

The Society

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This booklet closely follows a meditation on the Stations of the Cross in the form it was offered on-line to mark Good Friday 2020.

The Society freely offers this booklet with its prayers to all those who are seeking to offer intercessions for a broken world while meditating on the Stations of the Cross during Lent and Holy Week 2021.

Please note that some of the phrasing used necessarily follows the restrictions arising from the pandemic which were in place at Good Friday 2020. To use this devotion in different contexts, groups could choose on p4 to omit the middle two lines of the first stanza and the whole of the last stanza; and on p19 omit the whole of the middle stanza.

The Society wishes to offer its thanks to the author of the mediation, Fr Owen Dobson, the Assistant Priest of St James's, Sussex Gardens and to Fr Paul Thomas, the Vicar of that parish, along with its congregation. Thanks are also due to Ruth Craven for supplying the illustrations.

This booklet seeks to complement The Society's publication of a booklet on the Stations of the Cross in 2020 which is available here: www.sswsh.com/fullposts.php?id=303

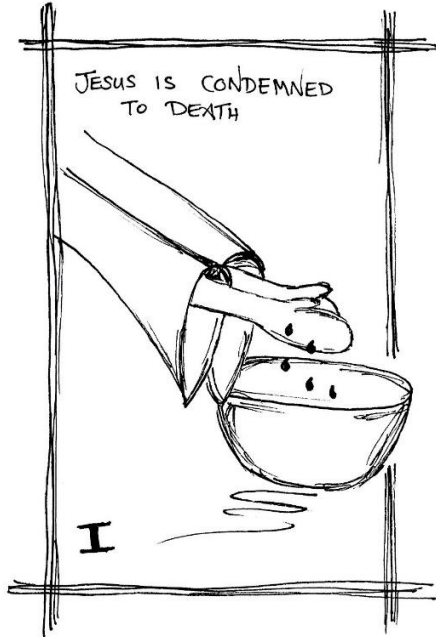
*We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Introduction

Good Friday - but what could possibly be good
when today Jesus dies on a cross of rough wood?
And especially this year, when our church doors are shut
and our ties as a family are seemingly cut.
But maybe, instead of 'just what's good about it?'
we should ask, 'can there ever be good things without it?'

Because on this dark day, when he carries the cross,
Jesus bears it for us, for the least and the lost
And he takes to the Father this sad, hurting world
and its pain he redeems, by his stripes we are healed.

So though church is off limits, it is streets just like ours
and a city like this, where his love overpowers
every sickness and sin: so from home let us go
on the way of the Cross, his salvation to know.

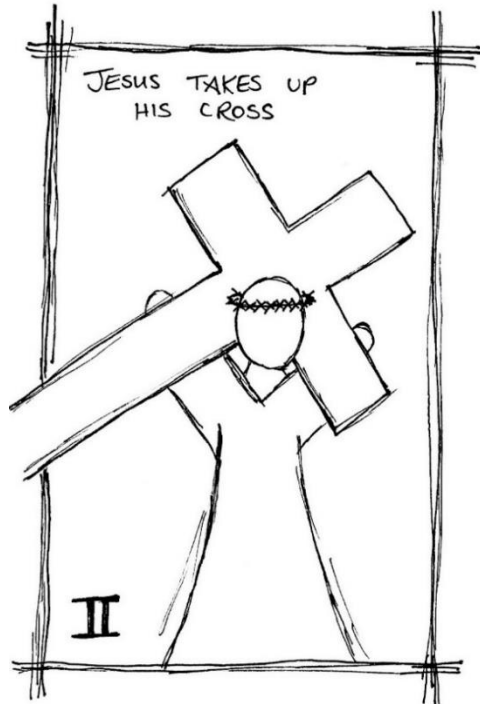


I Jesus is condemned to death.

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

Pilate washes his hands (we're all experts at that!)
as he passes the buck like a true bureaucrat
'What is truth?' Pilate asks, While, we know 'Jesus is!'
Pilate's in charge, but the real power is his.

*To all under sentence of death, Lord, draw near,
renew them in strength, and deliver them from fear.*

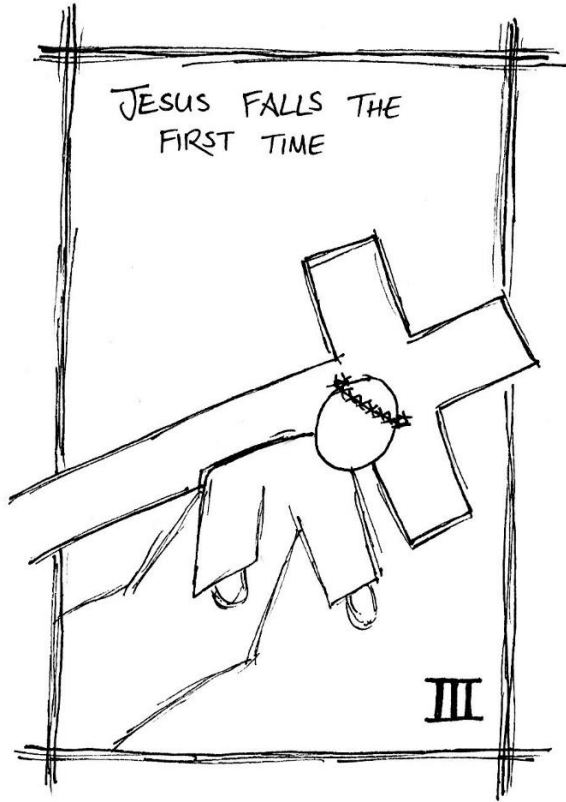


2 Jesus takes up his cross.

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

A tree was how death claimed us all, in the garden;
Now a tree will be part of what wins us our pardon.
For the wood of the cross will bear fruit that gives life!
Jesus takes up its weight, and he faces the strife.

*Your words to the weary, Lord Christ we invoke:
that they rest and refreshment find under your yoke.*

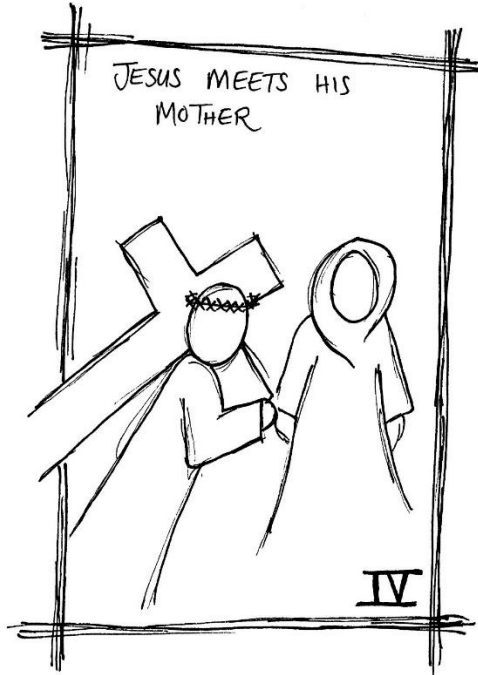


3 Jesus falls the first time

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

He falls, unexpectedly, sudden and hard,
to the cheers of the crowd and the rage of the guard.

*Lamb of God, who for the world's sin was slain:
have mercy on us, and restore us again.*

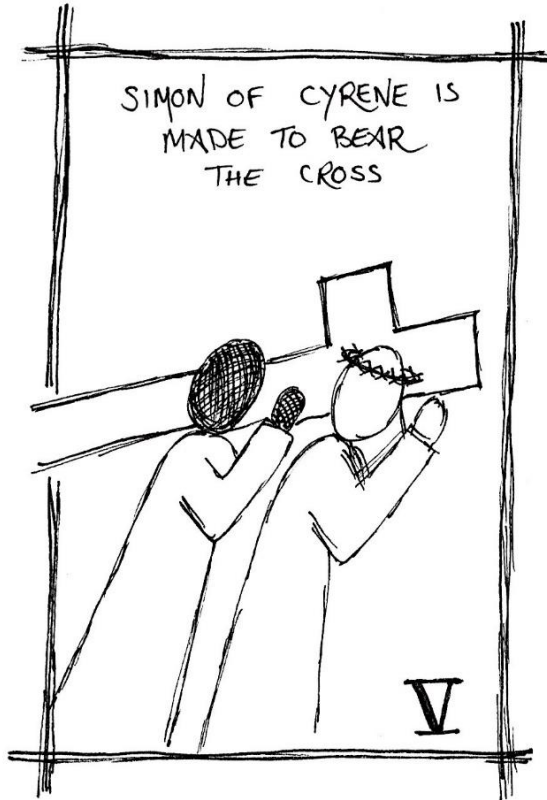


4 Jesus meets his mother

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

What grief could be worse? Who could try to condole?
As she saw her son struggling a sword pierced her soul.
And yet Mary, with trust that cannot be denied,
followed her Son and would not leave his side.

*Full of grace even, now Mary, share your embrace
with the women in grief of the whole human race.*

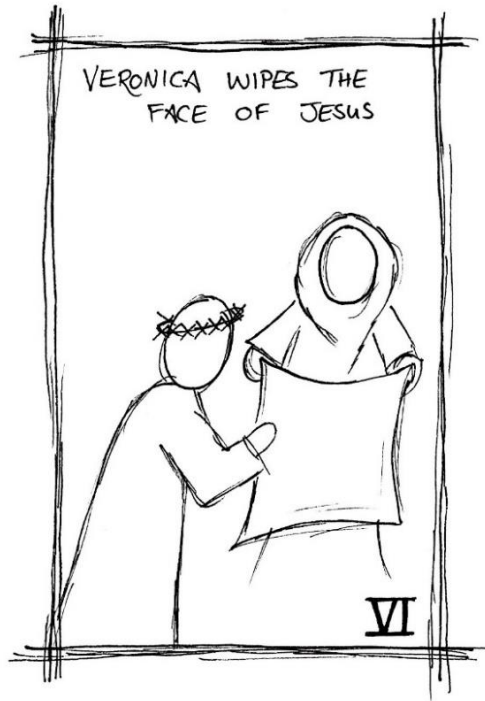


5 Simon of Cyrene is made to bear the cross

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

Simon, whose dark skin had made him a target,
is dragged to the cross to help Jesus to bear it.

*When people are hated for their race or their nation,
renew Lord their dignity, bring full restoration.*

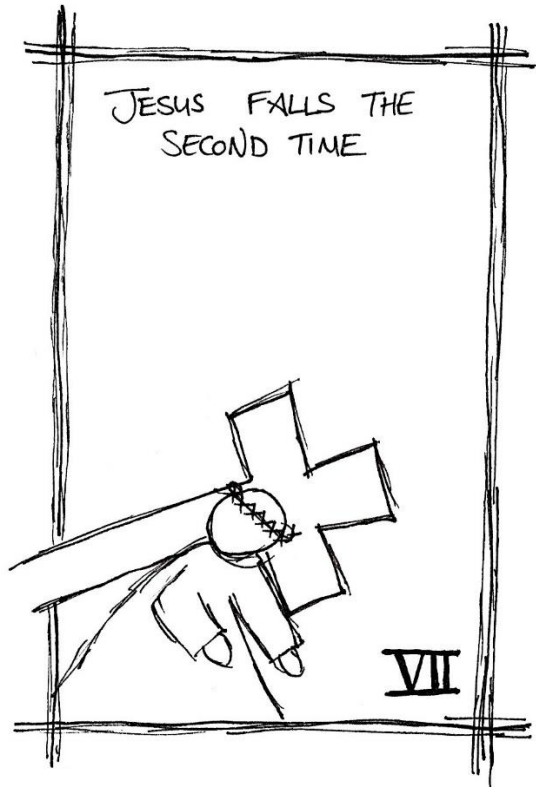


6 Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

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

A moment of kindness amidst cruelty and hurt,
she takes out a cloth and she wipes all the dirt
from the face of the one, who although caked in blood,
is the true image of the invisible God.

*Let us all, suffering Lord be the first to serve others,
recognising your face in our sisters and brothers.*



7 Jesus falls the second time.

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

Again his grip slips, his hands splintered and lined,
hands that brought healing and sight to the blind.

*Lamb of God, you take away our sin's blindness,
have mercy on us and fills hearts with your kindness.*



8 Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem

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

The disciples have scattered, but the women remain
and stay close to Jesus, and share in his pain.
'Daughters of Jerusalem, don't shed tears for me
but weep for yourselves and your own family.'

*All parents and children in need, hear their cries
and in mercy, Lord, wipe every tear from their eyes.*

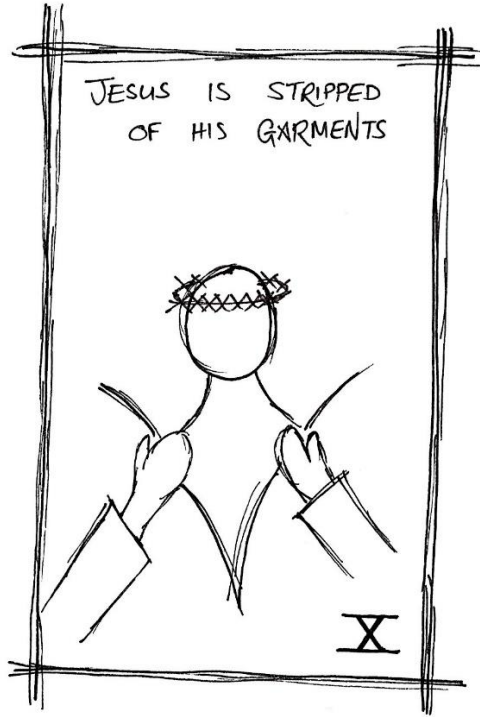


9 Jesus falls the third time

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

A rock in the road, from his feet he is thrown,
here stumbling is Salvation's Chief Cornerstone.

*Lamb of God, from all our sins us you release,
give us your mercy, grant us your peace.*

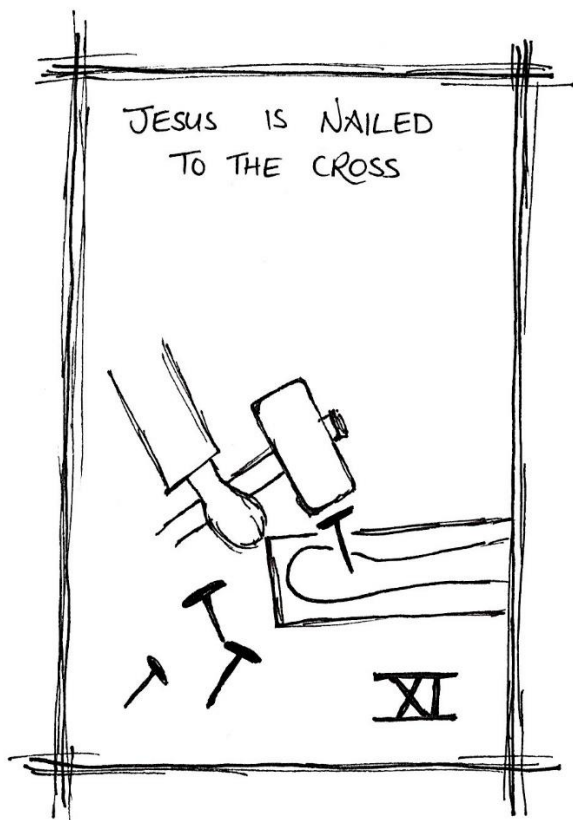


10 Jesus is stripped of his garments

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

Enthroned in the heavens, wrapped in light like a robe,
he clothed with his flowers the fields of this globe,
but now guards cast lots for the robe from him stripped,
'what a waste,' they agree, 'if it was to be ripped.'

*For the naked, the poor and those on the extremes,
let justice come flooding like never failing streams.*

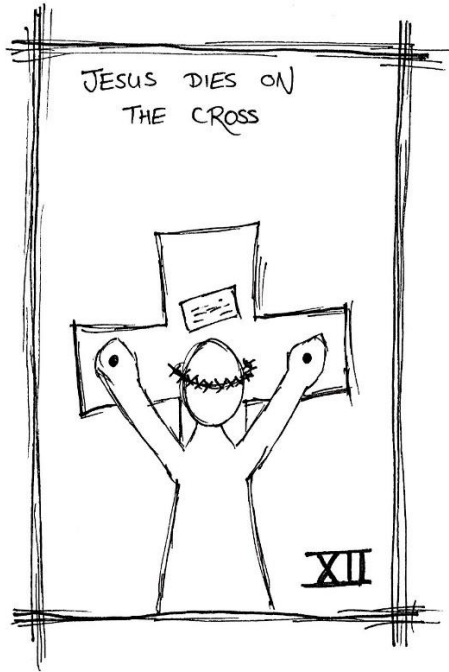


II Jesus is nailed to the cross

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

Before us Isaiah's ancient prophecy stands:
'Your names are engraved on the palms of my hands.'

*In your wounded hands, Jesus, hide us within,
that safe in your love, we may find rest therein.*



12 Jesus dies on the cross

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

How could this happen? The sun flees the skies
and darkness descends as the Lord of life dies
Yet this is the moment of glory utmost:
as he cries 'It is finished' and gives up the ghost.

Silence is kept

*Words cannot tell how you died here for me
so in silence and wonder I bend on my knee.*

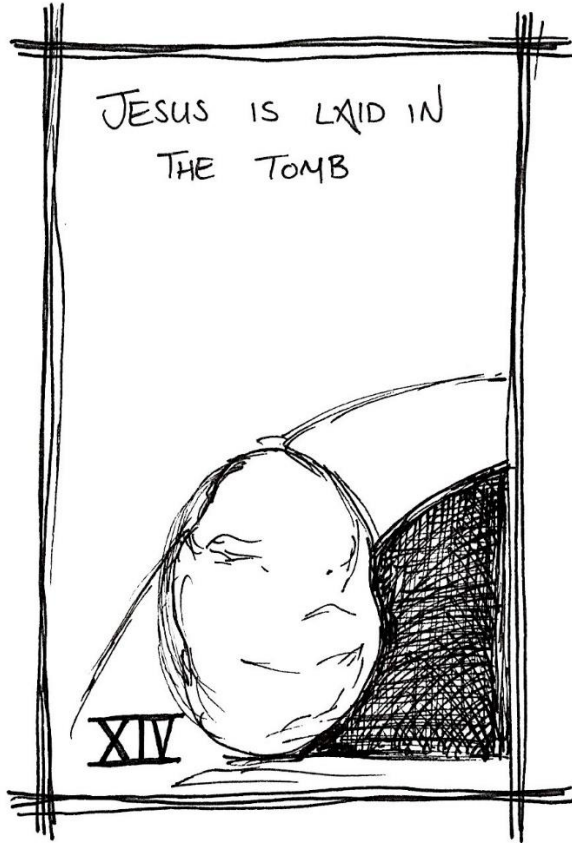


13 Jesus is taken down from the cross

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

In love he descended from heaven to earth
and humbly in Mary, was carried to birth.
Now lifeless and cold, he descends from his place
and lies in his grief-stricken mother's embrace.

*For the ones who have died, in the hour of my end,
Jesus have mercy, your prayers, Mary, lend.*



14 Jesus is laid in the tomb

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

In a tomb in a garden, his body was laid
and his friends, leaving silently, downcast and dismayed,
could feel only sadness, could see only the end
of their hoped-in redeemer, their master and friend

But, while all seemed hopeless and still as the grave,
something was stirring while he lay in the cave.
The deep and dread caverns of death's darkest night
were dazzled and blinded with a glorious light:
The gates burst wide open, and life flooded in
as Jesus triumphant extinguished death's sting.

O something is stirring alright, even now,
when we're locked in our houses and not allowed out.
Because Easter's not cancelled, it never can be,
when Jesus is risen and holds Hades's key.
So when death looks victorious, and our fears impede,
in our heart we can know 'He is risen indeed!'

But today, on Good Friday, with all of creation
we hope and we wait for that promised salvation.
And we stand at the cross as it towers above,
and we marvel at Jesus's self-giving love.

Almighty Father,
look with mercy on this your family
for which our Lord Jesus Christ was content to be betrayed
and given up into the hands of sinners
and to suffer death upon the cross;
who is alive and glorified with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**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.**