

STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

The Stations of the Cross (also called the Way of the Cross) is a traditional liturgical devotion commemorating the last day of Jesus' life. The devotion originated with pilgrims in Jerusalem retracing the traditional steps Jesus is believed to have followed on Good Friday. Since not all Christians could make pilgrimages to Jerusalem, however, the custom arose of replicating the devotion in congregational and individual settings, often with images or carvings on the walls of a church to commemorate each of the traditional 14 stations (or stops) on the Way of the Cross.

The Church through the centuries has used many forms of praying the Stations of the Cross. The form here, prepared by The Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations, offers the opportunity for Christians to meditate on each of the stations by contemplating the needs of suffering people in God's creation today. The devotions challenge us to think about how we – the ministers of God's reconciliation in Christ – can honor Christ's sacrifice by offering ourselves to the healing and repair of the world God sent his Son to save.

The prayers and other spoken words in this devotion come from The Episcopal Church's *Book of Occasional Services*.



OPENING DEVOTIONS

As you say the opening devotions, consider the world God sent his Son to save.

Consider that in our world today, more than one billion of God's children live in intense and debilitating poverty. More than 15,000 children die each day from AIDS, Tuberculosis, or Malaria. There are more than 100 million orphans in the developing world. Large segments of God's creation live without access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation, or educational services. Debilitating conflict rages across the globe from Darfur in the Sudan to Iraq to the Holy Land.

In Jesus' first public sermon, he described his vocation by quoting Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Is not Jesus' vocation also the vocation of the Church? How are we as believers called to live into that vocation?

At Baptism, and whenever we renew our Baptismal vows, we promise to "strive for justice and peace." Sharing this witness with the leaders of our governments and communities is one way in which Christians can live out the vocation that Isaiah and Jesus commended to us. To learn how you can get involved, join the Episcopal Public Policy Network at www.episcopalchurch.org/eppn/.

Prior to making the first station, the devotion traditionally opens with the following, or similar, prayers. The prayers may be recited antiphonally by an Officiant and congregation (or a parent and family) – as presented here – or they may be prayed by an individual.

If the devotion is said in a church, the worshippers assemble in silence. The procession enters in silence and makes the accustomed reverence to the altar.

After a pause, the Officiant begins the devotion as all make the sign of the Cross:

Officiant: In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

All: 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. Amen.

Officiant: We will glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ:

People: In whom is our salvation, our life, and our resurrection.

Officiant: Let us pray.
Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

In a church, the procession now moves to the First Station. Music or signing may accompany the procession as it moves. The traditional hymn sung during this time is the *Stabat Mater*, ("At the Cross, her Station Keeping," hymn number 159 in *The Hymnal* 1982.)

THE FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DIE



Christ before Pilate
Tintoretto, 1566-67
Oil on Panel

The First Station commemorates Jesus being sentenced to death before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. As you say this devotion, meditate upon all those throughout God's creation who are sentenced to die each day because of extreme poverty. The many facets of extreme poverty include income poverty, hunger, conflict, disease, environmental degradation, a lack of basic human rights, and structural barriers to justice such as crushing debt burdens throughout the developing world.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) recognize that just as humanity is fundamentally interconnected, so is the phenomenon of global poverty and the responses to it. The world has been slow to embrace the MDGs – which envision cutting extreme poverty in half by 2015 – but there is still time. The world possesses the resources, strategies, and capacity to eradicate extreme poverty. It has yet to build the political will.

To learn more about the MDGs and what you can do, visit Episcopal Relief and Development's website on the MDGs: www.er-d.org/mdg/. Commit to praying for the fulfillment of the MDGs.

Officiant:
People

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:
Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Officiant:

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation; and they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him to Pilate. And they all condemned him and said, "He deserves to die." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the

judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. Then he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

Officiant: God did not spare his own Son:
People: **But delivered him up for us all.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

People: **Amen**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



SECOND STATION: JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS



Christ Carrying the Cross
Benvenuto di Giovanni, 1491
Oil on Panel

Jesus, who willingly took up the Cross for humanity's sake, also commanded us to take up our own crosses and follow him.

Taking up our own crosses and giving ourselves in self-sacrificial love to help bear the burden of others is the model of vocation that God gave us in his Son. In a world where so many starve for daily bread, this vocation of sacrifice can be seen as amplifying the ancient imperative of God spoken through Isaiah: "If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, your light shall rise in the darkness. You shall be called repairer of the breach, restorer of streets to live in." As you meditate upon the Second Station, consider the starving of the world, and the vast gap between the hungry and those who have plenty.

To learn how you can participate and help make a difference, visit www.bread.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: Jesus went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Like a lamb he was led to the slaughter; and

like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

Officiant: The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all:
People: **For the transgression of my people was he stricken.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
Almighty God, whose beloved Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME



Jesus Bearing the Cross
Jacquemart de Hesdin, 1409
Tempera on Panel

Tradition holds that Jesus stumbled and fell three times along his road to Crucifixion, crushed by the heavy load of the Cross but willing to continue so that humanity would be spared the burden of its weight.

As you pray this station, meditate upon the crushing burdens that today afflict God's creation, and how those burdens prevent humanity's full flourishing in the peace and freedom God intends for us. One such burden is the reality of crushing debt in the developing world. Many impoverished countries are repaying enormous sums of debt, often acquired by past corrupt regimes or through predatory lending practices from the world community in the Cold War era. These annual debt-service payments to wealthy international creditors hinder poor nations' ability to spend on the health, education and well-being of their people. As an example, the U.S. will contribute more than \$4 billion to the fight against HIV/AIDS globally this year. The countries that will benefit most from that \$4 billion will pay more than \$9 million in debt service.

To learn more – and find out what you and your faith community can do – visit Jubilee USA, of which The Episcopal Church is a member, at www.jubileeusa.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and was born in human likeness. And being found in human form he humbled himself

and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name.

Officiant: Surely he has borne our griefs:

People: **And carried our sorrows.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS AFFLICTED MOTHER



Mater Dolorosa
Titian, c. 1555
Oil on Wood

As the burden of the Cross becomes heavier, Jesus meets his Mother, the one whom the Church through the centuries has called the Theotokos, or “God-bearer,” because when the angel of God appeared to her to announce that she would give birth to the Incarnate Word, Mary submitted graciously and without hesitation. After the angel departed from her, Mary sang a song about God’s kingdom, and in it, told us how different a world modeled after God’s will – rather than our own – would look. In that world, God “has put down the mighty from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; He has filled the hungry with good things, but the rich he has sent away empty.”

Though Christians have been singing Mary’s song, the Magnificat, every day at Evening Prayer for centuries, her vision of a world ordered after God’s will remains sorely unrealized in our own midst. One example is the devastating irony that the world’s richest countries tend to be the least generous in the amount they invest in economic development for poor countries each year. The United States – the world’s most prosperous nation – gives a smaller percentage of its annual budget to development aid than any other industrialized nation.

To become part of the movement to change this, join The One Campaign, of which The Episcopal Church is a member, at www.one.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:
People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: To what can I liken you, to what can I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem?
What likeness can I use to comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For vast as

the sea is your ruin. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended.

Officiant: A sword will pierce your own soul also:

People: **And fill your heart with bitter pain.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

O God, who willed that in the passion of your Son a sword of grief should pierce the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary his mother: Mercifully grant that your Church, having shared with her in his passion, may be made worthy to share in the joys of his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



FIFTH STATION: THE CROSS IS LAID ON SIMON OF CYRENE



The Way to Calvary
Duccio di Buoninsegna, 1308-11
Tempera on Wood Panel

The Gospel tells us that as the weight of Jesus' Cross grew, the Roman soldiers compelled a man named Simon to step in and carry the Cross for a time.

As you meditate upon the Fifth Station, consider the various weights placed upon God's children each day, and the fact that often, others have to help carry the load. For example, in much of the developing world, the fees for basic primary and secondary education are so great that families have to choose which child, if any, can attend school. Disproportionately, those who are short-changed are girls, who then stay at home and help their mothers in long days of crushing labor. These young children bear burdens in place of others in their family, often – like Simon of Cyrene – with very little choice.

To learn more about how school fees and other barriers to education hurt the world's children – and what can be done to change this reality – visit Global Action for Children, a nationwide coalition of which the Episcopal Church is a member, at www.globalactionforchildren.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:
People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: As they led Jesus away, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus. "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his

cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Officiant: Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me:

People: **Cannot be my disciple.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



SIXTH STATION: A WOMAN WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS



Saint Veronica
Hans Membling, c. 1470-75
Oil on Panel

Ancient Christian tradition holds that along the Way of the Cross, a woman offered Jesus a towel to wipe his face, and on that towel, the image of his face was left. Thus, tradition has called the woman St. Veronica, from the Latin Vera Icon, or "true icon." In the legend of St. Veronica, Christians see the belief that the true icons of the world are those who offer themselves in the humble service of others.

Today, along the real Way of the Cross in Jerusalem, Israelis and Palestinians continue to be enmeshed in conflict that robs all of the people of the Holy Land of the peace and security God intends for them. News accounts often are filled with stories of those at the extremes who see violence and division as the only way forward. In reality, great majorities of the people of the Holy Land – Jews, Muslims, and Christians – are dedicated to a peaceful and reconciled future. These are the "true icons" of the Holy Land today. People of faith around the world should stand in solidarity with them, using our voices, actions and prayers to fulfill the Psalmist's cry: "O pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

To learn what you can do, visit Churches for Middle East Peace, of which The Episcopal Church is a member, at www.cmep.org.

Officiant:

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Officiant: We have seen him without beauty or majesty, with no looks to attract our eyes. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not. His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of men. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.

Officiant: Restore us, O Lord God of hosts:

People: **Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

O God, who before the passion of your only-begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant to us that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance, may be strengthened to bear our cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME



Christ Bearing the Cross
Alonso Cano, 1635-37
Oil on Canvas

Jesus falls a second time. His burden is becoming overwhelming, but he continues to march forward to Calvary, the point of our redemption.

As you meditate upon the Seventh Station, contemplate the will to survive and march forward among the one billion of God's children who live on less than a dollar a day. Consider the life of an impoverished family in Vietnam. A dollar a day might buy a third of a pound of rice and a third of a pound of beans. Tomatoes, onions, flour, sugar, soap and other staples might have to wait until money can be saved. There is no electricity, clean water, or sanitation. Hunger tears at adults and children alike as a persistent, never-absent part of life. And yet, people march forward because they have no other choice.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) represent a recognition that the horror of crippling poverty can be alleviated only through partnerships between rich and poor nations that seek to lift the barriers that perpetuate inequality. Rich nations are called to help build a "global partnership for debt, aid, and trade." To learn more about building this global partnership, and how you can get involved, visit DATA (Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa) at www.data.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:
People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

Officiant: But as for me, I am a worm and no man:
People: **Scorned by all and despised by the people.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
Almighty and ever-living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM



Station Eight
Wall Carving at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
Pittsburgh, PA

Jesus, as continues to bear the weight of the Cross, stops to speak to the women of Jerusalem, the ones who so often bear the burdens of wisdom and well-being for their families and communities.

The status of women around the world is critical to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Education, civic empowerment, and access to health services for women are important MDG targets that affect not just women themselves, but also their families and communities. Among the most critical health services for women in the developing world is family planning, which gives women and their families the ability to plan and space births, thereby promoting maternal health, reducing child mortality, and allowing for a family's economic survival.

International funding for family-planning programs lags severely behind need, however. In particular, the United States has eliminated or greatly reduced much of its support for these vital programs in recent years. To learn about and help support a new proposal to put America back on the right track – the “Focus on Family Health Worldwide Act” – visit the Episcopal Public Policy Network at www.episcopalchurch.org/eppn/.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:
People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: There followed after Jesus a great multitude of the people, and among them were women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

Officiant: Those who sowed with tears:
People: **Will reap with songs of joy.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
Teach your Church, O Lord, to mourn the sins of which it is guilty, and to repent and forsake them; that, by your pardoning grace, the results of our iniquities may not be visited upon our children and our children's children; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A THIRD TIME



Christ Carrying the Cross
Unknown Master with Monogram MS, 1500-1510
Oil on Canvas

The weight of the Cross finally has overtaken Jesus as he falls a third time, barely able to drag his body along the ground as he approaches Golgotha.

As you meditate upon the Ninth Station, contemplate the toll that crushing disease has on God's children around the world. Imagine the tens of millions in sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia who have been infected with HIV/AIDS or Malaria, who know that treatments for their diseases exists but that they will never be able to afford them. Contemplate the burdens they bear as they – like Jesus -- move closer to death yet still are bound to move forward with the daily rhythms of their lives, supporting their children and families. They know that if they die, the burden will only shift to those children who will join the swelling ranks of orphans in the developing world.

To learn how you can help, visit Friends of the Global Fight at www.theglobalfight.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light. He has besieged me and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me dwell in darkness like the dead of long ago. Though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer. He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes.
"Remember, O Lord, my affliction and bitterness, the wormwood and the gall!"

Officiant: He was led like a lamb to the slaughter:
People: **And like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS



This Disrobing of Christ
El Greco, c. 1600
Oil on Canvas

In a final act of humiliation before being lifted up on the Cross, the Roman soldiers strip Jesus of his garments and divide them amongst themselves.

As you meditate upon Christ's humiliation, consider the many acts of humiliation endured daily by God's people who live in poverty. Among the greatest humiliations is the inability to provide for one's self, family, and community as a result of unfair international barriers to trade. Like debt relief and development aid, fair-trade policy is an essential pillar of the Millennium Development Goals. Whereas debt relief and development aid are, by nature, intermediary steps to lift certain structural barriers from impoverished people, fair trade is a lasting measure to allow disempowered people to build a better future for themselves.

To learn more about what makes trade fair, and how you can get involved, visit the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/tradebackground.htm.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: When they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And they divided his garments among them by casting lots. This was to fulfill the scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing."

Officiant: They gave me gall to eat:
People: **And when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.**

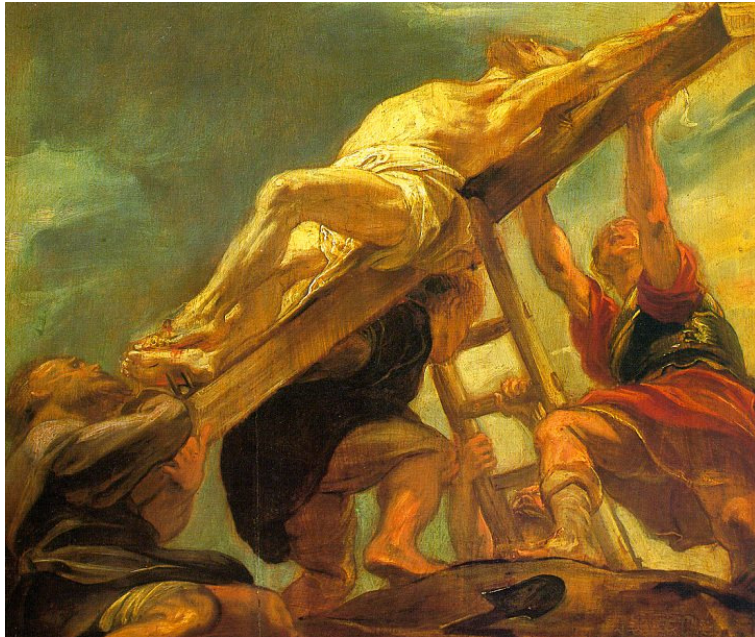
Officiant: Let us pray.
Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS



The Crucifixion
Peter Paul Rubens, 1620-21
Oil on Canvas

"And I, when I am lifted up from the Cross, will draw all people to myself." To Christians, these words of Jesus from the Gospel of John speak of the power of the cross to contain and enfold all the horror, pain and grief of the world in God's uncompromising and enduring embrace of love. The Cross is not merely our redemption, but also our reconciliation and restoration to God and to one another in Christ.

As you meditate upon the Crucifixion at the Eleventh Station, consider how we are called to the ministry of reconciliation in our own lives. Consider how all of the problems which afflict humanity – poverty, conflict, disease, injustice – might be combated by building partnerships of reconciliation between nations and peoples. Humanity is fundamentally interconnected; we are, as St. Paul tells us, all limbs and members of the same body. Thus, when one part of the body suffers we all suffer.

To learn more about the principle of interconnectedness – and how partnerships of reconciliation can help bring healing to humanity – visit the UN's Millennium Project at www.unmillenniumproject.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:
People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: When they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him; and with him they crucified two criminals, one on the right, the other on the left, and Jesus between them. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

Officiant: They pierce my hands and my feet:
People: **They stare and gloat over me.**

Officiant:

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name.

People:

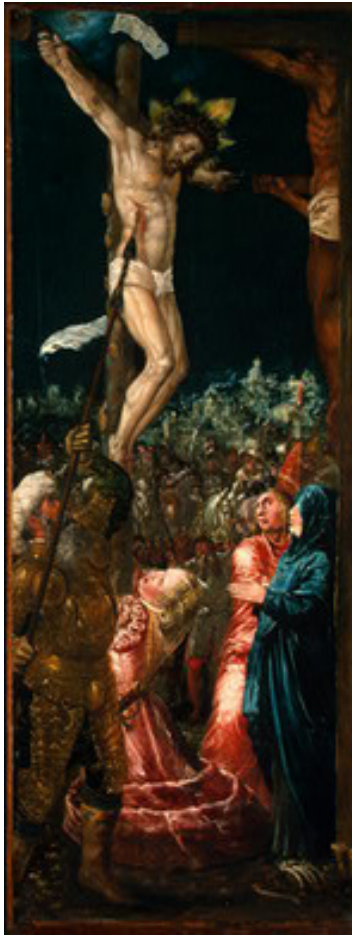
Amen.

All:

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS



The Crucifixion
Hans Mielich, c. 1650/75
Oil on Canvas

“Through Christ,” St. Paul tells us, “God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things whether in heaven or on earth by making peace through the Blood of the Cross.”

Despite God’s passionate desire for reconciliation and peace through the Blood of the Cross, humanity at the beginning of the 21st Century remains torn by conflict, strife, and war. Few nations have suffered more than the Sudan, which – while just emerging from 21 years of civil war between the north and the south – is now embroiled in government-sponsored genocide against the people of Darfur in the west.

Recently, the Archbishop of Canterbury traveled to the Sudan and then came to Washington, where he shared his reflections on the needs of the Sudanese people with U.S. policymakers. To read more about this, visit www.needlink.org. Then, to get involved with the movement to bring peace to Darfur, visit www.savedarfur.org.

Officiant:

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Officiant: When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished!" And then, crying with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." And he bowed his head, and handed over his spirit.

Officiant: Christ for us became obedient unto death:

People: **Even death on a cross.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

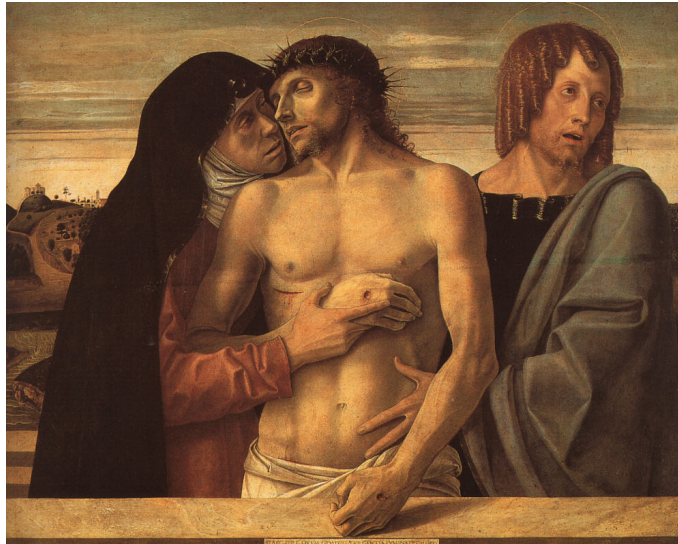
O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; who lives and reigns now and for ever.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



THIRTEENTH STATION: THE BODY OF JESUS IS PLACED IN THE ARMS OF HIS MOTHER



Pieta
Giovanni Bellini, 1460s
Oil on Canvas

Removed from the Cross, the lifeless body of Jesus is returned to the arms of his Mother, the one who cradled him in her arms at Bethlehem on the night of his birth. The face of the Blessed Virgin Mary is covered in grief, a mother's heart broken by the humiliating death of her beloved Son.

As you meditate upon the imagery of Station Thirteen, and Mary's love for her Son, consider the love of parents for their children all throughout the world. Consider the burden, the heartbreak, and the suffering endured by parents in the developing world as they see their children die because of disease, malnutrition, conflict, or child trafficking.

To learn more about the challenges facing children in the developing world – and how you can help –visit the U.S. Coalition for Child Survival at www.child-survival.org.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: All you who pass by, behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow. My eyes are spent with weeping; my soul is in tumult; my heart is poured out in grief because of the downfall of my people. "Do not call me Naomi (which means Pleasant), call me Mara (which means Bitter); for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."

Officiant: Her tears run down her cheeks:

People: **And she has none to comfort her.**

Officiant:

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, by your death you took away the sting of death: Grant to us your servants so to follow in faith where you have led the way, that we may at length fall asleep peacefully in you and wake up in your likeness; for your tender mercies' sake.

People:

Amen.

All:

**Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB



Deposition in the Sepulchre
Marten Van Heemskerck, Date Unknown
Oil on Canvas

At the end of the story of Good Friday, nothing but death remains. Humanity has brought God's Son to the tomb, sealing him behind an immovable stone. But to God, through whom all things are possible, no barrier is immovable. Through the sacrifice and death of Christ, even death itself is no longer a barrier to life for the children of God. And thus, the burial rite in the Book of Common Prayer tells us, "Even at the grave, we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!"

As you meditate upon Jesus in the tomb, consider that the Church – the Body of Christ in the world – is called by God to carry forward Christ's reconciling sacrifice by helping bring life even in the midst of death. One way we do this is through fidelity to our Baptismal covenant, in which we promise to "strive for justice and peace, and respect the dignity of every human being."

To get involved with The Episcopal Church's ministry of public advocacy, visit the Church's Office of Government Relations and join the Episcopal Public Policy Network at www.episcopalchurch.org/eppn.

Officiant: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

People: **Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**

Officiant: When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of

Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb.

Officiant: You will not abandon me to the grave:
People: **Nor let your holy One see corruption.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
O God, your blessed Son was laid in a tomb in a garden, and rested on the Sabbath day: Grant that we who have been buried with him in the waters of baptism may find our perfect rest in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

All: **Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.**



CLOSING DEVOTIONS

The following prayers conclude the service. If the rite has occurred in a church, the procession moves back to the altar for the closing prayers.

Officiant: Savior of the world, by your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us:
People: **Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech you, O Lord.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
We thank you, heavenly Father, that you have delivered us from the dominion of sin and death and brought us into the kingdom of your Son; and we pray that, as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his love he may raise us to eternal joys; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People: **Amen.**

Officiant: To Christ our Lord who loves us, and washed us in his own blood, and made us a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

The procession retires to the sacristy in silence.

