



**STATIONS**  
*of the*  
**CROSS**

*Holy Week 2021*



CHURCH OF THE  
**SAVIOR**

## ABOUT THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Stations of the Cross are a powerful way of contemplating and entering into the mystery of Jesus' sacrifice of himself for us. They invite us to embrace his gift of love with our hearts as well as with our minds. Our gratitude grows as we come to experience the love of Jesus with our whole being, and true gratitude leads to true generosity — an ardent desire to love as we have been loved.

For centuries, Christians have wanted to see Jerusalem and visit the places that were part of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection. Egeria, a woman from Gaul (modern-day France) who traveled to the Holy Land in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, recalls in her diary how she joined Christians from all parts of the Roman world on Holy Thursday in their walk westward from the garden of Gethsemane to the church of the Holy Sepulcher, where they celebrated Jesus' death and resurrection.

This path that pilgrims walked in Jerusalem came to be known as the *Via Dolorosa*, or Sorrowful Way. Many Christians made the long, expensive, and often dangerous pilgrimage to Jerusalem — but many more were unable to take this journey. And so, by the late middle ages, the Stations of the Cross emerged as a replication of the *Via Dolorosa* that all Christians could experience.

And so, as you walk through these fourteen stations today, you are walking in the footsteps of Christians across the centuries. May this small pilgrimage draw you into the truth of God's love for us, love so great that Jesus became a human being and took on all of the pain and suffering of a human body in order to bring us into the joy of God's salvation.



## ENTERING THE STATIONS

*As you enter the stations, take a few moments to slow down, to release the tasks and events of your day, to become fully present to this experience. Each station has a scripture passage and a suggested response; many are also accompanied by art or poetry. We invite you to proceed through the stations slowly and quietly, lingering in those places that catch your attention.*

### PRAYER

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*Begin your journey through the stations by praying these words:*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Assist us with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, so that we may contemplate those mighty acts through which you have given us eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## STATION I: JESUS PRAYS IN THE GARDEN



**MATTHEW 26:36-39**

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Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."



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### RESPONSE

As you begin this journey through the Stations and enter the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus, take a moment to quiet your heart. Breathe in: Lord Jesus Christ. Breathe out: Have mercy on me, a sinner.

*Photo by Kristen Page.*

## STATION II: JESUS IS BETRAYED BY JUDAS



**MATTHEW 26:14-16**

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Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the leading priests and asked, “How much will you pay me to betray Jesus to you?” And they gave him thirty pieces of silver. From that time on, Judas began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus.



### **RESPONSE**

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Imagine holding a coin. Wonder: where am I tempted to betray Jesus?

## STATION III: JESUS IS CONDEMNED



MARK 14:55-56, 61B-64

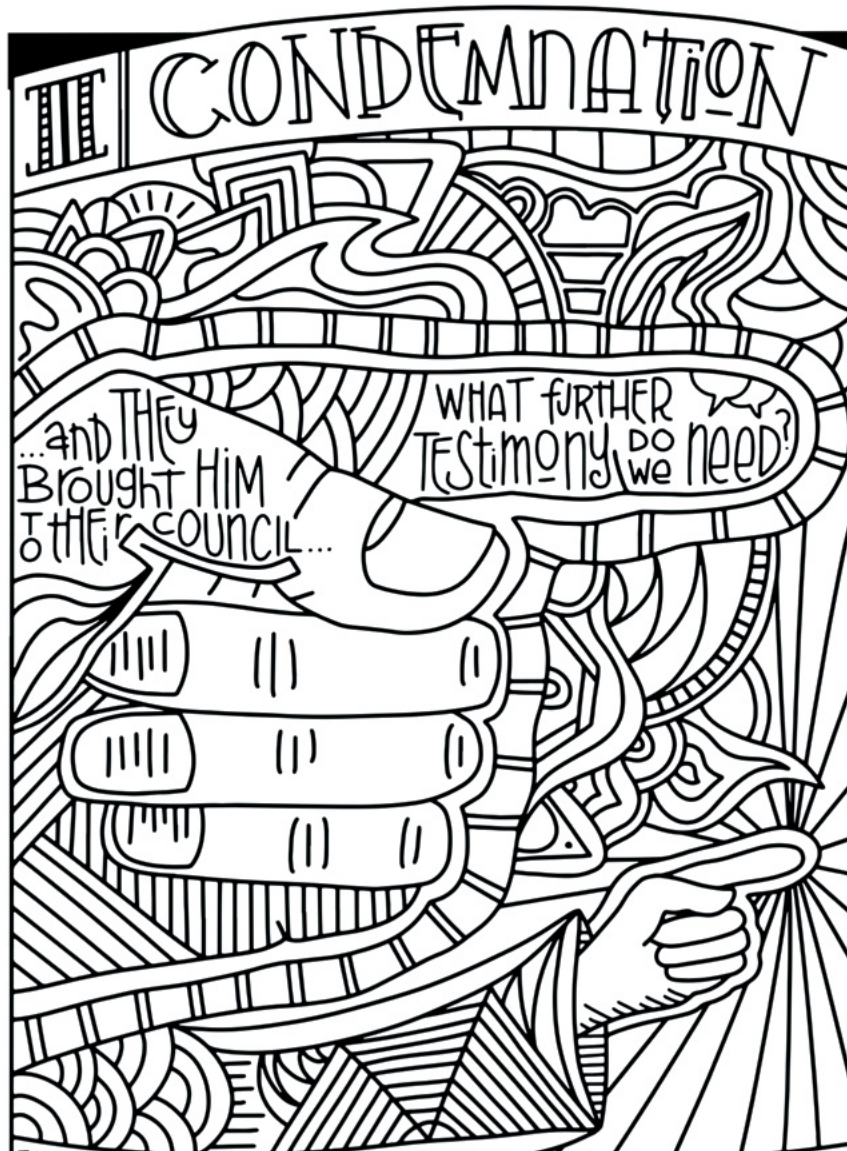
The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. “You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?”

They all condemned him as worthy of death.



### RESPONSE

Meditate on this passage. If you would like, use the coloring sheet to help you contemplate Jesus' condemnation: you can print this page, or click [this link](#) to print the full image.

## STATION IV: JESUS IS DENIED BY PETER



**MATTHEW 26:69-75**

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Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came over and said to him, “You were one of those with Jesus the Galilean.”

But Peter denied it in front of everyone. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said.

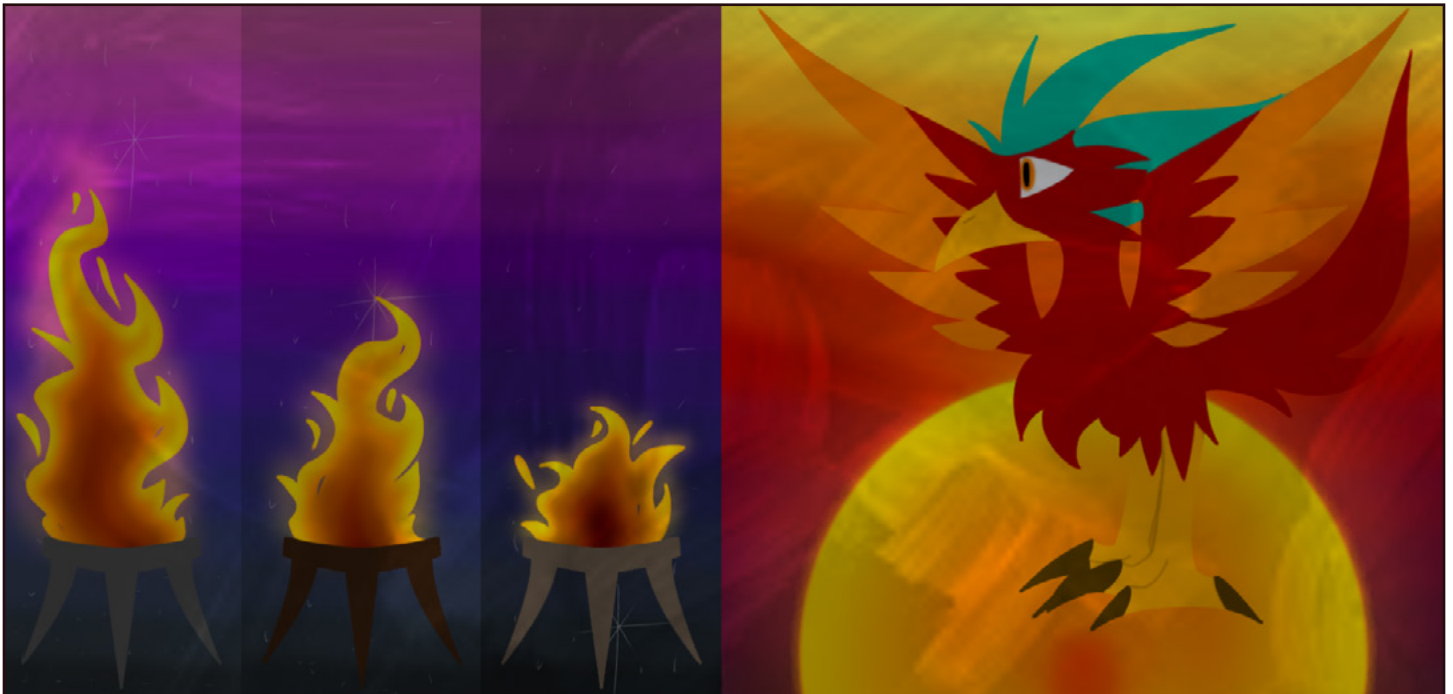
Later, out by the gate, another servant girl noticed him and said to those standing around, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. “I don’t even know the man,” he said.

A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, “You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent.”

Peter swore, “A curse on me if I’m lying — I don’t know the man!” And immediately the rooster crowed.

Suddenly, Jesus’ words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And he went away, weeping bitterly.



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### RESPONSE

Read the story of Peter’s denial. What do you wonder about this story?

*Art by Meiyng Howard.*

## STATION V: JESUS IS JUDGED BY PILATE



**MATTHEW 27:11-14, 22-26**

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Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?”

“You have said so,” Jesus replied.

When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?” But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge — to the great amazement of the governor.

“What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” Pilate asked.

They all answered, “Crucify him!”

“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. “I am innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It is your responsibility!”

All the people answered, “His blood is on us and on our children!”

Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.



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### RESPONSE

Wonder with Pilate: what is Truth? If you are able, pour water over your hands.

*Art: Nikolai Ge, What is Truth?, 1890.*

## STATION VI: JESUS IS CROWNED WITH THORNS



**MATTHEW 27:27-30**

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Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again.



### **RESPONSE**

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It can be difficult to contemplate suffering, and mid-way through these Stations of the Cross you may find yourself disengaging or feeling discomfort as you are asked to dwell in these moments of Jesus' pain. But just as Jesus suffered with and for us, we can be present for those who suffer around us. Thank Jesus that he chose to experience pain and death and ask for the courage and grace to see God's presence in the midst of suffering.



## STATION VII: JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS



JOHN 19:16-17

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Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus away. Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, Golgotha).



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### RESPONSE

Pray: Father in heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ, still carries his Cross in his persecuted brothers and sisters throughout the world. Make us feel the needs of all persons so that we might as readily help them as we would help Jesus himself. Amen.

*Art by JoAnn McNeely. Artist's note on color symbolism:*  
Blue: healing power of God, God's Presence  
Gold: God's love, God's divinity/deity  
White: righteousness of Christ.

## STATION VIII: JESUS IS HELPED BY SIMON OF CYRENE



MARK 15:21

A passerby named Simon, who was from Cyrene, was coming in from the countryside just then, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. (Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus.)

### THE CROSS BEFORE ME, THE WORLD BEHIND ME

I hardly knew on that Friday that my life would change.  
I was simply watching – observing – from the crowds.  
This man others called “Jesus” looked weak and battered,  
Worn and weary – two slabs of wood joined upon his back.  
He could not take another step, could not catch his breath.

I don't know *how* it happened, but before I knew it,  
I was carrying his cross.  
The weight of the wood was stunning.  
With each step, I felt my weakness.  
Yet how was I to know that it would soon hold *the weight of the world*?

I kept in step behind Jesus, somehow hurting at his suffering,  
Wondering *what* could he have done to earn this pain, this death?  
Death must be deserved, right?  
Yet, when I caught his eyes – tender and willing –  
I doubted my questions.



### NO TURNING BACK, NO TURNING BACK

In carrying Jesus' cross, I *followed* him to his death.  
What I didn't know then but do today  
Is that in carrying His cross,  
*I was learning to carry my own.*

Death must be deserved, right?  
Yet, Jesus took *mine*.  
With each painful step, each drop of blood,  
Leading all the way to the cross,  
He chose to take *my* pain, *my* sin.

How can I not live for him?  
To rise each day, taking up my cross,  
This is my mysterious joy. This is my honor.  
To take another step, to take another God-given breath.  
*This is the glory of my life –*  
To give glory to Him for that Friday that changed my life.

### RESPONSE

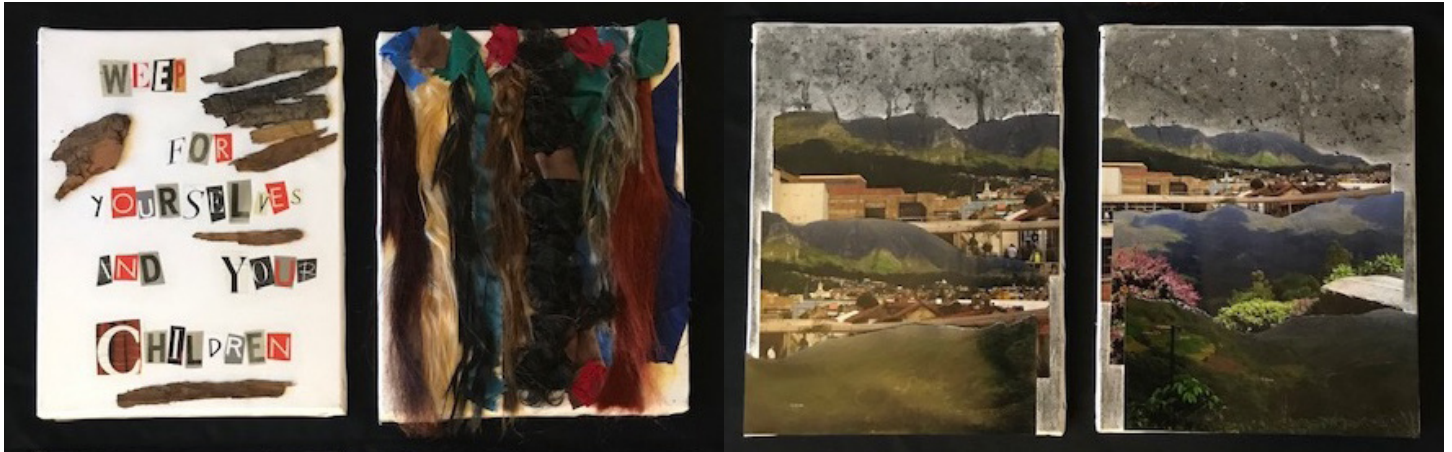
Imagine carrying the weight of the cross — probably about 100 pounds. Wonder: how did Simon feel, carrying Jesus' cross? How did Jesus feel, to see Simon carry it?

## STATION IX: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM



LUKE 23:27-28, 31

A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. . . . For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”



### LAMENT OF THE WOMEN

- I. His words ring like a ransom note:  
Witness that we are captives  
without power to free ourselves.

We are told to weep,  
o women,  
so let us put the strength of our  
lungs to the test

and ask, once again:

Why is it always women  
who carry the burden of weeping  
for ourselves  
for our children  
born and unborn  
yearned for and lost  
ones we wanted to bear and couldn't  
those who were unwanted and thrown away  
preteens condemned to life in prison for one mistake  
others locked up for crossing the wrong border  
without permission

and when will it end?

Weep, sisters,  
and know our tears  
are not enough:

We cannot quench the flames  
of this world's suffering  
for all of us under ransom.

**II.** Let loose your hair, o women,  
signal your mourning  
through the centuries.

All of you:

unclip and unbraid  
unfasten  
the storm doors of your suffering  
let loose your  
tears and  
your choke  
of anger  
over  
every slight, every sight,  
every gaze and graze  
that you didn't ask for.  
Speak  
the things you have been  
too afraid  
to tell. Break  
the silence  
of your grief  
with anger.

Weep, women!  
and know that Jesus is  
weeping too.

**III.** Come, mountains:  
Which I picture as the mountains around Bogotá  
where squatters' rickety shelters  
surround the valley's  
multimillion-dollar high-rises  
where my friends live  
and I, in the more modest northern neighborhoods of the city  
was not exempt  
from the remove  
from the problem  
because those mountains are where the poor people live  
with no running water  
no protection for jobs in a pandemic  
no way of buying groceries  
so they have starved  
and I do not know any of their names.

Will these hillsides always be  
amphitheaters of injustice,  
idolatry, and selfishness?

Mountains, come, and bury us  
to hide the ways  
we gate off our inequalities  
while the church looks on, impassive.

We cannot pay  
the ransom required to change ourselves.

IV. Wood that is dry and ever drier  
burns far too easily:  
    in Oregon, in California, in the Amazon  
        we cannot quench the wildfires  
        with unpredictable rain  
and there are flames in the streets  
    of Louisville, of Chicago, of Hong Kong  
        where tear gas and bullets  
        cut short our brothers' and sisters' memories  
            and teens are shot for turning their backs on cops—  
so we can't breathe.

But in the forests of my heart  
    all that's left is charcoal and ash  
        and what should have me enflamed  
        sputters out with barely a whisper.  
I do not know how to cry anymore:  
    Inured to the grieving, the injustice, the hate  
        that hide in my heart also.

Women, men, brothers, sisters: let us learn how to weep.  
We need him  
    the pierced one  
    to show us how to grieve  
        and yet hope  
        because the ransom has been paid by his pain  
and someday this will all be changed.

## RESPONSE

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Contemplate the art and the words. Take a moment to let the images and words about the women who stayed with Jesus work in your heart.

*Art and poem by Christine Kindberg.*

## STATION X: JESUS IS CRUCIFIED



JOHN 19:23-24A, 28-30A

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. So they said, "Rather than tearing it apart, let's throw dice for it." Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, "I am thirsty." A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!"



### RESPONSE

Spend a moment with the scene above, witnessing Jesus' suffering as he is crucified.

## STATION XI: JESUS MAKES A PROMISE TO A CRIMINAL



LUKE 23:39-43

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One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself — and us, too, while you’re at it!”

But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.”

And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

### THE PRESENT SAVIOR

utterly alone.  
he had never been before. Three in One  
the god-man; the Father Son and Spirit now just  
the Son.  
*eloi eloi lema sabachthani?*  
raucous laughter, first a snicker  
but louder now: have you been forgotten? where is your God now?  
*forgive them father. forget their sins as you have forgotten me.*  
like the garden he is surrounded but alone

in the beginning there was God and then there was man.  
God reached out to man but  
connection turned to a gulf.  
now nailed incarnate God turns his head and sees nailed man—  
*remember me, Jesus, he begs.*  
lost eyes long for the friend beyond  
the gulf in between them. his hands cannot move but if they could  
they would reach out and join and close the gap of  
excruciating pain, utter isolation, abject hopelessness

met in abandonment by the abandoned son himself  
God reaches back out to man  
*I remember you.*  
Three in One  
now and forever Immanuel  
*God with us.*  
the gulf is closed with incarnate understanding as  
pain is bridged by pain into paradise  
like the garden there is togetherness

### RESPONSE

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Imagine Jesus extending this promise to you. What would you like to say to Jesus? Where do you see God extending mercy and compassion to you today?

*Poem by Natalie Nichols.*

## STATION XII: JESUS UNITES HIS MOTHER AND DISCIPLE



JOHN 19:25-27

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Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, "Dear woman, here is your son." And he said to this disciple, "Here is your mother." And from then on this disciple took her into his home.



### RESPONSE

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Who Jesus giving you to care for today?

*Art: Laura James, Station no. 12, 2013.*



## STATION XIII: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS



**LUKE 23:44-46**

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It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.



### **RESPONSE**

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Kneel or sit in prayer at the cross.

## STATION XIV: JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB



**MATTHEW 27:57-60**

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As evening approached, Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea who had become a follower of Jesus, went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. And Pilate issued an order to release it to him. Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a long sheet of clean linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb, which had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a great stone across the entrance and left.



### **RESPONSE**

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What is something that you would like to bury with Jesus? A sin that you would like to die with Christ? A sorrow that you would like to see transformed into new life?

Bring what is on your heart to Jesus. You may even write it down on a piece of paper, and then “bury” that paper to symbolize burying this weight in the tomb.

*Art: Heather Maynard, The Strange Beauty of Sadness, 2019.*

## EXITING THE STATIONS

### PRAYER

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*Bring your journey alongside Jesus to a close by praying these words:*

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father — to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.



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Sign at Station X created by Barrett Scheuermann.

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