

STATIONS OF THE CROSS



Artwork and text from *The Soul's Journey: An Artist's Approach to the Stations of the Cross*
(Cincinnati OH: Forward Movement, 2014)

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Introductory Note on the Stations from the Artist

The tradition of walking the Way of the Cross, or the Stations of the Cross as it has come to be known, dates back to the earliest centuries of Christianity. Many Christians desired to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to follow in the steps of Jesus on his last days. But for most, this was an impossible dream. Consequently, churches and communities established the tradition of walking the stations as a devotional ritual in their locale.

The traditional Stations of the Cross were established around the seventeenth century. These fourteen scenes or stations include some drawn from long-standing custom but not directly described in scripture.

My paintings and meditations don't replace traditional depictions of the stations but rather offer another perspective. Narrative images are important to our understanding of the events of Holy Week, but they are not the only lens through which to view the story. This series draws imagery from scripture as well as personal experience. The varying perspectives for each station give the viewer an opportunity to relate to multiple roles—those of observer, betrayed and betrayer, judge and judged, ways to enter into the reality of the living Christ. My hope is that in reading these meditations and reflecting upon the images, that you will relate the Passion of Christ to your own walk, to the soul's journey that shapes each of our lives. (Kathrin Burleson, *The Soul's Journey: An Artist's Approach to the Stations of the Cross*, xi - xiii).

Opening Devotion

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.

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.

We will glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ:

In whom is our salvation, our life and our resurrection.

Let us pray.

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Station I - Acceptance

Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

God did not spare his own Son;

But delivered him up for us all.

A Reading from St. Luke

Jesus came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial." (22:39 - 46)

A Reflection from Bishop Barry Beisner

Here, Jesus struggles for light amidst the deep darkness of desolation, a time of profound loneliness, fear, and uncertainty. . . Jesus is not a superhuman above all fears and frailties; he must struggle—agonize—to master these emotions... Jesus must trust God completely, every step of the way, come what may—just like us. And, just as we must, he does this through prayer. . . .Scripture shows us a savior who knows us better than we know ourselves, who loves us and forgives us, and who not only teaches us how to pray but also prays himself: *Father. Not my will but yours. Save us from the time of trial.* (Bishop Barry Beisner, *The Soul's Journey*, 4)

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 Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. *Amen.*

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Station II - Betrayal

Jesus is Betrayed and Arrested

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

God did not spare his own Son;

But delivered him up for us all.

A Reading from St. Mark

Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. (14:43 - 46)

A Reflection from former Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori

The heart of God is grievously wounded, and this image does justice to the explosion and exploitation unleashed in Judas's passion. And yet, at the same time, the beating heart of the Divine continues to give life to the world—for the passion that underlies all creation will not cease, in spite of bent intention and bodies broken.

[The dendritic fingers reaching into the heart's core, or growing out of it, are sign and sacrament of the ceaseless action of the holy. Are they divine yearning for greater and more abundant life? Lament at life misused and diverted? The already-growing greenness of healing and resurrection? Are these tendrils like the placental exchange embracing and enlivening new creation in the womb, in spite of the apparent cost to the one who harbors new life?] (Katharine Jefferts Schori, *The Soul's Journey*, 10)

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 for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Station III - Denial

Peter Denies Jesus

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Surely he has borne our griefs:

And carried our sorrows.

A Reading from St. Luke

“Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” And Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!” Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me.” (22:31 - 34)

A Reflection from Father Alberto R. Cutié

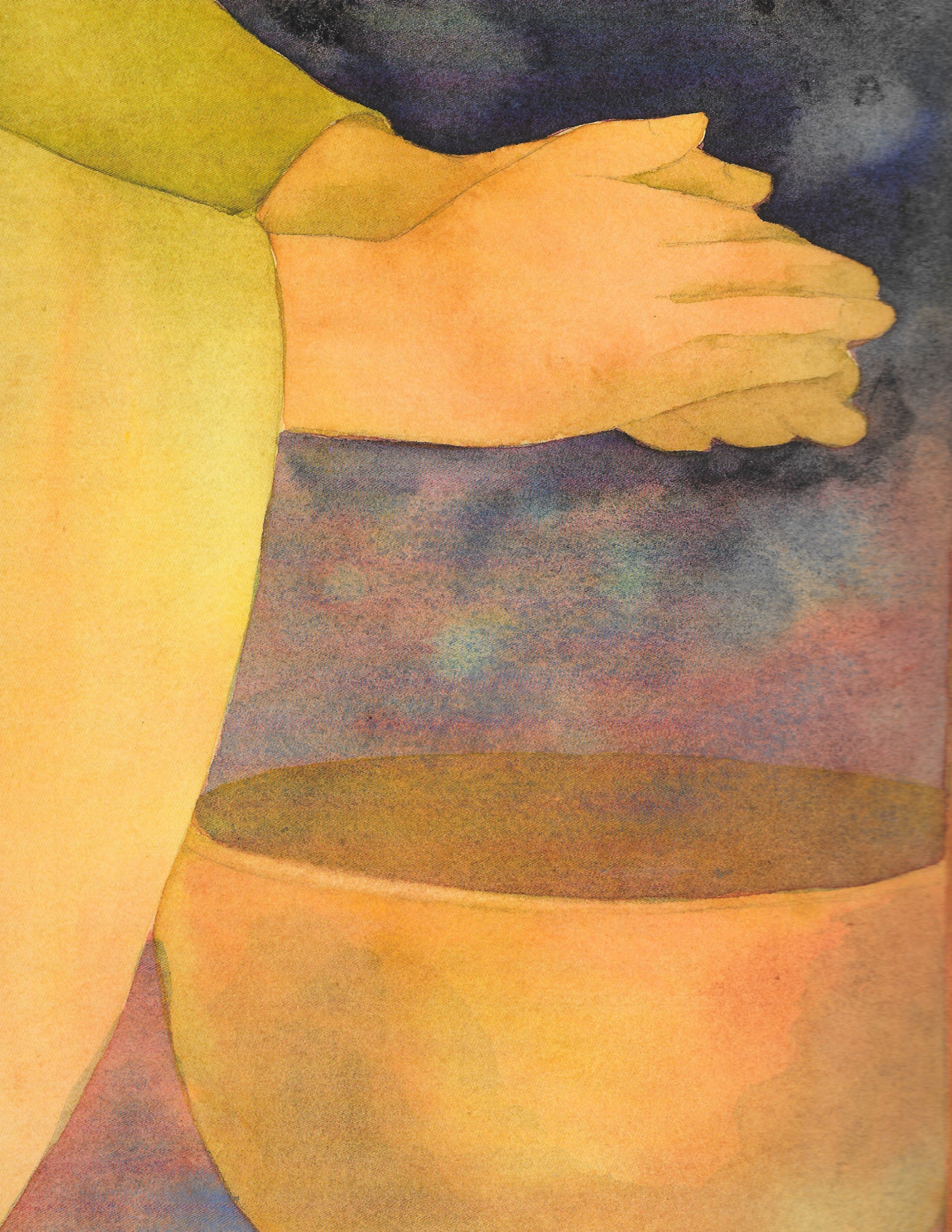
There is a great deal of Peter in all of us, especially when we feel pressured and so often give in to life in ways that do not clearly identify us as followers of Jesus. This is especially evident in our contemporary Christian lives when we ignore or choose not to hear the cry of the poor, the hungry, the lonely, the discriminated, the undocumented, the rejected, and so many of those ‘little ones’ Jesus invites us to receive, that are among us, and are still so neglected. It is then that the cock still crows. (Father Alberto R. Cutié, *The Soul’s Journey*, 16)

Let us pray.

O God, you know 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. *Amen.*

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Station IV - Judgment
The Crowd Condemns Jesus

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

Surely he has borne our griefs:
And carried our sorrows.

A Reading from St. Matthew

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. (27:24 - 26)

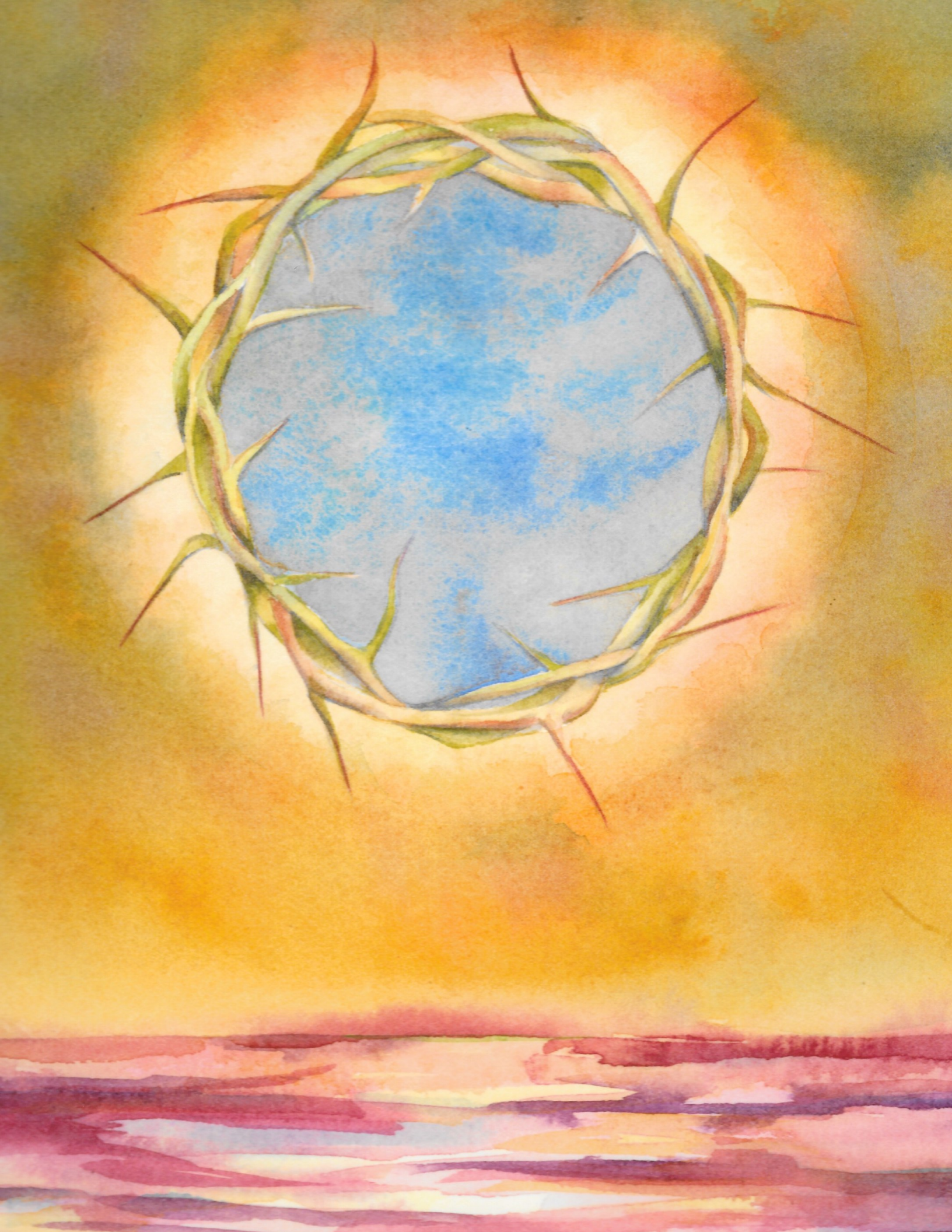
A Reflection from Bishop Barry Beisner

Pilate washes his hands, and hands Jesus over. Jesus, who stood up for the outcast, embraced the sinner, and ministered God's love to all. In Jesus's time of need, Pilate does not raise a helping hand higher than the basin he has had brought to him. Pilate in us is no different. In Christ, we can be different. In the light of Christ, we can see our way to make a difference. And we can learn to ask, as we look out from our places of power and privilege: Who is this who has been handed over to us? Into our hands? What will be our response, our decision? A futile hand-washing? Or a taking by the hand, our hands extended to help? (Bishop Barry Beisner, *The Soul's Journey*, 22)

Let us pray.

Teach your Church, O Lord, to mourn the sins of which it is guilty, and to repent and forsake them; that, by your pardoning grace, the results of our iniquities may not be visited upon our children and our children's children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Station V - Humiliation
The Soldiers Mock Jesus

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

Christ for us became obedient unto death:
Even death on a cross.

A Reading from St. John

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and 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. (19:1 - 3)

A Reflection from Sister Teresa Marie Martin

This representation of the crown with its wicked thorns anchors us not only in the painful reality of the situation in which Jesus was caught, but it also immediately draws us into the immensity of the reality beyond it—into God’s divine energy of love that fills the universe. We are not alone, caught on the thorns of difficult or humiliating situations. God’s light of love surrounds us, upholds us, and draws us into its center to sustain us and to lift us beyond the thorns so that we may be empowered to deal with these situations as best we can. That divine light that we see through the window of the thorns draws us ever beyond ourselves into the dazzling mystery of love. (Sister Teresa Marie Martin, *The Soul’s Journey*, 28)

Let us pray.

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped 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. ***Amen.***

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.



Station VI - Suffering
Jesus Carries His Cross

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

Christ for us became obedient unto death:
Even death on a cross.

A Reading from St. John

And carrying the cross by himself, he went out to the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. (19:17)

A Reflection from Father Scott Gunn

God's perfect love was rejected by the world. We surely know how this is part of the arc of God's plan of salvation for the world, but this knowledge does not diminish our sorrow for Christ's death and for the desolation of humanity. How could we do this?

Here we can rest assured that just as God's love is stronger than death, God's love can redeem us. God's love is stronger than our fears. The painting here gets it right. A worldly, horrific cross stands before us. Just beyond, still in our sight, is the light of God's love. The cross is not just a gruesome object. The cross is our promise of God's love, despite all odds. (Scott Gunn, *The Soul's Journey*, 34)

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, you 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 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 honor of your Name. *Amen.*

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.



Station VII - Help

Simon of Cyrene Assists Jesus

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me:

Cannot be my disciple.

A Reading from St. Mark

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross: it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. (15:21)

A Reflection from Father Scott Gunn

Jesus again and again tells his followers that they must take up their cross and follow him. Simon—who may or may not have been a follower of Jesus—literally took up Jesus’s cross and walked with him. Most of us, thanks be to God, never will be asked to make this kind of sacrifice, to literally take up a cross. But we Christians are called to take up the burdens of others. Sometimes we will be compelled to do this, whether or not we want to.

When we take up the burdens of another, we can do this knowing that Christ walks with us.

When we carry the burdens of another, we can see that the burden of another is eased. We can take up the cross knowing that God is near. In this is redemption. (Scott Gunn, *The Soul’s Journey*, 40)

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following 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 Savior Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.



Station VIII - Witness

Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Those who sowed with tears:

Will reap with songs of joy.

A Reading from St. Luke

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.’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us’; and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?” (23:27 - 31)

A Reflection from Friar Leo M. Joseph

Could there be such a catastrophe that would cause a mother to regret having brought a new life into this world? Spare me from ever having to face such a day, and never let me fail to find joy in the miracle of new life no matter how troubled the circumstances. Open my heart also to reverence those who are not able, or consciously choose not, to bear children of their own, and those, who out of unselfish love, parent, in various ways, the children of others. (Leo M. Joseph, *The Soul's Journey*, 46)

Let us pray.

A Prayer from Friar Leo

May we learn from you, our all-loving Jesus, the redemptive work of compassion for the healing and well-being of the whole creation. May we have courage to go against the flow of the crowd and let us never turn away from seeing your face in the innocent who suffer pain and anguish as a result of unjust systems. ***Amen.***

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Station IX - Surrender
Soldiers Nail Jesus to the Cross

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

Christ for us became obedient unto death:
Even death on a cross.

A Reading from St. Mark

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. It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." (15: 22 - 26).

Let us pray.

A Prayer from Friar Leo M. Joseph

O Jesus...help me to forgive all who in any way have added to my burden of pain and have pointed the finger of blame and heaped shame on me. Give me the courage and love to let go of all the bitter and noxious thoughts and every evil intention against those who have done harm to me or have abandoned me in my time of need.

To fulfill the scripture, your executioners divided your clothes among themselves. As you endured the spoiling of your possessions, enable me to dispose of my material goods according to your will. Teach me to keep a light grasp on all things and discern what is appropriate and helpful according to my current circumstances, holding on to nothing that can take hold of me.
Amen. (Leo M. Joseph, *The Soul's Journey*, 52)

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.



Station X - Compassion

Mary and the Beloved Disciple Stand at the Foot of the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Those who sowed with tears:

Will reap with songs of joy.

A Reading from St. John

Meanwhile, 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 disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. (19:25 - 27)

A Reflection from Father Alberto R. Cutié

One of the most touching moments in the Sunday Eucharist is when we, the community, arrive at the Prayers of the People. After formal petitions are read, *The Book of Common Prayer* instructs us that "the people may add their own petitions." If you pay close attention, you'll hear the whispers of names, petitions, thanksgivings, and a variety of prayers, as well as the names of people who may not be physically present but are surely spiritually remembered and united through prayer. At that moment, you can witness the Christian community at the "Foot of the Cross," gazing upon the crucified and the suffering they have encountered in their lives and relationships. It is a powerful moment of prayer, for we realize that we are all connected and united, that a spiritual family of sisters and brothers has been brought together at the "Foot of the Cross" of our humanity. (Alberto R. Cutié, *The Soul's Journey*, 58).

Let us pray.

Jesus, by your life and death you created a new family born of your love, compassion, and sacrifice. Help me to see you in each of my sisters and brothers. May we all know that we are one in you. ***Amen.***

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.



Station XI - Death
Jesus Dies on the Cross

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

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

A Reading from St. Matthew

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. (27:45 - 51).

A Reflection from Friar Leo M. Joseph

The veil between the sanctuary of the temple and the holy of holies is rent asunder from top to bottom. All that separated creation from the Creator is obliterated by the Almighty. The cherubim sheathe their swords as the gates of paradise are once and for all time flung wide. (Leo M. Joseph, *The Soul's Journey*, 64).

Let us pray.

A Prayer from Friar Leo

Let me never set anything between the Divine Presence and myself. May I strive to keep the awareness of my communion with God unobscured by anything or person, especially my own ego, lest I fall prey to the deception of the deceiver as did our forbearers. As Jesus's cross, thrust into the bosom of Mother Earth, unleashes the healing tide of love, so may it cleanse me and all humanity of its primal separation from our Divine Source. ***Amen.***

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Station XII - Love

Jesus's Body is Taken Down from the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you;

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Those who sowed with tears:

Will reap with songs of joy.

A Reading from St. John

When the soldiers came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. (19:33-34, 38)

Let us pray.

A Prayer from Friar Leo

May I behold Mary in the mother kneeling on a trash-strewn ghetto street, weeping over the corpse of her child shot in a senseless gang shooting; the mother kneeling beside a hospital bed, cradling the body of her young son who has just died of AIDS; the mother throwing herself over the casket delivered from the belly of a military transport plane. May this image of the *Pieta* once more melt the coldness of all our hearts, which have become hardened to the pain and anguish of mothers worldwide who bore us for joy and fullness of life. ***Amen.***

(Leo M. Joseph, *The Soul's Journey*, 70)

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Station XIII - Waiting
Jesus's Body is Entombed

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

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

A Reading from St. Matthew

So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own 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. (27:59 - 61)

A Reflection from Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori

Will we sit at the tombs with those who wait, expectant? Will we offer up our place for the vulnerable among us? After all is said and done, solidarity and passion are the only gifts we have to offer at this cave. (Katharine Jefferts Schori, *The Soul's Journey*, 76)

Let us pray.

O God, 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 the waters of baptism may find our perfect rest in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer; Come and listen to me.



Closing Prayer

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; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. ***Amen.***

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

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Artwork and text from *The Soul's Journey: An Artist's Approach to the Stations of the Cross*
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