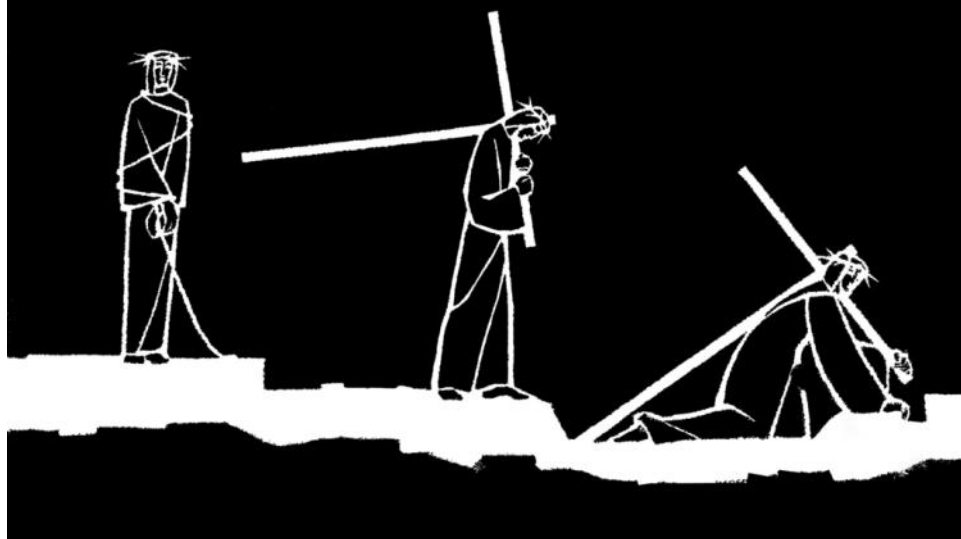


THE WAY OF THE CROSS

GOOD FRIDAY
REFLECTIONS



Portions of this reflective guide were taken from Praying the Stations of the Cross by Ruth Haley Barton, 2013. All Bible references are the English Standard Version (ESV). Images used by permission of Linda Roberts.

Good Friday Midday Reflections

The Way of the Cross

The Way of the Cross

Today we get to be spectators. Through scriptures and visual images we are going to follow Jesus as He walks *The Way of the Cross - the path to his crucifixion. We will make stops along the way that string together to tell the most compelling love story of all time.*

We invite you to engage your imagination as you page through this booklet. As you read the scriptures and meditate on the artwork, place yourself in the scenes as a spectator— accompany Jesus in his sorrow and suffering. Watch and listen to the remarkable events unfolding before you. This is a safe space for you to take the words you hear to heart and sit with the emotions you are feeling.

In this booklet you will find reflection questions and space to journal your thoughts. Use whatever is helpful to you to enter the story.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not 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 our Lord. Amen.

-Book of Common Prayer

**Station One:
Jesus is Condemned to Death**



Matthew 27:15-24

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. 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 shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" And he said, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

Reflection

Which details from this scene catch your attention or stir your thoughts?

What would you like to say to Pilate? To the chief priests and elders? To the crowd?

What is your response when you are accused?

Is there anything Jesus is inviting you to die to in order to experience new life?

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

**Station Two:
Jesus is Scourged and
Crowned with Thorns**



Matthew 27:27-31

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

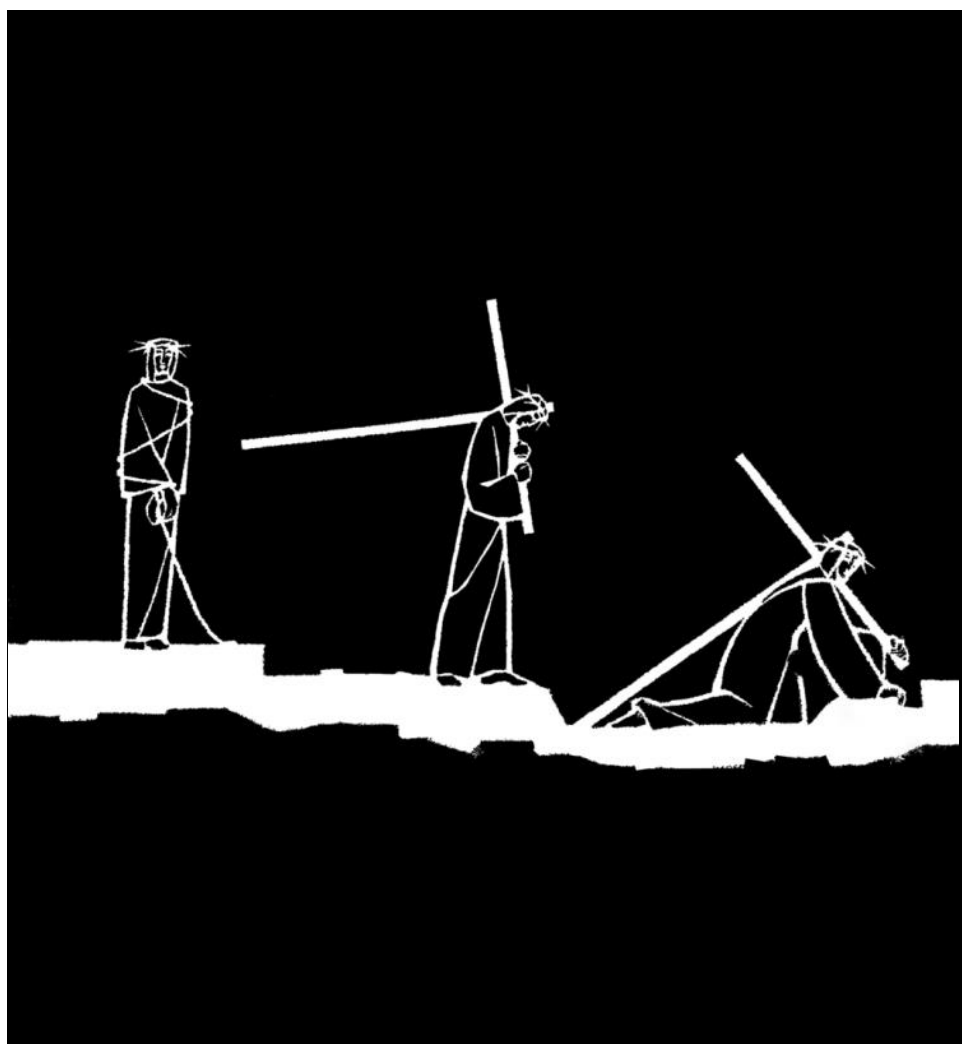
Reflection

Imagine this brutal scene at the governor's headquarters. What thoughts, memories or emotions are stirred in you?

What is the expression on Jesus' face?

What does Jesus' silence speak to you?

**Station Three:
Jesus Takes Up His Cross**



John 19:16-17

So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

**Station Four:
Simon of Cyrene Helps
Jesus carry His Cross**



Luke 23:26

And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus.

Reflection

What are your thoughts and emotions as you watch this interaction unfold?

What are you learning from Jesus?

What do you want to say to Simon?

Is it easy or difficult for you to accept help from others? Why?

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

**Station Five:
Jesus Speaks to the
Women of Jerusalem**



Luke 23:27-31

And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. But turning to them Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Reflection

Place yourself in this scene. Where are you?

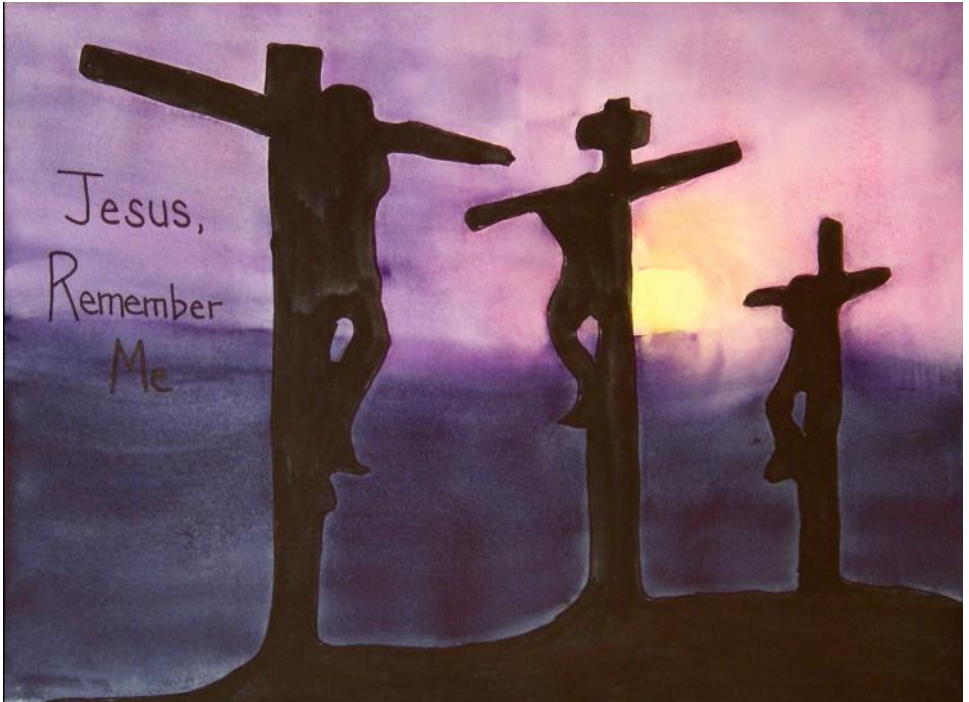
What do you want to say to Jesus?

What do you long for him to say to you?

Is Jesus inviting you to weep for anyone or any situation today?
Who? What?

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

Station Six: Jesus is Crucified



Luke 23:33-43

And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they

know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments. And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Reflection

Imagine you are at the foot of the cross, watching and listening to everything taking place. What emotions or thoughts are stirring in you?

Are you silent or do you speak? What do you say?

What do Jesus' words, action, or inaction demonstrate to you?

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

Station Seven: Jesus Cares for His Mother



John 19:25-27

Standing by 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 nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Reflection

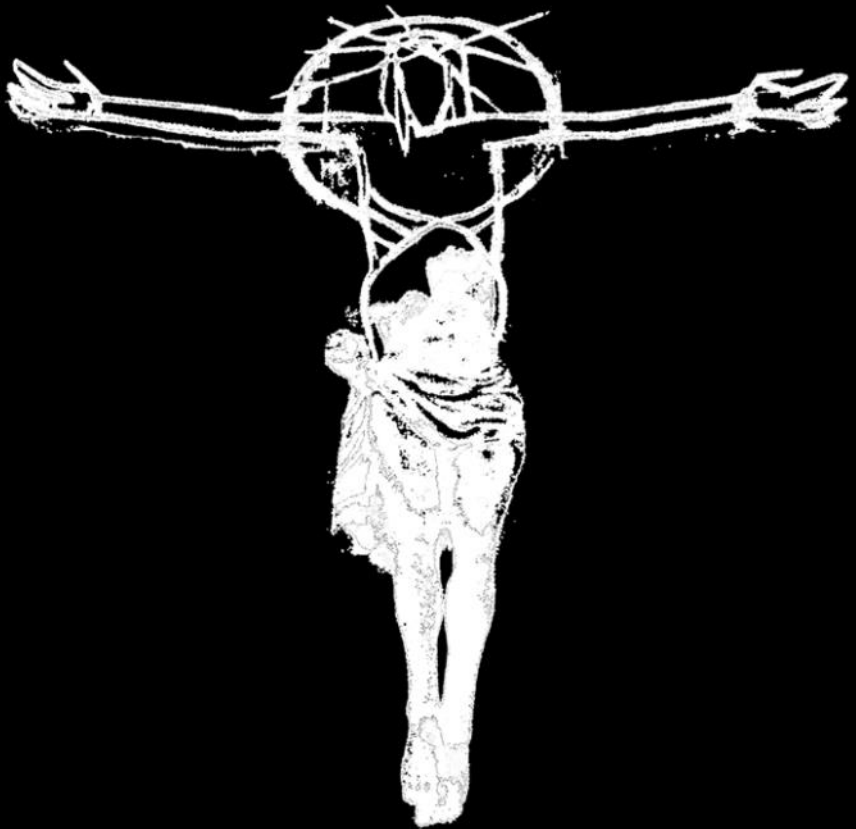
What catches your attention and captures your heart in this scene?

You are still positioned at the foot of the cross. What is your posture?

Imagine you are nearing the end of your life. What last words would you like to speak to the people you love most?

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

**Station Eight:
Jesus Dies Upon the Cross**



Luke 23:44-49

It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent!" And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.

Reflection

What is stirring in you as you watch Jesus take his final breaths on earth? What are you feeling in your body?

When do you leave this scene? What are you saying to yourself as you go?

What does Jesus' final act on earth mean to you personally?

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

**Station Nine:
Jesus is Laid in
the Tomb**



John 19:38-42

After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

Reflection

Speak to God about what it has been like for you to symbolically walk the Way of the Cross with Jesus today. What stands out to you in the passage?

Journal what you are noticing during this time of reflection.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, we pray for all to recognize the message of love demonstrated by your sacrifice:

For those who have yet to hear the gospel

For those who have lost their faith

For those hardened by sin or indifference

For the contemptuous and the wounded

For those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and persecutors
of his followers

For those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others

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

Further Reflections



Grace Community Church
21001 Moross Rd.
Detroit MI 48236