's ark, the altar in Exodus, the kindling Isaac carries. It is not by happenstance that both Jesus and Joseph were carpenters. For Christians, all wood signifies and leads us to the one salvific wood of the Cross. Jesus' sacrifice, which redeemed us on Calvary, is re-membered today in the Eucharistic sacrifice that takes place on the altar. All grace flows from the Cross, from our Abbey's altar, which is why our Station's frames are designed to replicate the Abbey church. They are crafted from Brazilian hardwood of substantial weight and density but are ecologically respectful of the Amazon forest, reminding us of God's original commission to humankind in Eden - to be stewards of creation.

THE STATION IMAGES

The Station scenes are bas-relief replicas from the bronze doors located at the Basilica of San Zeno in Verona, Italy. According to tradition, the crypt inside the Basilica was the marriage site of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. The church is Romanesque in design typical of 12th century architecture. Our holy father, St. Norbert, lived during that time and established the Order of Prémontré in 1120, thus connecting the Stations to the founding of our Order.

THE TREE TRUNK BENCHES

Daylesford Abbey took root and evolved from our original home at the site of the former Cassatt Estate. As Providence would arrange it, an oak tree was being removed from that property while our Stations were under construction. Our plans called for some seating to be formed from large tree trunks. This coincidence provided the symbolic means to represent our historical roots.

WE BEGIN: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Jesus said to them ‘If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.’” LK 9:23



I JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

I hear the pain in the voices of my loved ones and know that I have hurt them. Friends and family are intervening in my life demanding that I change. They condemn my past behaviors and insist that my old ways, my old life, must die. *Under the lash of addiction, we are driven to discover the fatal nature of our situation. Then, and only then, do we become as open-minded to conviction and as willing to listen as the dying can be. Who cares to admit complete defeat? Every natural instinct cries out against the ideas of personal powerlessness. No other kind of bankruptcy is like this.* Stop the pain, Lord. I want to do this but I need your help. You understand what it means to be condemned to death. Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



II JESUS ACCEPTS HIS CROSS

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

I am told that by accepting my defeat I will finally learn how to carry this cross. *Only through defeat are we able to move forward to liberation.* I need to understand acceptance. I've been told to attend meetings. I've been told to find a sponsor. I've been told to work the Steps and to make sacrifices. *This is the way to a faith that works.* Help me accept these changes as you accepted your Cross. Strengthen me on this Way of the Cross so that a new life is resurrected in me, through you.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



III

JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

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

With just a few steps forward, already I have fallen back to my old habits. Self-will and self-sufficiency leads to my destruction. Help me get back on track. Help me discover the lesson I need to learn hidden inside this fall. Relapse is simply a stop on my journey; not the end of the road. The more I become willing to depend on you, the more independent I become of those habits that imprison me. Help me place the key of willingness into the lock.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



IV JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

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

It is hard to comprehend all the pain I've caused my parents and family - especially my mother who raised me and taught me right from wrong. I see the pain in her eyes but I also see her faith and support on this road to recovery. Don't let me disappoint her again. Strengthen me so she might look at me and smile again.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



V SIMON HELPS JESUS CARRY HIS CROSS

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

You had Simon to help you. Now you've sent a sponsor to walk beside me and guide me on this journey. Having a sponsor lightens my burden as I share my trials and struggles with someone who has walked this path already. My sponsor points out the pitfalls and encourages me with hope. Teach me to lean on him when necessary.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



VI VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

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

Just as you left your impression on Veronica's veil, so I can see myself in the stories that I hear others share in meetings. There is something in each of their past that is a part of me. There is something in each of them that now reflects your image and likeness. Strengthen me on this journey so that I am configured more to you each day, so that like Veronica, others will look at me and see you.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



VII JESUS FALLS THE SECOND TIME

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

Not again! Not a new bottom! I have come to realize with this fall that I have more problems than just addiction. My best thinking has kept me sick. Nothing but continuous advancement on these Steps can bring about the much needed, much desired change. Sometimes I fall back on old ways of thinking. I know now this must change in me as well. Resentments are the number one offender and I must surrender these just as I have surrendered my life over to your care. Restore me to sanity.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



VIII JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

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

People, places and things. Everything must change. That old gang of mine can't support me while I make the necessary changes. These new friends that I'm discovering truly care about me. They look me in the eye. They know the pain and struggles I'm going through. They tell me to lean on them. They're here to support me! Help me become an example to the friends I left behind, so they too, can be free.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father . . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



IX JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

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

Progress, not perfection. I know now that the conversion that has begun in me is a lifelong task. As long as I get back up and strive to eliminate my character defects, I will continue to improve. Don't let me get discouraged. Give me the fervor with which the drowning seize life preservers. Help me to realize this is always a quest, never a destination. Humbly I ask you, to remove all these defects of character that cause me to fall.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



X JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

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

My former life and coping mechanisms had to be stripped away. The Fifth Step required that I stand naked before another person, devoid of all my masks. That day I joined the human race. No more guilt, no more shame. I lost what I thought were friends and former ways of thinking. I've left those old haunts I no longer visit. I need to become transparent and relinquish those secrets I have harbored. Strip me of all my defects of character that I uncovered in my inventory. Pride – the tap root of many of my faults must be destroyed so that humility can come forth. Someday, I will stand naked before you. Help me to become comfortable in my own skin.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



XI JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

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

There are times I have felt hung out to dry with my reputation ruined. Through their words and actions some have nailed me to my past, refusing to see that I have changed. Change is painful – excruciating at times. You accepted this process and I must learn to. Help me grow closer to you through my sacrifices.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



XII JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

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

You died for me and my old ways must die with you. Help me to hand over my life as you did to the Father. Into your hands, I dedicate my life in gratitude for the gift of recovery. I crossed the threshold of these rooms wishing I was dead at what seems like a long time ago. You granted that wish, because the old me is now gone. Those of us who have experienced the dynamics of recovery understand that death must come before new life can begin.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



XIII JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

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

There are times when I have been so worn out my new friends have had to carry me - dragging me to a meeting, telling me to put one foot in front of the other, one day at a time. As they have carried me on this journey teach me to carry other on theirs. Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



XIV JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

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

You planted in the tomb of my soul the seed for new life just as your Body was planted into the earth to redeem all creation. Transformation takes time; it does not happen overnight. As I gain time in recovery new habits take root as old ones die. Strengthen the roots of my new foundation so that new life will flow in me. Be the source of my strength, that in you I will have strength for everything.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen



XV THE RESURRECTION

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

I never thought this new life was possible. I have found a new freedom and a new happiness. My whole attitude and outlook on life has changed. Now I comprehend the spiritual awakening that was promised. My old life is over and a new life has begun. I am happy, joyous and free. In this new life, guide me to help others just as you taught your disciples. Make me an apostle of your Resurrection sowing faith and hope to those who are still sick and suffering. Help me to continue to practice these principles in all my affairs.

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . . Glory be to the Father. . .

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the
mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen