The Stations of the Cross

Praying with the Psalms

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 the 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.

If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day 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.

As soon as morning came, the chief priest with the elders and the scribes … held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so." The chief priests accused him of many things. Again, Pilate questioned him, "Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of." Jesus gave him no further answer. MK 14: 43-44. 15:1 – 5.

God, do not be silent;
God, do not be deaf or remain unmoved!
See how your enemies rage;
your foes proudly raise their heads.

They conspire against your people,
plot against those you protect.
They say, "Come, let us wipe them out as a nation;
let Israel's name be remembered no more!"

They scheme with one mind,
they have entered into a covenant against you …
"Let us take for ourselves the pastures of God."

Cover their faces with shame,
till they seek your name, LORD.
Let them know that your name is LORD,
you alone are the Most High over all the earth. PS 83:2-3, 4-5, 6 & 13b, 17 & 19

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.

(Pilate) said to the Jews, "Behold your king!" They cried out, "Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, and carrying the Cross himself, he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. JN 19: 14b-17

LORD, do not punish me in our anger:
in your wrath do not chastise me!
Your arrows have sunk deep in me;
your hand has come down upon me.

Those who seek my life lay snares for me;
they seek my misfortune; they speak of ruin;
they plot treachery every day.
I am very near to falling;
my wounds are with me always.

My enemies live and grow strong,
those who hate me grow numerous fraudulently,
Repaying me evil for good,
accusing me for pursuing good.

Do not forsake me, O LORD;
my God, be not far from me!
Come quickly to help me,
my Lord and my salvation! PS 38:2-3 13, 18, 20 – 23

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.

Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,
our suffering that he endured,
While we thought of him as stricken,
as one smitten by God and afflicted,
But he was pierced for our offenses,
crushed for our sins;

Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole,
by his stripes we were healed. ISA 53: 4-5

With my own voice I cry to the LORD;
with my own voice I beseech the LORD.
Before him I pour out my complaint,
tell of my distress in front of him.

When by spirit is faint within me,
you know my paths.
As I go along this path,
they have hidden a trap for me.

I look to my right hand to see
that there is no one willing to acknowledge me.
Listen to my cry for help,
for I am brought very low.

Lead my soul from prison,
that I may give thanks to your name.
Then the righteous shall gather around me
because you have been good to me. PS 142: 2-4, 5ab & 7ab, 8.

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.

(Jesus') father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted – and you yourself a sword will pierce – so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." LK 2:33-35

Preserve my life, for I am devoted;
save your servant who trusts in you.
You are my God; be gracious to me, Lord;
to you I call all the day.

LORD, hear my prayer;
listen to my cry for help.
On the day of my distress I call to you,
for you will answer me.

O God, the arrogant have risen against me;
a ruthless band has sought my life;
to you they pay no heed.
But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy and truth.

Turn to me, be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant
save the son of your handmaid.
Give me a sign of your favor;
make my enemies see, to their confusion,
that you, LORD, help and comfort me. PS 86: 2-3, 6-7, 14-17

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.

Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it. MK 8:34-5

The LORD does righteous deeds,
brings justice to all the oppressed.
Merciful and gracious is the Lord,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.

For as the heavens tower over the earth,
so his mercy towers over those who fear him.
As a father has compassion on his children,
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

But the LORD'S mercy is from age to age,
toward those who fear him.
His salvations is for the children's children
of those who keep his covenant,
and remember to carry out his precepts.

Bless the LORD, all you his angels,
mighty in strength, acting at his behest,
obedient to his command.
Bless the LORD, all you his hosts,
his ministers who carry out his will.
Bless the LORD, my soul! PS 103:6, 8, 11, 13, 17-18, 20-22

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.

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me. MT 25:35-36, 40

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom should I fear?
The LORD is my life's refuge:
of whom should I be afraid?

Hear my voice, Lord, when I call;
have mercy on me and answer me
"Come," says my heart, "seek his face"
your face, LORD, do I seek!

Do not hide your face from me;
do not repel your servant in anger.
You are my salvation; do not cast me off;
do not forsake me, God my savior!

Do not abandon me to the desire of my foes;
malicious and lying witnesses have risen against me.
I believe I shall see the LORD's goodness
in the land of the living. PS 27:1-9, 12-13

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.

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me. MT 25:35-36, 40

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom should I fear?
The LORD is my life's refuge:
of whom should I be afraid?

Hear my voice, Lord, when I call'
have mercy on me and answer me
"Come," says my heart, "seek his face"
your face, LORD, do I seek!

DO not hide your face from me;
do not repel your servant in anger.
You are my salvation' do not cast me off;
do not forsake me, God my savior!

Do not abandon me to the desire of my foes;
malicious and lying witnesses have risen against me.
I believe I shall see the LORD's goodness
in the land of the living. PS 27:1-9, 12-13

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.

A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.'" LK 23:27-29

Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am in distress;
affliction is wearing down my eyes,
my throat and my insides.

My life is worn out by sorrow,
and my years by sighing.
My strength fails in my affliction;
my bones are wearing down.

To all my foes I am a thing of scorn ….
I hear the whispers of the crowd…
They conspire together against me;
they plot to take my life.

But I trust in you, LORD;
I say, "You are my God."
My destiny is in your hands;
rescue me from my enemies,
from the hands of my pursuers. PS 31: 10-12, 14-16

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.

Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help. HEB 4:14-16

My spirit is faint within me;
my heart despairs.
I remember the days of old; I ponder all your deeds;
the work of your hands I recall.

I stretch out my hands toward you,
my soul to you like a parched land.
Hasten to answer me, LORD;
for my spirit fails me.
Do not hide your face from me,
lest I become like those descending to the pit.

Show me the path I should walk,
for I entrust my life to you.
Rescue me, LORD, from my foes,
for I seek refuge in you.

For your name's sake, LORD, give me life;
in your righteousness lead my soul out of distress.
In your mercy put an end to my foes;
all those who are oppressing my soul,
for I am your servant. PS 143: 4-9, 11-12

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.

Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help. HEB 4:14-16

My spirit is faint within me;
my heart despairs.
I remember the days of old' I ponder all your deeds;
the work of your hands I recall.

I stretch out my hands toward you,
my soul to you like a parched land.
Hasten to answer me, LORD;
for my spirit fails me.
Do not hide your face from me,
lest I become like those descending to the pit.

Show me the path I should walk,
for I entrust my life to you.
Rescue me, LORD, from my foes,
for I seek refuge in you.

For your name's sake, LORD, give me life;
in your righteousness lead my soul out of distress.
In your mercy put an end to my foes;
all those who are oppressing my soul,
for I am your servant. PS 143: 4-9, 11-12

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.

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified (Jesus) and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, "He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Christ of God." LK 23:33-35

Save me, God,
for the water have reached my neck.
I have gone down to the watery depths;
the flood overwhelms me.

I am weary with crying out;
my throat is parched.
My eyes fail,
from looking for my God.

Insult has broken my heart, and I despair;
I looked for compassion, but there was none,
for comforters, but found none.
Instead they gave me poison for my food;
and for my thirst they gave me vinegar.

But here I am miserable and in pain;
let your saving help protect me, God,
that I may praise God's name in song
and glorify it with thanksgiving. PS 69:2-4, 21-11, 30-31

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.

From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice. "*Eli, Eli, Lema Sabachthane?*" Which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Some of the bystanders who hear it said, "This one is calling for Elijah." Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said, "Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him." But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit. MT 27:45-50

I cry aloud to God,
I cry to God to hear me.
On the day of my distress I seek the Lord'
by night my hands are stretched out unceasingly.

When I think of God, I groan'
as I meditate, my spirit grows faint.
You have kept me from closing my eyes in sleep;
I am troubled and cannot speak.

At night I ponder in my heart;
and as I meditate, my spirit probes:
"Will the Lord reject us forever,
never again show favor?

Has God's mercy ceased forever?
Has God forgotten how to show mercy …?
I conclude: My sorrow is this,
the right hand of the Most High has abandoned us." PS 77:2-5, 7-11

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.

When it was evening, since it was the day of preparation, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a distinguished member of the council, who was himself awaiting the kingdom of God, came and courageously went to Pilate and asked for the Body of Jesus. Pilate was amazed that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had died. And when he learned of it from the centurion, he gave the Body to Joseph. MK 15:42-45

You have rejected and disgraced us ….
You make us retreat before the foe ….
You hand us over like sheep to be slaughtered ….
You make us the reproach of our neighbors ….

All this has come upon us,
though we have not forgotten you,
nor been disloyal to your covenant.
Our hearts have not turned back,
nor have our steps strayed from your path.

You have left us crushed,
desolate in a place of jackals;
you have covered us with a shadow of death.
For you we are slain all the day long,
considered only as sheep to be slaughtered.

Awake! Why do you sleep, O LORD?
Why do you hide your face;
why forget our pain and misery?
Rise up, help us!
Redeem us in your mercy. PS 44:1-=14, 18-20, 23-25, 27

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.

Taking the Body (of Jesus), Joseph wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained sitting there, facing the tomb. MT 27:59-61

LORD, the God of my salvation, I call out by day;
At night I cry aloud in your presence.
I am reckoned with those who go down to the pit;
I am like a warrior without strength.

My couch is among the dead,
like the slain who lie in the grave.
You plunge me into the bottom of the pit,
into the darkness of the abyss.

Do you work wonders for the dead?
Do the shades arise and praise you?
Is your mercy proclaimed in the grave;
your faithfulness among those who have perished?

Are your marvels declared in the darkness,
your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?
But I cry out to you, LORD;
in the morning my prayer comes before you. PS 88:2, 5-7, 11-14

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.

On entering the tomb they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe, and they were utterly amazed. He said to them, "Don't be amazed! You seek Jesus the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here."MK 16:5-7

He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.

He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear the LORD
and put their trust in him.

Blessed is the one
who trusts in the LORD,
who does not look to the proud,
to those who turn aside to false gods.

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,
because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
nor will you let your faithful one see decay.
You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand. PS 40:2-11, PS 16:9-1

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

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