

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

by *Father Kenneth Aldrich*

THE PREPARATION

Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we praise Thee.

R. Because by Thy holy Cross, Thou hast redeemed the world.

He knelt down and prayed saying: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done." And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the earth.

O God, whose only begotten Son for our sake did suffer agony in the garden and was betrayed and forsaken by sinful men; give us grace and courage to yield our wayward hearts to the accomplishment of thy righteous will and the greater glory of thy holy Name in joyful gratitude for the saving love of Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

FIRST STATION

Jesus is condemned to death

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

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.

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 thy Son our Lord. Amen.

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

SECOND STATION

Jesus takes up his Cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

Jesus went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called 'the place of a skull,' which is callein 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.

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 liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

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

THIRD STATION

Jesus falls for the first time

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

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 the 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. Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, and kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is the Lord our God.

O God, who knowest 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. Amen.

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

FOURTH STATION

Jesus meets his Mother

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

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.

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

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

FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene is compelled to help Jesus

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

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."

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, thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

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

SIXTH STATION

Veronica hands her napkin to JESUS

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

Lo, he was without beauty or majesty, with no comeliness that we should desire him. 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 sons of men. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement of our peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

O God, who before the passion of thine only-begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant 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 the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

SEVENTH STATION

JESUS falls the second time beneath the cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to our 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.

Almighty and everlasting God who in thy tender love for mankind didst send thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of this great humility: Mercifully grant that we who walk in the way of his suffering, may also share in his resurrection; who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

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

EIGHTH STATION

JESUS speaks to the weeping women

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

There followed after Jesus a great multitude of 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."

Teach thy Church, O Lord, to mourn the sins of which we are guilty, and to repent and forsake them; that by thy pardoning grace, their consequences may not be visited upon our children nor our children's children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

NINTH STATION

JESUS falls the third time beneath the cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; he has driven and brought me and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me dwell in the 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!"

O God, by the passion of thy blessed Son thou didst make the 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 thy Son and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

TENTH STATION

JESUS is stripped of his garments

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

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; cast lots for my clothing."

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be scourged 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.

ELEVENTH STATION

JESUS is nailed to the cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

When they came to a place which is call the Skull, there they crucified him; and with him the 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."

Lord Jesus Christ, who didst stretch out thy arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of thy saving embrace: So clothe us in thy Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know thee to the knowledge and love of thy Holy Name. Amen.

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

TWELFTH STATION

JESUS dies on the cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

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

O God, who for our redemption didst give thy only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grand us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; who liveth and reigneth now and for ever. Amen.

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

THIRTEENTH STATION

JESUS is taken down from the cross

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

All you who pass by, behold and see if there be any sorrow like my sorrow. My eyes are spent with weepin; 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."

Lord Jesus Christ, who by thy death took away the sting of death: Grand to us thy servants so to follow in the faith where thou hast led the way, that may at length fall asleep peacefully in thee and wake up in thy likeness; for thy tender mercies' sake. Amen.

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

FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is laid in the tomb

V. We adore Thee, O Christ...

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 begged for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it 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 sone to the door of the tomb.

O God, whose blessed Son was laid in a garden tomb, 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 liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

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