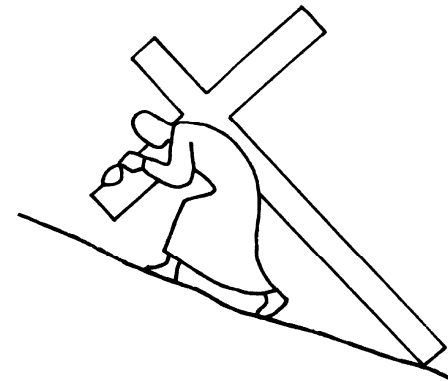


The Way of the Cross (Scriptural)



Anglican 4th Day

May 2011

Concerning the Service

The devotion known as the *Way of the Cross* is an adaptation to local usage of a custom widely observed by pilgrims to Jerusalem: the offering of prayer at a series of places in that city traditionally associated with our Lord's passion and death.

In the orthodox tradition the number of stations, which at first varied widely, finally became fixed at fourteen. Of these, eight are based directly on events recorded in the Gospels. The remaining six (numbers 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 13) are based on inferences from the Gospel account or from pious legend. We have omitted the six non-scriptural stations here.

The form which follows is appropriate either as a public service or as a private devotion, particularly on the Fridays of Lent, but it should NOT displace the proper Liturgy of Good Friday.

Traditionally, the stations are made before a series of plain wooden crosses placed along the walls of the church or in some other appropriate place. With each cross there is sometimes associated a pictorial representation of the event being commemorated.

The hymn *Stabat Mater* ("At the cross her station keeping") has frequently been associated with this service, but is NOT an integral part of it. Selected stanzas of this hymn may appropriately be sung at the entrance of the ministers, and after the opening devotions before the Alter as the procession approaches the first station.

In the form which follows, the *Trisagion* ("Holy God") is the chant recommended as the procession goes from station to station. Alternatively, the *Trisagion* may be used to conclude each station, and stanzas of appropriate hymns sung as the procession moves. It is appropriate that all present take part in the procession.

The officiant at the service, whether clergy or lay, customarily reads the opening versicle at each station and reads the concluding Collect. The readings and the versicles which follow them are appropriately assigned to other persons.

The Way of the Cross

The Way of the Cross, also known as *Stations of the Cross*, is a popular devotion used to meditate on different scenes from the Passion and Death of Christ. Its function is to dramatize the Passion and make it real to us on an emotional as well as intellectual level. The fourteen stations are designed for meditation on different scenes from the Passion of Christ.

The earliest precedents for the *Way of the Cross* date back to the 400's but the first true form developed in the 1400's. These were modeled after the *Via Dolorosa* in Jerusalem, which has been marked out since the early centuries and used as devotional sites for pilgrims. The devotion of the *Way of the Cross* spread to monasteries around the Christian world as a way of imitating the pilgrim route in Jerusalem and eventually began to be used in local parishes.

Not all details of the *Way of the Cross* are recorded in Scripture, but some are inferred from Scripture making the account more vivid. For example, the Bible does not mention Jesus stumbling as he carried the Cross but he must have, since after starting to carry it himself (John 19:17), the Romans found it necessary to press into service Simon of Cyrene to carry it (Matthew 27:32). This inference is given dramatic form in the *Way of the Cross* with Jesus falling *three* times. This emphasizes the extreme physical suffering that Jesus endured even before he was nailed to the Cross. Here, we omit the six non-Scriptural stations and present only those recorded in Scripture.

The only other element not directly stated or implied in Scripture is the wiping of Jesus' face by Veronica, which is a tradition that apparently developed in the Middle Ages, possibly rooted in the Shroud of Turin.

Concluding Prayers before the Altar

Savior of the world, by your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us:

Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech you, O Lord.

Officiant:

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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. *Amen*

The list of stations of the *Way of the Cross* and the Scripture passages where they may be found or from which they may be deduced follows. All fourteen are included here for your reference.

1. Jesus is condemned to death (Luke 23:24)
2. Jesus takes up his Cross (John 19:17)
3. Jesus falls for the first time (by inference from stations 2 & 5)
4. Jesus meets his afflicted mother (by inference from John 19:25-27)
5. The Cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene (Matthew 27:32)
6. A woman wipes the face of Jesus (not recorded in Scripture)
7. Jesus falls a second time (not recorded in Scripture)
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem (Luke 23:27-31)
9. Jesus falls a third time (not recorded in Scripture)
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments (John 19:23)
11. Jesus is nailed to the Cross (by inference John 20:25)
12. Jesus dies on the Cross (Mark 15:37)
13. His body is placed in his mother's arms (by inference Mark 15:47)
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb (Matthew 27:60)

Eighth Station - Traditional Fourteenth Station

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.

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.

V. You will not abandon me to the grave:

R. *Nor let your holy One see corruption.*

Officiant:

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

Holy God,

Holy and Mighty,

Holy Immortal One,

Have mercy upon us.

Seventh Station - Traditional Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the Cross

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

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.

V. Christ for us became obedient unto death:
R. *Even death on a cross.*

Officiant:
Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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

The Way of the Cross

Opening Devotions

In the Name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Officiant and People:
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.

V. We will glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ:
R. *In whom is our salvation, our life and resurrection.*

Officiant:
Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

First Station - Traditional First Station

Jesus is condemned to death

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

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.

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

Officiant:
Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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

Sixth Station - Traditional Eleventh Station

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.

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."

V. They pierced my hands and my feet:
R. *They stare and gloat over me.*

Officiant:
Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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

Fifth Station - Traditional Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of his garments

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

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

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."

V. They gave me gall to eat:

R. *And when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.*

Officiant:

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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

Second Station - Traditional Second Station

Jesus takes up his Cross

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

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

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.

V. The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all:

R. *For the transgressions of my people was he stricken.*

Officiant:

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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

Third Station - Traditional Fifth Station

The Cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene

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

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."

V. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me:
R. *Cannot be my disciple.*

Officiant:
Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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

Fourth Station - Traditional Eighth Station

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

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

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."

V. Those who sowed with tears:
R. *Will reap with songs of joy.*

Officiant:
Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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. *Amen.*

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