



# St Mary the Virgin, Rickmansworth

The Church of England and The Methodist Church in Partnership

*Serving the whole community*

## The Stations of the Cross

Introduction: The Way of the Cross

As we seek to enter into our Lord's passion, we take up the Way of the Cross, which is also the way of life. So, let us know commit to our hearts the remembrance of Christ's suffering and pray that we may be faithful in our duty to follow the way of Christ.

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?

His dying crimson, like a robe,  
Spreads o'er His body on the tree;  
Then I am dead to all the globe,  
And all the globe is dead to me.

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.

*Isaac Watts(1674-1748)*

O Lord Christ, Lamb of God, call us along the way of your Cross; draw us to the foot of your Cross; cleanse us with the pardon of your Cross; instruct us in the mystery of your Cross; bring us to the victory of your Cross; and seal us among the servants of your Cross.

All **Amen.**

First Station  
Jesus is condemned to death

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

*Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!" So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather 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." Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.*

*Matthew 27:20-26*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

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.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Second Station  
Jesus receives his cross

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

*So 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.*

*John 19:16-17*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

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.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Third Station  
Jesus falls the first time

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

*But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."*

*Mark 10:38-40*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

O God, who knows 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.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Fourth Station  
Jesus meets his mother

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

*And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed— and a sword will pierce your own soul too."*

*Luke 2:33-35*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

O God, who has 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 your Church, having shared with her in his passion, may be made worthy to share with her in the joys of his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Fifth Station  
Simon of Cyrene carries the cross

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

*As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.  
Matthew 27:32*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

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 Saviour Jesus Christ.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Sixth Station  
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

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

*"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'*

*Matthew 25:31-40*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

O God, who before the passion of your only-begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: grant 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.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Seventh Station  
Jesus falls the second time

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

*"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

*Matthew 11:28-30*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

Almighty and everliving God who in your tender love for mankind did send your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of great humility: mercifully grant that we who walk in the way of his suffering, may also share in his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Eighth Station  
Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

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

*A great number of the 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. For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.'*

*Luke 23:27-29*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

Teach your 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.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Ninth Station  
Jesus falls the third time

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

*Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*

*John 12:23-24*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

O God, by the passion of thy blessed Son you have made 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 our Saviour Jesus Christ.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Tenth Station  
Jesus is stripped

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

*Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.*

*Mark 15:22-24*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

Lord God, whose blessed Son, our Saviour, 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.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Eleventh Station  
Jesus is nailed to the cross

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

*When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."  
Luke 23:33-34*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

Lord Jesus Christ, who 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 thy Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of your Holy Name.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Twelfth Station  
Jesus dies on the cross

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

*It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.*

*Luke 23:44-46*

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

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.

**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

Thirteenth Station  
The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you  
**All because 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 waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down from the cross.*  
Luke 23:50-53

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

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

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us**

Fourteenth Station  
Jesus is laid in the tomb

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

*They took the body of Jesus, wrapped it in linen cloth and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.*

Luke 23:53-56

*A period of quiet follows for personal reflection*

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 lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
**All Amen.**

**All Holy God,  
holy and strong,  
holy and immortal,  
have mercy upon us.**

## The Intercessions

God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that, through him, the world might be saved. Let us therefore pray to our heavenly Father for people everywhere according to their need.

For the Church of God throughout the world, for those preparing for Baptism, and for all who suffer for the sake of Christ, that God will confirm his people in faith, strengthen them in love, and preserve them in peace;

*Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*Almighty and everlasting God, by your Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified. Hear the prayers we offer for all your faithful people; that in their vocation and ministry each may serve you in holiness and truth to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.*

For the nations of the world and their leaders, for our own country and those who govern us, and for all who work for reconciliation, that by God's help we may live in justice, peace and freedom;

*Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*God of peace, whose will is to restore all things in your beloved Son, the king of all: govern the hearts and minds of those in authority, and bring the families of the nations, divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin, to be subject to his just and gentle rule; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

For God's covenant people, Israel, whom he called to be his own and for all who seek to live by the light of God's truth, that, with them, God will grant us grace to live in faithfulness and to grow in the love of his name;

*Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*Eternal God, bless all who look to Abraham as the father of faith. Set us free from prejudice, blindness, and hardness of heart, that in accordance with your will and guided by your truth our life together may be for the glory of your name; we ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

For all who lack faith and for those who are hostile to it, that God will open their hearts to the truth and lead them to faith and obedience;

*Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*God our redeemer, who called your Church to witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us so to proclaim the good news of your love that all who hear it may be reconciled to you; through him who died for us and rose again and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

For all who suffer: for victims of violence, injustice and abuse, for the lonely, the bereaved, and those without hope, for the sick, the dying, and all who care for them, that, in his mercy, God will sustain them with the knowledge of his presence;

*Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer, hear the prayers of your children who cry out to you in their need. In their afflictions show them your mercy, and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them, for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Remembering those who have died, all whose lives have ended in loneliness, and all who have offered their lives for the sake of others, and remembering the saints and martyrs of every generation, that we also, inspired by their example, may have grace to glorify Christ;

*Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.***

*Almighty and everlasting God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: set his passion, cross and death between your judgement and our souls, now and in the hour of our death, and bring us, with the whole creation, to the light and glory of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom in the words our Saviour taught us.

*All* **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

Most merciful God, who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ delivered and saved the world: grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his victory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen.**

## Blessing

May God bless us, that in us may be found love and humility, obedience and thanksgiving, discipline, gentleness and peace.

*All* **Amen.**

*All leave the gathering in silence in their own time.*

## A Brief History

The Stations of the Cross have formed part of Christian devotion at Passiontide for many centuries because they enable us to engage actively with the path of suffering walked by Jesus. They originated when early Christians visited Jerusalem and wanted to follow literally in the footsteps of Jesus, tracing the path from Pilate's house to Calvary. They would pause for prayer and devotion at various points. Eventually those pilgrims brought the practice back to their home countries and ever since then Christians of differing traditions have used this form of devotion.

In the late fourteenth century the Franciscans were given the responsibility for the holy places of Jerusalem and they erected tableaux to aid the devotion of the visitors. These kinds of images are now commonplace inside churches, and occasionally outside them.

The number of stations has varied immensely through the centuries from as few as five to as many as thirty-six, but the now traditional number of fourteen was established by Clement XII in 1731 – nine scriptural stations and a further five based on popular devotion. However, owing to the increasing ecumenical popularity of this devotion there have been attempts to create a wholly scriptural set on which to focus.

*Taken from Common Worship*