

The Way of the Cross

The Way of the Cross or Stations of the Cross are a traditional devotional prayer of the church. They are usually prayed by physically moving from one station to the next, our journey recalling Christ's journey to Calvary and ultimately to the tomb. As we walk in his footsteps, we pray and reflect on his sufferings for us. This simple resource aims to let you pray the stations at home, with a printout or on an electronic device.

For each station, read the title of the station, spend some time contemplating the image and then read the reflection and prayers that go with it. Each includes a verse or two of a hymn which you can sing or say. You can pray them all at once or you may like to do two or three at a time and work through them over the days of Holy Week.

Acknowledgements:

The prayers, reflections and hymns were written and compiled by the Revd Norman Wallwork.

Images: Stations of the Cross for the Theresienkapelle in Schwarzenberg (Vorarlberg, Austria). Created by Gerhard Winkler (artist, * 1939). To see the complete series of images in larger format, [click here](#).

Preparation

Lord Christ,
Lamb of God and crucified Lord
cleanse us, who are not worthy to approach,
with the pardon of your Cross;
bring us, in the fellowship of your sufferings,
to the victory of your cross;
and seal us in the kingdom of your glory
among the servants of your Cross,
for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign one God
now and for ever. Amen.

Eric Milner-White

***Jesus, we follow thee,
In all thy footsteps tread,
And seek for full conformity
To our exalted head.
We would, we would partake
Thy every state below,
And suffer all things for thy sake,
And to thy glory go.***

Charles Wesley

1. Jesus is condemned to death

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

*When Pilate saw he could do nothing,
and that a riot was beginning, he took
some water and washed his hands before
the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this
man's blood; see to it yourselves."*

Matthew 27.24

*Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.
By a perversion of justice he was taken away.
Who could have imagined his future? Isaiah 53.7ff*

Jesus, forgive the moments of injustice when we decided to do nothing – the decisive hours when we went with the flow – the crucial days when we refused to take responsibility.

O Saviour Christ, save and help those sentenced to death – those unjustly condemned – those persecuted in the pursuit of justice – all prisoners of war and conflict.

*O, holy Jesus, how have you offended,
that we to judge you have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by your own rejected, O most afflicted.*

*Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon you?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, has undone you.
I, O Lord Jesus, I it was denied you: I crucified you.*

Robert Bridges, from the German and the Latin

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.



2. Jesus receives his cross

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

*Jesus said, "If anyone wants to be a follower
of mine, let them deny themselves, take up
their cross and come with me". Luke 9.23*



*He was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53.5*

Jesus, forgive the times we have laid aside the cross – left the path of self-denial – taken our hand from the plough – refused to carry another's burden.

**O Saviour Christ, save and help those who bear the cross of grievous
temptation – who endure the cross of ill-treatment – who live with the cross
of anxiety or loneliness.**

*Thou hidden source of calm repose,
Thou all-sufficient love divine,
My help and refuge from my foes,
Secure I am, if thou art mine:
And lo, from sin, and grief, and shame,
I hide me, Jesus, in thy name.*

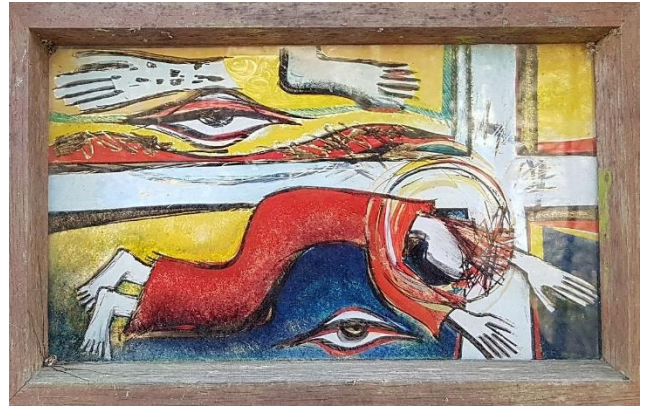
Charles Wesley

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

3. Jesus falls the first time

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

*Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to
make the people holy through the shedding
of his own blood. Hebrews 13.12*



*He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him of no account. Isaiah 53.3*

Jesus, forgive my turning aside from your needy ones in the street – from your hungry ones in the door-way – from your homeless ones fallen on hard times.

O Saviour Christ, save and help those who have lost their footing in life – who have lost contact with family or friends – who have been crushed by failure or weakness.

*Jesus Christ is calling, calling in the streets,
'Who will join my journey? I will guide their feet.'
Listen, Lord Jesus, let my fears be few.
Walk one step before me;
I will follow you.*

John L Bell

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

4. Jesus meets his Mother

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

*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you.
Jeremiah 1.5*



*Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted. Isaiah 53.4*

Jesus, forgive the times we have forgotten your Mother's love – failed to give thanks for her obedience – drawn back from her sorrow – been unmindful of her prayers.

O Saviour Christ, save and help all who are deprived of a mother's love – those seeking tenderness – longing for understanding – enduring parental pain – carrying the wounds of a damaged childhood.

*Sing we, too, of Mary's sorrows,
Of the sword that pierced her through,
When beneath the cross of Jesus
She His weight of suffering knew,
Looked upon her Son and Saviour
Reigning high on Calvary's tree,
Saw the price of our redemption
Paid to set the sinner free.*

George B Timms

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross

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

*They compelled a passer-by, who was
coming in from the country, to carry his
cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father
of Alexander and Rufus. Mark 15.21*

*All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53.6*

Jesus, forgive the times we have left you to carry your cross alone – refused to
share its weight –
despised its shame – blunted its message – neglected its grace.

**O Saviour Christ, save and help those longing to serve you more faithfully –
those seeking to love you more deeply – those carrying another's burden
more heavily.**

***Take up your cross – nor let its weight
fill your weak spirit with alarm:
Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up,
and brace your heart, and nerve your arm.***

***Take up your cross, and follow Christ,
nor think till death to lay it down;
for only those who bear the cross
may hope to wear the glorious crown.***

Charles William Everest

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.



6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

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

*It is the God who said, "Let light shine out
of darkness", who has shone in our hearts
to give the light of the knowledge of the glory
of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

2 Corinthians 4.6f



*For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. Isaiah 53.2*

Jesus, forgive our living only with the attractive images of your appearance –
our turning away from the true image – the ‘vera ikon’ [the Veronica] of your
torn skin and blood-spattered face – our reluctance to trace the true likeness
of your glory in the bruised and broken.

**O Saviour Christ, save and help your sisters and brothers where disease has
marred their outward beauty – bless your servants whose vocation is to
bathe and wash the bodies of others – strengthen your sisters and brothers
whose ministry is to the dying.**

*Jesus, these eyes have never seen
that radiant form of Thine;
The veil of sense hangs dark between
thy blessed face and mine.*

*Yet though I have not seen, and still
must rest in faith alone,
I love Thee, dearest Lord, and will, unseen,
but not unknown.*

Ray Palmer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

7. Jesus falls a second time

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

*Jesus was himself tested by what he
suffered, so that he is able to help those
who are also being tested.*

Hebrews 2.18



*Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain.
When you make his life an offering for sin,
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;
through him the will of the Lord shall prosper. Isaiah 53.10*

Jesus, forgive the sins to which we have returned – the sins for which we have made excuses – the sins to which we give an innocent name – the sins you died to overcome – the sins you died to forgive.

O Saviour Christ, save and help those living with grave and secret sins – those broken by the discovery of their wrong-doing – those whose sins have wounded another – those whose actions have caused another to stumble.

*Nothing in my hand I bring,
simply to thy Cross I cling;
naked, come to thee for dress;
helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly;
wash me, Saviour, or I die.*

Augustus Montague Toplady

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

8. Jesus comforts the women of Jerusalem

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

*Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of
Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for
yourselves and your children”. Luke 23.28f*



*Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.
He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street. Isaiah 42.1f*

Jesus, forgive the cultures of the world for debasing the place of women –
forgive the faiths of the world denying the calling of women – forgive the
work-places of the world for devaluing the contribution of women.

**O Saviour Christ, save and help the women who strive and weep for their
communities, the mothers who struggle and shed tears for their families and
the daughters who work and cry for the sick and the dying.**

*Drop, drop slow tears,
and bathe those beauteous feet,
which brought from heaven
the news and Prince of Peace.*

*In your deep floods
drown all my faults and fears;
nor let his eye
see sin, but through my tears.*

Phineas Fletcher

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

9. Jesus falls a third time

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

*Being found in human form, Christ
humbled himself and became obedient to
the point of death – even death on a cross.
Philippians 2.8*



*A bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice. Isaiah 42.3*

Jesus, forgive the impossible burdens we place on the shoulders of our
politicians and leaders – the unbearable loads we place on the vocations of our
pastors and teachers – the crushing weight we place on the skills of our
doctors and nurses.

**O Saviour Christ, save and help those whose strength of body is failing –
whose power of mind is diminishing – whose vibrancy of spirit is abating.**

*O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee:
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.*

George Matheson

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes

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

*They stare and gloat over me. They
divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.*

Psalms 22.16ff



*Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness. Philippians 2.6,7*

Jesus, forgive the times we exposed another to ridicule – disclosed a valued secret – stripped a person of their good name – turned aside from the needs of your naked and emaciated sisters and brothers.

O Saviour Christ, save and help those exposed to cold, hunger and homelessness – those terrified of being in the presence of others – those no longer able to hide their weakness – prisoners frightened of re-entering their community.

*What language shall I borrow
to praise thee, dearest friend,
for this, thy dying sorrow,
thy pity without end?
Lord, make me thine for ever,
nor let me faithless prove;
O let me never, never abuse such dying love!*

Paul Gerhardt from the Latin

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

11. Jesus is nailed to the cross

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

*Christ himself bore our sins in his body on
the cross, so that, free from sins, we might
live for righteousness; by his wounds you
have been healed. 1 Peter 2.24*



*He poured out himself to death,
and was numbered with the transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53.12*

Jesus, forgive the wounds we inflict on those we love – the scars we leave on the memories of colleagues or friends – the hopes we have killed in those who believed and trusted us.

O Saviour Christ, save and help those who grieve in silence – who sorrow without words – who bear an inward pain – who are tortured for their convictions.

***Never love nor sorrow was
Like that my Saviour showed;
See him stretched on yonder cross,
And crushed beneath our load!
Now discern the deity,
Now his heavenly birth declare;
Faith cries out: 'Tis he, 'tis he,
My God, that suffers there!***

Charles Wesley

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

12. Jesus dies upon the cross

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

*When Jesus had received the wine, he said,
“It is finished”. He bowed his head and
gave up his spirit. John 19.28-30*



*He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his teaching. Isaiah 42.4*

Jesus, forgive those who crucify you again – those who once died to their sins
but who do so long longer – those who once drank from your cup but have
since betrayed you.

**O Saviour Christ, save and help those who draw near to the end of life –
those fearful of death – those who pass into the presence of God.**

*We in thy birth are born, sustain thy grief and loss,
Share in thy want, and shame, and scorn,
And die upon the cross.*

*Thou saidst, 'Where'er I am, there shall my servants be.'
Master, thy welcome word we claim,
And die to live with thee.*

Charles Wesley

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

13. Jesus is taken down from the cross

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

*I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope; for with the
Lord there is steadfast love, and with
him is great power to redeem.*

Psalm 130.5ff



Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, from Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Luke 23.50f

Jesus, forgive our fearfulness in the mystery of your silence – our fretfulness in the stature of your waiting – and our faithlessness in the surety of your purposes.

O Saviour Christ, save and help every mother bereft of a son or daughter – every mourner deprived of a loved one – every person bringing consolation to the dying.

*Be near me, Lord, when dying,
O show thy cross to me,
and, my last need supplying,
come, Lord, and set me free;
these eyes, new faith receiving,
from thee shall never move;
the one who dies believing
dies safely through thy love.*

P. Gerhardt

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.

14. The body of Jesus is laid in the tomb

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

Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden was a tomb in which no one had ever been laid. They laid Jesus there. John 19.41-42



He was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.

They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Isaiah 53.8f

Jesus, forgive us when we have not listened for your voice calling us yet again to follow you – not heard your word raising us once more to the life of faith – not waited even a third time for you ask us if we still love you.

O Saviour Christ, save and help every seeker longing for the light that comes after the darkness – every searcher longing for the life that comes through faith – every disciple longing for their Lord in the power of the Resurrection.

*Forth he came at Easter, like the risen grain,
He that for the three days in the grave had lain,
Quick from the dead my risen Lord is seen:
Love is come again, like wheat that springs up green.*

John Macleod Campbell Crum

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, **with all creation we rejoice in the glory of your death and resurrection.**

May Jesus Christ, who for our sake became obedient unto death, even death on a cross, keep us and strengthen us, this day and for ever. **Amen.**