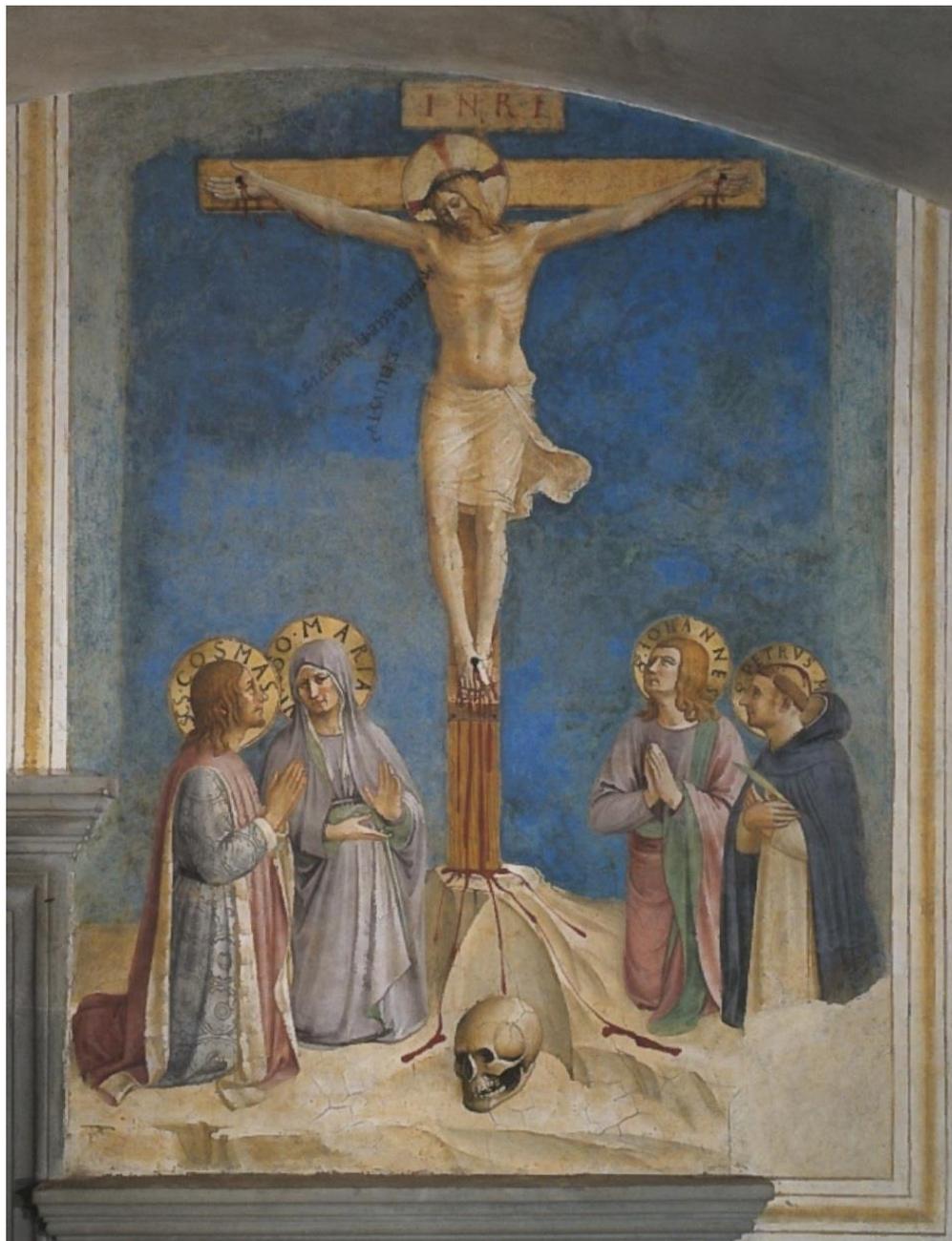


THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR DIVORCED AND SEPARATED



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.

“The Son of Man is destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected, and to be raised up on the third day. If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me. For anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake, that man will save it.” LK 9:22-24



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.

Lord Jesus, often I feel unjustly judged by the court system, just as you were. At times even my friends and family voice their judgmental interpretation of my situation and fail to be understanding or loving. Help me to react as you did with the quiet confidence of knowing that God our Father knows the truth. Help me to seek you as my most ardent defender. 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.

Lord Jesus, the Cross that you willingly accepted was weighed down by our sins, for you are blameless and without sin. My cross is heavy too, Lord. My sins make it difficult to carry, but the weight placed on it by the person who hurt me most makes it seem unbearable to hold. When the weight of the cross of divorce overwhelms me Lord, prompt me to unite my sufferings to yours. Help me to remember the burden that you bore for my sake. 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



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.

Lord Jesus, over the years I have developed sinful patterns of behavior. These sinful choices helped to create an environment devoid of peace. Through your mercy and grace, I've come to recognize the part I played in the breakup of my marriage. But patterns are hard to change Lord. Please give me the grace not to fall back into those sinful patterns. If I do, help me to remember your first fall. Fill me with the courage to get up and begin again. 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



IV JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

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

Lord Jesus, when your mother Mary's eyes met yours she was overcome by your suffering. Do I take the time to notice the suffering of others? Sometimes I fear that I am so consumed with my own suffering that I pay little or no attention to what others may be feeling. Open my eyes, Jesus, to each opportunity that you provide for me to empathize with those around me. Teach me the true meaning of humility, one of the greatest virtues of your Blessed Mother. Help me to understand that humility does not mean thinking less of myself, but thinking of myself less often. 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



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.

Lord, Jesus in your humility you allowed Simon to help you with the burden of your Cross. Many people have reached out to me also in an effort to relieve my suffering. Sometimes I find it so difficult to accept their help. I'd like to think that I can do it all by myself. I can't. Release me from my prideful tendencies. Help me to accept their help as you accepted the help of Simon. 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



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.

As I meditate on this station it is easy to see Veronica's compassion for you in your time of sorrow. But what is important here is something more subtle and more powerful: even in the midst of your most painful suffering, you left your imprint on Veronica's cloth as well as her heart. Am I so consumed with being politically correct that I'm afraid to share my faith with others? Teach me, dear Lord, to find ways to leave your imprint on the people I meet today in spite of my hardships. 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



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.

Placing myself at the scene of your second fall I can see the soldiers and the crowd laughing at your physical weakness. They make jokes at your expense and they enjoy seeing you fail. They call you names and proclaim you a fraud. How many times have I taken satisfaction over the falls and failings of the one who hurt me the most? Sometimes I wait for some hardship to befall that person so I can publicly humiliate them. Heal my heart Lord. Help me not to repay evil for evil but instead teach me to forgive and forget. 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



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.

This Station used to puzzle me, Lord. I could not understand why you would tell these sorrowful women not to weep for you, but to weep for themselves and for their children. Now I see why. You could see, even then, all of the painful suffering that parents and children go through when families fall apart. You especially had tremendous compassion and sorrow for the children. I'm so sorry for all of the pain this is causing my children. Surround them with their guardian angels and ask your Blessed Mother to wrap them within her loving mantle. Heal their hearts, Lord. 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



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.

Lord, when I contemplate you falling for the third time it's hard to understand how you were able to go on. So many times I feel as though I can't go on. Just when I think that I've hit a stride another obstacle trips me up and I fall again. Help me to see that when I am most vulnerable, when my heart is broken wide open, that you desire my surrender. I want to give all to you. Please teach me how. Piece together my broken heart and spirit with the healing power of your love. 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



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.

Lord Jesus, seeing you so cruelly humiliated as they intentionally stripped you of your garments grieves my heart. I offer up to you the many humiliations that I have suffered as a result of my divorce. Please strip me of all of my past embarrassments that this divorce has caused me. Clothe me with the virtues of your Blessed Mother: faithfulness, obedience, prudence, patience, mercy and purity. 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



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.

Christ, you lived in the truth and were nailed to a Cross because of it. The crowd preferred to live in darkness surrounded by lies and fueled by hatred. I am so tired of living in darkness. I'm tired of all of the lies and hatred that swirl around me as I see my marriage fall apart. I am going to nail every lie to your Cross and plead for the grace to live in the truth. I will no longer accept lies and deception in my life. You are the Way, the Truth and the Life. Give me the courage that it takes to live an authentic life. 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



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.

I give this moment to you, Jesus. Help me to think of nothing other than the fact that you died for me. How can I turn my back on you now, Lord? So often I have taken the gift of my faith for granted; going to mass out of obligation and begrudgingly participating. I'm sorry. I am reminded of the Roman soldier whose servant you so mercifully healed. From my heart I utter his prayer, *"I believe. Help my unbelief."* MK 9:24 Help me to realize the richness and fullness of my Christian faith. Especially inspire me to desire you, who are fully present in the Eucharist. 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



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.

My heart breaks when I think of your mother's overwhelming loss. Your lifeless Body was taken down from the Cross and she lovingly held you in her arms. Jesus, I see the failure of my marriage as an overwhelming loss too. Please encourage me to rely on Mary's motherly love. Help me to place my loss into her loving arms. Open my heart to her consolation. Help me rely on her infinite desire to draw me closer to you, her son. 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.

The tomb was such an empty and cold place to dwell, even in death. I reflect on my soul, where you also dwell. Is it empty and cold too, Lord? In your great mercy you have provided an opportunity to soften our hearts - the sacrament of Reconciliation. I need your help to overcome my fear and weakness. Fill me with true contrition for my sins and a deep desire to begin again with the grace you pour down on me in this sacrament of love. 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.

Lord, you have said *“Why do you seek the living one among the dead?”* LK 24:5 Through this crisis help me to see you by my side supporting me. From this death inside of me, draw me into your resurrection. Show me the new life you are preparing for me now and when I meet you in paradise.

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