

Via Dolorosa

THE BIBLICAL STATIONS OF THE CROSS



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Collects from: *The Book of Common Prayer 1928*

At the Cross Her Station Keeping

Text: Latin, 13th Century

Tune: MAINZ

The Hymnal 1940 - Hymn 76

The Book of Common Praise 2017 - Hymn 119

A brief introduction to "The Way of the Cross"

For centuries Christians have gone on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to visit the holy places where Jesus lived and died and rose again, to trace the last steps of Jesus as He was led to the cross and tomb, where He fulfilled and accomplished the will of God for our salvation. This "way of the cross", Christian pilgrims brought home from the Holy Land, and in the version we use, there are fourteen "stations" (stopping places) along the way of the cross. At each of which, we remember with gratitude what Jesus did and suffered for our salvation, and we pray for repentance, faith, and love toward God.



You are encouraged to arrive early enough to prepare yourself for the service. Suggestions for your preparation include:

- Prepare for the start of the service by kneeling and praying quietly.
- Read the Psalms appointed for the evenings in Lent (the assigned Psalms may be found listed in the front of the Prayerbooks in your pews, beginning on page xxv).
- Read through some of the Biblical texts that accompany each station and think about their meaning.
- Read the short meditations included in the back of this booklet.
- Parents: please encourage your children to participate in the stations by reading the parts in bold.
- All are welcome to walk to each station with the acolyte and clergy. You may also choose to remain in your pew as we visit each station.

PREPARATION

To be said by the Priest before the Altar.

In the Name of the ✠ Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

Let us pray.

All kneel.

ASSIST us mercifully with thy help, O Lord God of our salvation; that we may enter with joy upon the meditation of those mighty acts, whereby thou hast given unto us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord have mercy upon us.

Christ have mercy upon us.

Lord have mercy upon 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 trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. **Amen.**

Minister. God forbid that I should glory:

Answer. **Save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Let us pray.

GRANT, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we may now in spirit follow Our Lord along the Way of Sorrows, and seeing His sufferings may be so filled with contrition and repentance, and increased in true faith and love that we may, through Thy grace, obtain the remission of all our sins, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. Let us go forth.

Answer. **To follow Jesus along the Way of Sorrows.**

The congregation follows the procession of the cross to the first station, singing:

**At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful mother weeping,
Close to Jesus at the last,
For her soul, of joy bereavèd,
Bowed with anguish, Deeply grievèd,
Felt the sharp and piercing sword.**



By the artist
Dante S. S. S.

I. Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Matthew 26:36-41

THEN cometh Jesus with them
unto a place called Gethsemane,
and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye
here, while I go and pray yonder.

And he took with him Peter and the
two sons of Zebedee, and began to be
sorrowful and very heavy.

Then saith he unto them, My soul is
exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:
tarry ye here, and watch with me.

And he went a little farther, and fell
on his face, and prayed, saying, O my
Father, if it be possible, let this cup
pass from me: nevertheless not as I
will, but as thou wilt.

And he cometh unto the disciples,
and findeth them asleep, and saith
unto Peter, What, could ye not watch
with me one hour?

Watch and pray, that ye enter not
into temptation: the spirit indeed is
willing, but the flesh is weak.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. Surely he hath born our griefs:
And carried our sorrows.

Let us pray.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, pour
thy grace into our hearts; that,
as we have known the incarnation of
thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of
an angel, so by his cross and passion
we may be brought unto the glory of
his resurrection; through the same
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**Let me mourn, O Lord, beside thee
For the sins which crucified thee,
While my life remains in me.**



II. Jesus is Betrayed by Judas and Arrested

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Mark 14: 43-46

AND immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.

And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. But as for me,
I am a worm and no man:
**A very scorn of men,
and the outcast of my people.**

Let us pray.

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 to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us;

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



The congregation follows the procession of the cross to the next station, singing:

**True repentance, Jesus win me:
Savior print thy wounds within me,
Brand them on my stubborn heart.**



John Galt
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III. Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Luke 22: 66-71

AND as soon as it was day, the
elders of the people and the chief
priests and the scribes came together,
and led him into their council, saying,

Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he
said unto them, If I tell you, ye will
not believe:

And if I also ask you, ye will not
answer me, nor let me go.

Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on
the right hand of the power of God.

Then said they all, Art thou then the
Son of God? And he said unto them,
Ye say that I am.

And they said, What need we any
further witness? for we ourselves have
heard of his own mouth.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. He was led like a sheep
to the slaughter:

**And like a lamb dumb before
the shearer, so opened he not
his mouth.**

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God,
who hatest nothing that thou
hast made, and dost forgive the sins
of all those who are penitent; Create
and make in us new and contrite
hearts, that we, worthily lamenting
our sins and acknowledging our
wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the
God of all mercy, perfect remission
and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**May my heart fresh ardour gaining,
And a purer love attaining
May with thee acceptance find.**



Art by
Brent Jones

IV. Jesus is Denied by St. Peter

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Matthew 26: 69-75

NOW Peter sat without in the
palace: and a damsel came unto
him, saying, Thou also wast with
Jesus of Galilee.

But he denied before them all, saying,
I know not what thou sayest.

And when he was gone out into the
porch, another maid saw him, and
said unto them that were there, This
fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

And again he denied with an oath, I
do not know the man.

And after a while came unto him
they that stood by, and said to Peter,
Surely thou also art one of them; for
thy speech betrayeth thee.

Then began he to curse and to swear,
saying, I know not the man. And
immediately the cock crew.

And Peter remembered the word of
Jesus, which said unto him, Before the
cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.
And he went out, and wept bitterly.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. Turn us again, O Lord
God of hosts:
**Show us the light of thy
countenance, and we shall be
whole.**

Let us pray.

KEEP, we beseech thee, O Lord,
thy Church with thy perpetual
mercy; and, because the frailty of man
without thee cannot but fall, keep
us ever by thy help from all things
hurtful, and lead us to all things
profitable to our salvation; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**Saw him then from judgement taken,
And in death by all forsaken,
Till his spirit he resigned.**



V. Jesus is Judged by Pontius Pilate

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Mark 15: 1-5, 15

AND straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto them, Thou sayest it.

And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. God spared not his own Son:
But delivered him up for us all.

Let us pray.

GRANT, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of thy grace may mercifully be relieved; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us;

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



The congregation follows the procession of the cross to the next station, singing:

**Let my soul, thy death declaring,
Thy unsparing passion sharing,
Count thy bruises one by one.**



VI. Jesus is Scourged at the Pillar and Crowned with Thorns

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. John 19: 1-3

THEN Pilate therefore took Jesus,
and scourged him.

And the soldiers platted a crown of
thorns, and put it on his head, and
they put on him a purple robe,

And said, Hail, King of the Jews!
and they smote him with their hands.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. Her tears are on her cheeks:
She hath none to comfort her.

Let us pray.

OLORD God, whose blessed Son,
our Saviour, gave his back to
the smiters and hid not his face from
shame; Grant us grace to take joyfully
the sufferings of the present time, in
full assurance of the glory that shall
be revealed; through the same thy Son
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**For his people's sin chastised,
She beheld her Son despised,
Scourged, and crowned with
thorns entwined.**



VII. Jesus Bears the Cross

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. John 19: 6, 15-17

WHEN the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:

**For the transgression of his
people was he stricken.**

Let us pray.

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 the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**Take beneath the cross my station
And in all thy desolation
So unite myself with thee.**



VIII. Jesus is Helped by Simon the Cyrenian to Carry the Cross

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Mark 15: 21

AND they compel one Simon
a Cyrenian, who passed by,
coming out of the country, the father
of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his
cross.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. Whosoever doth not bear
his cross and come after me:
Cannot be my disciple.

Let us pray.

O GOD, whose blessed son
did overcome death for our
salvation: Mercifully grant that we
who have his glorious passion in
remembrance may take up our cross
daily and follow him; through the
same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;
**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**As thou bought'st, through tribulation
In thy passion, my salvation,
Let me bear therein my part.**



IX. Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;

**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Luke 23: 27-31

AND there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. They that sow in tears:
Shall reap in joy.

Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility; mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us;

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



The congregation follows the procession of the cross to the next station, singing:

**Jesus, great beyond all other,
'Turn not from me, heav'nly brother,
Let me too bewail thy pain.**



X. Jesus is Crucified

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;

**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Luke 23: 33-34

AND when they were come to the
place, which is called Calvary,
there they crucified him, and the
malefactors, one on the right hand,
and the other on the left.

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive
them; for they know not what they
do. And they parted his raiment, and
cast lots.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. I, if I be lifted up:

Will draw all men unto me.

Let us pray.

O GOD, who by the passion of
thy blessed Son hast made the
instrument of shameful death to be
unto us the means of life and peace:
Grant us so to glory in the Cross
of Christ, that we may gladly suffer
shame and loss; for the sake of the
same thy Son our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**Let thy stripes and scourging smite me;
And thy holy Cross requite me,
Let thy Blood refresh me there.**



XI. Jesus Promises His Kingdom to the Good Thief

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Luke 23: 39-43

AND one of the malefactors
which were hanged railed on
him, saying, If thou be Christ, save
thyself and us.

But the other answering rebuked
him, saying, Dost not thou fear
God, seeing thou art in the same
condemnation?

And we indeed justly; for we receive
the due reward of our deeds: but this
man hath done nothing amiss.

And he said unto Jesus, Lord,
remember me when thou comest into
thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say
unto thee, Today shalt thou be with
me in paradise.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. They gave me gall to eat:
**And when I was thirsty they
gave me vinegar to drink.**

Let us pray.

O GOD, who before the passion
of thine only begotten Son
didst reveal his glory upon the holy
mount: Grant unto us thy servants,
that in faith beholding the light of his
countenance, we may be strengthened
to bear the cross, and be changed
into his likeness from glory to glory:
through the same Jesus Christ our
Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**May his wounds both wound and heal me
He enkindle, cleanse and heal me,
Be his cross my hope and stay.**

**May he, when the mountains quiver,
From that flame which burns for ever
Shield me on the judgment day.**



XII. Jesus Speaks to His Mother and the Beloved Disciple

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. John 19: 25-27

NOW there stood by the cross
of Jesus his mother, and his
mother's sister, Mary the wife of
Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus therefore saw his
mother, and the disciple standing
by, whom he loved, he saith unto his
mother, Woman, behold thy son!

Then saith he to the disciple, Behold
thy mother! And from that hour that
disciple took her unto his own home.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. A sword shall pierce
through thine own soul also.

**That the thoughts of many
hearts may be revealed.**

Let us pray.

GRANT, we beseech thee,
merciful Lord, to thy faithful
people pardon and peace, that they
may be cleansed from all their sins, and
serve thee with a quiet mind; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**Who, on Christ's dear mother gazing,
In her trouble so amazing,
Born of woman, would not weep?**

**Who, on Christ's dear mother thinking,
Such a cup of sorrow drinking,
Would not share her sorrows deep?**



XIII. Jesus Dies on the Cross

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Luke 23: 44-46

AND it was about the sixth hour,
and there was a darkness over all
the earth until the ninth hour.

And the sun was darkened, and
the veil of the temple was rent in the
midst.

And when Jesus had cried with a
loud voice, he said, Father, into thy
hands I commend my spirit: and
having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

(All kneel.)

Silence is kept for a time.

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. Amen.

Minister. Christ for our sake became
obedient unto death:
Even the death of the Cross.

Let us pray.

O GOD, who for our redemption
didst give thine only-begotten
Son to the death of the Cross, and
by his glorious resurrection hast
delivered us from the power of our
enemy; Grant us so to die daily from
sin, that we may evermore live with
him in the joy of his resurrection;
through the same thy Son Christ our
Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world,
who by thy Cross and precious Blood
hast redeemed us;

**Save us, and help us, we humbly
beseech thee, O Lord.**



*The congregation follows the procession of the
cross to the next station, singing:*

**For his people's sins, in anguish,
There she saw the victim languish,
Bleed in torments, bleed and die.**



John C. ...
1987 ...

XIV. Jesus is Placed in the Tomb

¶ All kneel, as the Minister says:

Minister. We adore thee, O Christ,
and we bless thee;
**Because by thy holy cross
thou hast redeemed the world.**

St. Matthew 27: 57-60

WHEN the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

Silence is kept for a time.

Minister. Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell:

**Neither shalt thou suffer thy
Holy One to see corruption.**

Let us pray.

GRANT, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Minister. O Saviour of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us;

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



The congregation follows the procession of the cross to the next station, singing:

**Jesus, may thy cross defend me,
And thy saving death befriend me,
Cherished by thy deathless grace:**

**When to dust my dust returneth,
Grant a soul that to thee yearneth
In thy paradise a place.**

CONCLUSION

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the body: And the Life everlasting. Amen.

Minister. Christ became obedient unto death,

Even the death of the Cross.

O Saviour of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed the world.

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

Let us pray.

(All kneel.)

ALMIGHTY Father, who has given thine only Son to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification; grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that we may always serve thee in pureness of living and truth; through the merits of the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all evermore. **Amen.**

(An address with hymns usually follows.)

Meditation I. Whereas, in the Garden of Eden, Adam chose the way of disobedience that leads to death, so in the garden of Gethsemane, Christ chose the way of obedience that leads to life. His obedience unto death, at the tree of the cross, cancels out Adam's disobedience at the tree of paradise. May he teach us to walk in that way that leads to everlasting life.

Meditation II. Jesus, sold for thirty pieces of silver, is betrayed into the hands of his enemies by one of his friends: betrayed by a kiss. How often do we betray him, who bear his love, by words and deeds of fear and pride, of anger and greed! How often do we sell him for a paltry payoff by the world, the flesh, or the devil! Lord, have mercy upon us.

Meditation III. The council of the priests and scribes sits in judgment upon the Son of God, and finds him guilty of blasphemy. The one who brings life to the world, raises the dead, is found worthy of death. We cry out against the injustice of it all: but it is our sins that secure this conviction: these men represent us, they do our work.

Meditation IV. When the council demanded to know, Art thou the Christ? Jesus boldly confessed, I am. But when the servants ask Peter if he is with Jesus, Peter cravenly disowns him: I know not the man. Peter is afraid of death. "It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with him. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he will also deny us. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself" (2 Tim 2:11-13).

Meditation V. Innocent though he is, Jesus is condemned to death most cruel and shameful, for offenses against the God of Israel and the Caesar of Rome. Silent before his accusers, Jesus appeals for vindication over the heads of the earthly judges to the Judge of all. He who dies for our sins will be raised again for our justification. He accepts the condemnation and judgment that our sins deserve, so that he may gain for us the mercy, forgiveness and favour of God which we do not deserve!

Meditation VI. The flogging of the condemned prisoner was one of the most savage punishments of all: only crucifixion was worse. After the scourging then came the mockery: the cynical demonic glee in another's misery and shame. We are revulsed at the cruelty of the soldiers: but remember, they represent us, they do our work. To repent truly, we need to see sin for what it is, in all its obscenity and ugliness.

Meditation VII. Jesus accepts the burden, the weight of our sins, that weight too heavy for us to bear, the burden of which is intolerable. He accepts that burden that he may bear it away, as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. In gratitude, can we not bear with him the easy burden of suffering and the yoke of his commandments? "If any man would be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me". "For my yoke is easy, and my burden light".

Meditation VIII. The soldiers make Simon the Cyrenian help Jesus carry the cross. How unwilling we are to bear the cross of Jesus. How resentful we are of being called to suffer for his sake and the gospel's. Yet the way of the cross – the way of humility, patience, obedience, forgiveness, love – is the way that leads us to life, peace, and joy with God.

Meditation IX. The women of Jerusalem weep for Jesus: but Jesus tells them to weep for themselves and for their children, for judgment is coming on their city. Forgiveness and mercy come to those who repent of their sins, and repent in tears: without repentance, however, there is only judgment.

Meditation X. Jesus is nailed to the wood and lifted high upon the cross – extending his arms in prayer he offers himself in sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. By his perfect obedience, even unto death, he is lifted up from earth to heaven, and is exalted as the Saviour of the world. Whoever believes in him will not perish for ever, but will be saved.

Meditation XI. Jesus is crucified between two thieves, two bandits, men with blood on their hands, perhaps even men whom we might today call insurgents or terrorists. One reviles him; but the other knows that they are justly condemned; whereas Jesus is innocent. Turning to Jesus, he prays to be remembered in his kingdom; and in answer he hears the most wonderful words of promise. These thieves stand for us, the sons and daughters of Adam, who stole the fruit from the tree, and were cast out of the earthly paradise. Here at the cross Jesus opens the gates of the heavenly paradise to the thief who turns to him in repentance, faith, and hope.

Meditation XII. Below the cross stands Jesus' mother, and his friend, the beloved disciple, the Apostle John. He has nothing to leave them, nothing to comfort them with: and so he gives them to each other, as a new family. Here at the cross, the friends of Jesus become a new family in him, whose Father is God. "Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother" (Mark 3:35). Let us prove ourselves the family of Christ by the love with which we accept one another.

Meditation XIII. Jesus is dead; and from his side, pierced by the spear of the Roman centurion, flows streams of blood and water – the means of purification; streams to wash the world clean of its sin, and to turn our souls' deserts green. In his death do our sins die: and from his death, does our life arise. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life, shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:24, 25).

Meditation XIV. The strife is o'er, the battle done: now Jesus is laid to rest in the tomb, in the great Sabbath rest of the Son of God; waiting for the new creation, waiting for resurrection. "We were buried with him by baptism into death" says the apostle Paul, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6). "Remember always that Baptism represents unto us our profession; which is to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him; that as he died and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die to sin and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying and putting to death all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily increasing in all virtue and godliness of living".

