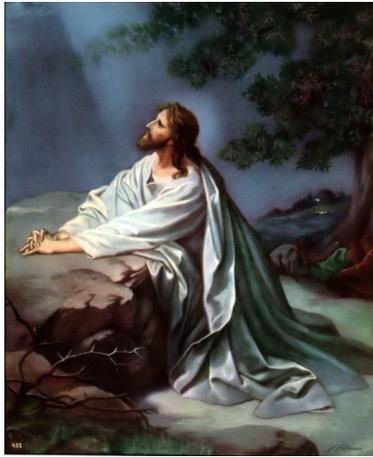


Stations of the Cross

Reflections for Good Friday



Currie Kirk



Opening Meditation

Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.” He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.



The First Station

“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

“Crucify him!” they shouted.

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

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

Meditation

Jesus, we too, are busy about many things in our daily lives. We pray for the grace never to let things that need to be done become more important than people who need to be loved; or else, we may miss You when You stand before us in need.



The Second Station

The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace and called together the whole company of soldiers. They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him.

Meditation

Jesus, we often reject You and fail to live up to the demands of love. But we also find our own efforts to love being rejected by other people; and it hurts us very much. Give us the grace to take up the cross with You, Lord, and go on loving.



The Third Station

He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

Meditation

Jesus, we find our sinfulness too much to bear. We hate it, we want to get rid of it. Yet it is always with us, even driving us to the ground. Save us from the pride of trying to carry our crosses strictly on our own.



The Fourth Station

When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, “Woman, here is your son,” and to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.

Meditation

Jesus, we are willing to do anything for those we love very much—for our family, for our friends. And we feel so inadequate when we cannot help them, when we cannot find the right words in times of sorrow. Lord Jesus, help us realise that we are not their saviour—You are. Help us stand in silent support when we need to.



The Fifth Station

As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

Meditation

Lord Jesus, there are always many reasons for not getting “involved” with others, especially when this involves an interruption in whatever we are doing. Give us the grace to see when You are calling us to bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil your law of love.



The Sixth Station

Surely he took all our pain and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed.

Meditation

Jesus, so often we look only for the big things, the heroic things we can do for our brothers and sisters.

Help us to be aware of the little things, the day to day things, that we can do to communicate your image of love to others.



The Seventh Station

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

Meditation

Jesus, why do things have to fall apart just at the time they seemed to be coming together? We work hard to conquer a particular failing; and just when we think it is overcome, we fall again. May we never forget our constant need of your grace.



The Eighth Station

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.”

Meditation

Lord Jesus, what You said was not, perhaps, what the women wanted to hear. But it certainly was what they needed to hear. Your word of love to us in our lives is not always easy to hear; but helps us be open to that word, so we may follow You and live.



The Ninth Station

And so the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha).

Meditation

Jesus, there are times in our lives when the situation seems absolutely hopeless. There is no way to turn; and all that is ahead is darkness. These times are terrifying, Lord. Give us the grace to hope. The Father will get us to Calvary—and to the Resurrection.



The Tenth Station

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. “Let’s not tear it,” they said to one another. And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Meditation

Lord Jesus, You are not ashamed to stand naked before the crowds; for You have stood before them in absolute openness and honesty all your life. Such openness frightens us, Lord. We have so many little ways of hiding our true feelings, of keeping up phony fronts and false appearances. Strip us of these things, Lord, that we may be free to mount the cross with You.



The Eleventh Station

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

Meditation

Jesus, we are shocked at the amount of inhuman cruelty people daily inflict on one another. We are terrified of the evil which lurks in our own hearts. May we never ignore this evil, but work actively against it in whatever ways we can.



The Twelfth Station

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.

Meditation

Lord Jesus, there is no way we can understand your death without participating in it. But we are afraid, Lord. We don't know what it will mean for our lives if we were really to die with You. Give us the peace to say YES to the cross, and by that YES to find true freedom and life.



The Thirteenth Station

When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Meditation

Pray for us at the times when we are tempted to give up in our journey of faith, those times of emptiness when Jesus seems to lie lifeless in our arms.

Pray that at that point we may go on and discover the true power of hope.



The Fourteenth Station

There was a man named Joseph from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it.

Meditation

Jesus, so often our faith becomes a faith of the tomb. We feel we know You well enough; we have figured You out; we know what You want; we know what we have to do. Lord, neither the tomb nor our own conceptions are big enough to hold you. Help us ever to await the Resurrection, and grow in following your way.