

The Way of the Cross

Scripture and Prayers on the Passion and Death of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

CALL TO WORSHIP

And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world,
and we loved darkness rather than light.
God is light, in whom there is no darkness at all.

For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world,
but that the world might be saved through him.
Every one who does evil hates the light,
and does not come into the light.
But all who do what is true come to the light.

Come, let us worship in spirit and in truth.

We sing:

O sacred head, now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down
Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thine only crown
O sacred head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine

What thou, my Lord, hast suffered was all for sinners gain
Mine, mine was the transgression, but thine the deadly pain
Lo, here I fall, my Savior! 'Tis I deserve thy place

What language shall I borrow to thank thee, dearest friend
For this thy dying sorrow, thy pity without end
O make me thine forever; and should I fainting be
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to thee

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray…*Silence.*

Most gracious God, look with mercy upon your family gathered here, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed, given into sinful hands, and suffered death upon the cross. Strengthen our faith and forgive our betrayals as we enter the way of his passion; 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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

We join together in praying as our Lord taught us:
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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Let us glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
In whom is our salvation, our life, and resurrection.

Let us pray:
Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross so that he might draw the whole world to himself. Mercifully assist us, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may remember with joy the mighty acts whereby you have given us life everlasting, and that we may take up our cross and follow him; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

We Sing:

Let all mortal flesh keep silence and with fear and trembling stand
Ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descended, our full homage to demand

FIRST STATION:
JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

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

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer?" But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival Pilate used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then Pilate spoke to them, 'What do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" They shouted back, "Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

God did not spare his own Son,
But delivered him up for us all.

Let us pray: Almighty God, your Son, our Savior, suffered at the hands of sinners and endured the shame of the cross. Grant that we may walk in the way of his cross and find it the way of life and peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.

We sing:

King of Kings yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood
Lord of lords in human vesture in the body and the blood
He will give to all the faithful his own self for heavenly food

SECOND STATION:
JESUS TAKES UP HIS CROSS

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

The soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Then they took Jesus and, carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth. 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.

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

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 forever and ever. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.

We sing:

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul
To bear the heavy cross for my soul

THIRD STATION:
SIMON OF CYRENE & THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

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

As they led Jesus away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me:
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

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. Grant them wisdom, patience, and courage, that they may minister in his name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy, sharing the love of him who laid down his life for us. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.

We sing:

To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing
To God and to the Lamb I will sing
To God and to the Lamb, who is the great I AM
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing
While millions join the theme, I will sing



FOURTH STATION:
JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

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

When they came to the place called Golgotha, they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself."

They pierce my hands and my feet;
They stare and gloat over me.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the 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 glory of your name. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.

We sing:

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

FIFTH STATION:
THE CRIMINALS SPEAK

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

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding Jesus and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? We have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Christ Jesus, though 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. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Those who sowed with tears
Will reap with songs of joy.

Let us pray: Teach your church, O Lord, to mourn the sins of which it is guilty, and to repent from and forsake them. Then teach your church to accept your pardoning grace, that we may live in gratitude for eternal life that we did not earn and do not deserve, but receive nevertheless, through your word and your sacrifice. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.

We sing:

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?



SIXTH STATION:
JESUS SPEAKS TO MARY & JOHN

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

Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciples, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciples took her into his own home.

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever.

Let us pray: O God, your Son chose the path which led to pain before joy. He chose the cross before glory. Plant his cross in our hearts, so that in its power and love we may come at last to joy and glory, through your son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.

We Sing:
Alas! And did my Savior bleed
And did my Sovereign die!
Would he devote that sacred head
For sinners such as I!

SEVENTH STATION:
JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

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

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice, saying, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." After this, when Jesus knew that all was finished, he said, "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there, so they put a sponge full of wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head, breathed his last, and gave up his spirit.

Christ for us became obedient to death,
Even death on a cross.

Let us pray: Gracious God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption and delivered us from the power of death through his glorious resurrection. Make us die every day to sin, so that we may live with him forever in the joy of resurrection. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.

We Sing:
Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut its glories in
When Christ the Great Redeemer died
For human creatures' sin

EIGHTH STATION:
JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

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

Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was a disciple of Jesus, waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate wondered if Jesus were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether Jesus had been dead for some time. When Pilate learned from the centurion that Jesus was dead, he granted the body to Joseph.

So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

You will not abandon me to the grave,
Nor let your faithful one see decay.

Let us pray: Loving Lord, 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 a death like his through the waters of baptism may find our perfect rest in his eternal and glorious kingdom, where he lives and reigns forever. Amen.

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
Have mercy and hear us.



We sing:

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride

Forbid it Lord that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ, my God
All the vain things that charm me most
I sacrifice them to his blood

See, from his head, his hands, his feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were a present far too small
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

CONCLUSION

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.

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. We pray in the name of Jesus, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

To Christ our Lord who loves us, 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 forever and ever. Amen.