

A Good Friday Walk to the Cross Meditative Journey



Copyright ©2008 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #24577. Music Copyright Information: From CCLI.com. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under CCLI copyright Annual License #3273333.

Welcome to A Good Friday Walk to the Cross A Service of Stations, Reflections and Participation

This Good Friday service of stations is a compilation and adaptation of the writings from theologians across religious traditions: Joan Chittister, Alphonsus Liguori, Rev. Robb McCoy, Henri Nouwen, Rev. Thomas L. Weitzel. We pray you will find meaning and peace on this Holy Day.

--Please begin in silence--

INTRODUCTION

The Stations of the Cross combine art, sculpture and movement to recreate Christ's walk to Calvary within the walls of the church, allowing the faithful to make a "pilgrimage to Jerusalem" and be drawn closer to the Christ who walked there.

The stations tradition developed during the time of the Crusades (12-13th cent.). Their number and subject matter have varied widely, from as many as 30 to as few as five.

The Stations of the Cross are like parables with a message. With this in mind, the stations are intended to be a devotion that is prayed and walked by one or more persons.

This booklet is designed to guide you through the stations. It is designed to use at home. Please take time to read, reflect, and engage with each. *Shalom.*

Begin by gathering the materials listed and place these items in numerical ascending orders on a workstation or table.

- Print a copy of the Finger Labyrinth
- #1 ~ broken decorative glass pieces, snack chips, puzzle pieces , a plate.
- #2 ~ Sand/potting soil in a glass or metal cup, 1 candle, matches
- #3 ~ small saucer or bowl with water inside , a napkin
- #4 ~ Paper & Pencil
- #5 ~ Small pine tree limb
- #6 ~ A mirror
- #7 ~ Nail
- #8 ~ Post-it-note / piece of paper with the Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachtani
(My God, My God why have you forsaken me)

Using the Finger Labyrinth as a guide, participate along with the video using your collected items. Pause at each numbered spot, set up your station and follow the directions explained on the video and within this brochure.

THE FIRST STATION: Broken Pieces

Instructions:

You are invited to chose broken glass pieces (snack chips, puzzles pieces) and place them on a plate making the shape of a cross.

Begin with prayer.

OPENING PRAYER

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

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it." (Matt 16:24-25)
Christ has humbled himself and become obedient to death. Even to death on a cross.

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 everlasting through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Let us follow the way of the cross. In the name of our Lord. Amen

Continue the walk toward the Center of the Finger Labyrinth

THE SECOND STATION: Lighting the Way

Instructions:

You are invited to light one candle:

Take a candle located by the cup of sand (potting soil) and light it from a match and carefully place in the sand/potting soil.

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

Reflection:

Psalm 119:105

The psalmist also reminds us with the words, *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*, how important it is to begin with the God's Word, Jesus Christ, and to live in his light. Remember a moment and/or someone that has cast a light for you.

Remember...give thanks.

Page 2

We pray:

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

THE THIRD STATION: A Garden Beginning

Instructions:

You are invited to dip your fingers in the saucer or bowl of water before you, and place a drop on your own forehead or back of one hand. Feel the water. Feel its coolness and its clinging touch like dew first thing in the morning. Sense the refreshing and sustaining nature of this important earthly element...And remember your baptism.

Mark 1:4, 9-11

John was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins.

About that time, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. While he was coming up out of the water, Jesus saw heaven splitting open and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down on him. And there was a voice from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."

Reflection

This journey begins where Jesus' journey began—at the water. The water of baptism is a sign of rebirth. To be baptized is to die to your old self, and to rise out of the water as a new creation.

At baptism, the Holy Spirit makes a special claim on a person, you are God's beloved child. This claim cannot be revoked.

From here we will proceed through Jesus' life, ministry, teaching, betrayal, and death. We will reflect on these things, and may encounter trouble along the way. Know that through it all, your identity as a Child of God is complete. You are God's beloved.

We pray:

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

THE FOURTH STATION - Prediction

Instructions:

Jesus asked Peter, "Who do you say that I am?" Using paper and a pencil or pen write down your thoughts. How would you answer the question, *Who is Jesus?*

Page 3

Mark 8:27-33

Jesus and his disciples went into the villages near Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” They told him, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others one of the prophets.” He asked them, “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Christ.” Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: “The Human One must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts, and be killed, and then, after three days, rise from the dead.” He said this plainly. But Peter took hold of Jesus and, scolding him, began to correct him. Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, then sternly corrected Peter: “Get behind me, Satan. You are not thinking God’s thoughts but human thoughts.”

Reflection

In the matter of a few moments Peter goes from insightful disciple to a tempter. In one breath he is able to make the bold claim that Jesus is the messiah, the anointed one of God. In the very next he demonstrates how little he understands about what the messiah must do.

Jesus understood that what he was teaching and doing would get him into trouble with the authorities. He understood that they could not let him live, and he understood that his mission could not be thwarted by their acts of violence. Peter had a hard time accepting this.

We pray:

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

WE SING

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
save in the death of Christ, my God;
all the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.

THE CENTER

Instructions:

Find a window or spot you can look outdoors. Look for the full moon? Look at the darkness that shrouds the outdoor space? Give thought to the vastness of God’s power.

John 1:1-4

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Reflection

Is there anything God cannot do for you? What is in your heart that can be laid at the feet of Jesus? May Jesus take away any shroud of darkness that comes near to you.

We pray:

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

THE FIFTH STATION – Jerusalem

Instructions:

The Gospel of John tells us that the people cut down palm branches and waved them. Take one (or a pine branch or large leaf), and wave it back and forth. Feel the weight of the leaf in the air. Feel the resistance. Imagine more branches like this one. Imagine the scene. Given the climate of the city, can you imagine the tension? Can you feel the weight of the moment as Jesus made his humble entrance into the city?

Mark 11:7-11

They brought the donkey to Jesus and threw their clothes upon it, and he sat on it. Many people spread out their clothes on the road while others spread branches cut from the fields.

Those in front of him and those following were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessings on the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest!” Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple.

After he looked around at everything, because it was already late in the evening, he returned to Bethany with the Twelve.

Reflection

This story is usually described as “Palm Sunday.” It is on this day that Jesus entered Jerusalem. He made his entrance as the city was getting ready to celebrate the Passover, a festival that remembered when the people escaped the power of Egypt, and God overthrew the Pharaoh.

Now occupied by the forces of the Roman Emperor, this was a dangerous time. Tempers were high. Rebellious fervor was rampant. In this climate, as the Roman governor entered the city riding upon a decorated horse, Jesus entered the city on a donkey. As Pilate entered surrounded by Roman soldiers, Jesus entered while people shouted “Hosanna!”

We pray:

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

THE SIXTH STATION –Denial

Instructions:

Look into the mirror and read this story of Jesus’ trial. Slowly read Peter’s words, the ones in bold.

Mark 6:35-44

They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, “We heard him say, “I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’ ” But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?” But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, ”

Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” Jesus said, “I am; and “you will see

the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,’ and “coming with the clouds of heaven.’ ” Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?” All of them condemned him as deserving death. Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophecy!” The guards also took him over and beat him.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.”

But he denied it, saying, “**I do not know or understand what you are talking about.**”

And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.”

But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.”

But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “**I do not know this man you are talking about.**” At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

We pray:

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

THE SEVENTH STATION – Trial

Instructions:

Take a nail and press it tightly in your hand. Feel its weight and the sharp point.

Mark 15:6-15

During the festival, Pilate released one prisoner to them, whomever they requested. A man named Barabbas was locked up with the rebels who had committed murder during an uprising. The crowd pushed forward and asked Pilate to release someone, as he regularly did.

Pilate answered them, “Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” He knew that the chief priests had handed him over because of jealousy. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas to them instead.

Pilate replied, “Then what do you want me to do with the one you call king of the Jews?” They shouted back, “Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Why? What wrong has he done?” They shouted even louder, “Crucify him!” Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd, so he released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus whipped, then handed him over to be crucified.

Reflection

The crowd had a choice. This crowd, which had kept Jesus protected through much of the week, could now free him. Fear of the crowd’s reaction had kept the chief priests from arresting Jesus earlier in the week. The chief priests understood something about crowds. They knew though they could be swayed.

So the choice was offered. Barabbas was a known insurrectionist. He had been “locked up with rebels.” The people were still looking for the messiah, the one who would deliver them. They could choose between the one willing to kill, or the one willing to die. They could choose between the rebel arrested for insurrection, or the teacher arrested for jealousy.

The choice goes down in history, but it is one we continue to face. What is our path? Is it revenge or is it grace?

We pray:

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

THE EIGHT STATION - Death

Instruction:

Say the words, “Eloi Eloi, lama sabachtani...My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” Breath out slowly as if it were your last.

Mark 15:25-41

It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. The notice of the formal charge against him was written, “The king of the Jews.” They crucified two outlaws with him, one on his right and one on his left. People walking by insulted him, shaking their heads and saying, “Ha! So you were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, were you? Save yourself and come down from that cross!” In the same way, the chief priests were making fun of him among themselves, together with the legal experts.

“He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself. Let the Christ, the king of

Israel, come down from the cross. Then we’ll see and believe.” Even those who had been crucified with Jesus insulted him. From noon until three in the afternoon the whole earth was dark.

At three, Jesus cried out with a loud shout, “Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani,” which means, “My God, my God, why have you left me?” After hearing him, some standing there said, “Look! He’s calling Elijah!” Someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, and put it on a pole. He offered it to Jesus to drink, saying, “Let’s see if Elijah will come to take him down.” But Jesus let out a loud cry and died.

The curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. When the centurion, who stood facing Jesus, saw how he died, he said, “This man was certainly God’s Son.” Some women were watching from a distance, including Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James (the younger one) and Joses, and Salome. When Jesus was in Galilee, these women had followed and supported him, along with many other women who had come to Jerusalem with him.

Reflection as you prepare to leave the labyrinth:

When arriving at the #8 stop in the labyrinth touch the place you marked with water at station #3. Remember your Baptism is death and rebirth. There is no resurrection without death. Go forth knowing that through it all, God has claimed you. You are God’s beloved.

We Sing

The Old Rugged Cross

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross where the Dearest and Best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

Refrain:

So I’ll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it someday for a crown.

Oh, that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above
To bear it to dark Calvary.

Refrain

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small;
love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.
Refrain

We Pray:

Dear Jesus,

You once were condemned; you are still being condemned. You once carried your cross; you are still carrying your cross. You once died; you are dying still. You once rose from the dead; you are still rising from the dead.

I look at you, and you open my eyes to the ways in which your passion, death, and resurrection are happening among us every day. But within me there is a deep fear of looking at my own world. You say to me: “Do not be afraid to look, to touch, to heal, to comfort, and to console.” I listen to your voice, and, as I enter more deeply into the painful, but also hope-filled lives of my fellow human beings, I know that I enter more deeply into your heart.

My fears, dear Lord, of opening my eyes to my suffering world are deeply rooted in my own anxious heart. I am not sure that I, myself, am truly loved and safely held, and so I keep my distance from other people’s fear-filled lives. But again you say: “Do not be afraid to let me look at your wounded heart, to embrace you, to heal you, to comfort and console you. . . because I love you with a love that knows no bounds and poses no conditions.”

Thank you, Lord, for speaking to me. I do so desire to let you heal my wounded heart and, from there, to reach out to others close by and far away. I know, Lord, that you are gentle and humble of heart and that you call out: “Come to me, you who labor and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.”

As your passion, death, and resurrection continue in history, give me the hope, the courage, and the confidence to let your heart unite my heart with the hearts of all your suffering people, and so become for us the divine source of new life. From *Walk With Jesus by Henri Nouwen* Amen.

Depart in peace+

**Thanks to Lynn Cox for the church photos and the loving
adornments made each day of Holy Week!**

