

together



A VOICE FOR CATHOLIC ANGLICANS

HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2026

WE ADORE YOU, O CHRIST, AND WE PRAISE YOU !

With the words above – We adore you, O Christ... – we make the approach to each meditation on the Stations of the Cross during Lent. This year the earthly remains of the Saint Francis of Assisi were brought down from their usual resting place above the altar in the crypt of the Basilica in Assisi, to be venerated 800 years after his death by the Faithful. Pope Leo has declared this year to be an extraordinary Jubilee Year in honour of Francis, a time to return to ways of peace, fraternity, and reconciliation. And given the events of recent weeks in the Middle East, God knows humankind urgently needs to heed such an invitation!

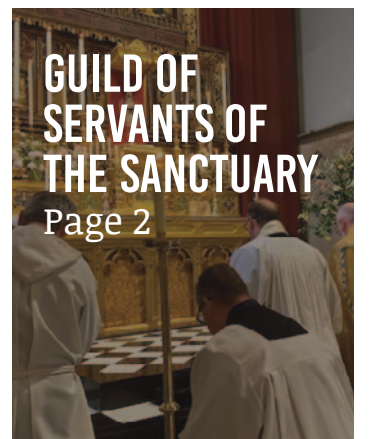
The Stations of the Cross are a particularly Franciscan devotion. Within years of Francis' return from the Holy Land in 1221, the Way of the Cross became a staple of the Franciscan spiritual diet during Lent and Passiontide. Later on, Franciscans became active in the development of the devotion of the Stations of the Cross once they were granted custody of the sacred sites of Jerusalem in 1343; it was then they began to promote the devotion of Christ's death with a passion (excuse the pun). During the 15th and 16th centuries Franciscans built a series of outdoor shrines in Europe to duplicate the Holy Sites of Christ's Passion and Death. The number of stations varied; seven was common, and they were often placed in small buildings along the approach to a church (not unlike those in the garden of the Anglican Shrine at Walsingham). In 1686, in answer to their petition, Pope Innocent XI granted the Franciscans the right to erect stations inside their churches. In 1731 the right was extended to all churches to have Stations of the Cross. Perhaps not surprisingly, the placing of Stations of the Cross in Anglican Churches was accompanied by sharp controversy, and the Royal Commission on Ritualistic Practices in the Church of England, established 1867 (tasked with examining the constitution of the Church in relation to the growing tide of ritualism) took note of the growing number of churches with stations of the cross, and the subsequent Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874 aimed to regulate the use of such practices within our Church. A fool's errand, as we know! But whatever its early history, the Way of the Cross has come to have a wide place in the life of the Church of England, finding its way even into the official Common Worship texts,

though some churches chose to 'delete' the non-Scriptural stations (Veronica, and the three Falls) from the images around their walls.

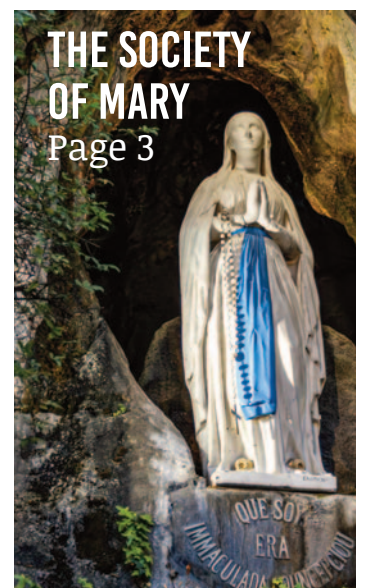
This edition of Together attempts to link the themes of the 15 Stations (if you include the Resurrection) to societies and groupings within the Church of England, some well known, others not quite so. After each article, it will also provide a sort of template to 'walk the Stations' in our own homes, with prayers and meditations provided. I suppose they might even be used in church as a 'Liturgy of the Word' at a Passiontide Mass.



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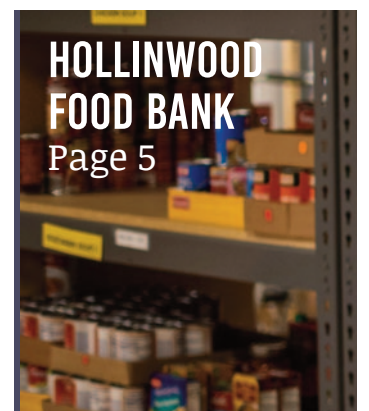
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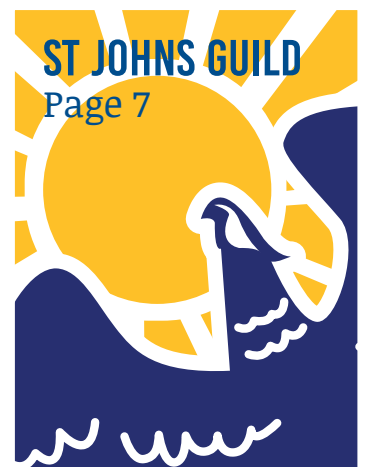
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The First Station of the Cross – Jesus is condemned by Pilate

It is easy to stand in judgement over Pilate who is standing in judgement over Jesus. A weak man. Typical politician. Passing the buck. He even uses the trick of being seen to wash his hands physically, as he washes his hands of this man's destiny. Take him yourself and crucify him. But we who stand in judgement over Pilate, ourselves deserve judgement. Of course we wouldn't have done what Pilate did, but do we stand up for what we know to be the truth, or what our faith requires? Isn't it easier to keep quiet? Not rock the boat? Or speak about 'people like them' or 'him or her'? We distance ourselves. Insulate ourselves.

The Nazi defence – I was simply doing my job...
O Jesus, speak words of compassion to us.
Righteousness itself, you could condemn. But be rather our Saviour and the lover of our souls.
Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

Were you there when Pilate washed his hands?
Were you there when Pilate washed his hands?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when Pilate washed his hands?



The Second Station of the Cross – Jesus takes up his cross

There is an old hymn entitled 'Keep Thou my way O Lord' and in the third verse these words:

*"Keep thou my all, O Lord hide my life in thine
O let thy sacred light over my pathway shine
Kept by thy tender care, gladly the Cross I'll bear
Hear thou and grant my prayer, hide my life in thine"*



I wonder how often any of us gladly embrace the Cross, for it inevitably signifies challenges, pain and suffering for this was the very heart of the pilgrimage journey that Jesus made to Calvary. But we will remember very shortly that Jesus was aided by the help of Simon who was pulled out of the crowd, most probably a somewhat reluctant volunteer.



Serving at the altar and assisting a priest is not just about glamour and prestige for it involves every aspect of service from cleaning the chalices to putting the books out and helping to choreograph the fine details of the liturgy to make sure everything goes correctly. And this is the Cross that we all bear as members of the GSS; but as Simon was touched by the humility of Christ and by the close proximity that he entered on that journey to Calvary so this is the story of so many of our sisters and brothers here at GSS. The objects of GSS are three fold



1. To raise the spiritual tone of altar servers
2. To promote a conscientious performance of the duties of altar servers
3. To encourage more frequent attendance at the Holy Eucharist.

Full membership is available to all lay members of the Church but Associate Membership is offered to Bishops, Priests and Deacons

A warm invitation is extended to all our members to come together on Saturday 11th April for our Annual Eastertide Festival at Saint Stephens Church Gloucester Road, beginning at 12 noon with our Sung Mass followed by lunch, AGM, Guild Office and Benediction. Please do

come and join us as we celebrate not only the resurrection of Christ but the duties, responsibilities, joys and pleasures of being a member of the Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary.

Looking ahead to other exciting events in the calendar there is our Autumn Festival in October, the date and venue is still to be confirmed, and our Epiphany Tide Festival in early January. Alternatively make contact with Michael Andrews our Secretary General at gss.secretarygeneral@gmail.com or telephone us on 07498201137

If you are not a member already then why not? Make contact with us at guildofservantsofthesanctuary.co.uk where you will find information on joining and what we believe and do in our service of God and his people.

The Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary



None of us passes through this Vale of Tears without bearing in some way the weight of a cross, some burden we have to bear within ourselves, or borne because of love for another. Jesus bears this weight for love of us, carries it in our place. In human terms it is fearful to bear the method of our own extinction, as Jesus did. But bear it he does. And because he has carried this symbol and means of human destruction, nothing that can come our way is so awful, for the weight has already been borne for us. Lean on me.

Lord, in the tragedies and hurts of this life, help us learn to confide in you and trust that you, who shared our life and death, will bear the weight and the pain that should be ours alone.
Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

Were you there when he bore the cross's weight?
Were you there when he bore the cross's weight?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when he bore the cross's weight?



The Third Station of the Cross – Jesus falls for the first time



**RICHBOROUGH
CHRISM MASSES
2026**

Guildford Cathedral — 28th March
Chelmsford Cathedral — 30th March
Rochester Cathedral — 31st March
St Mary's, Walsingham — 1st April

Each Mass begins at 12 noon

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Clergy to register at <https://tinyurl.com/583kax46> 



Under the weight of the Cross, Jesus falls. He bears, of course, not just a heavy frame of wood but the weight of the sin of the world. No wonder he falls. But what if the weight of my personal sin had not been there? Would that have made the difference between simply staggering, with the ability to go on, and this, the crushing fall he knew on hard earth and stone. I don't sin much, I console myself, though that's a lie in itself. May I have insight to see the enormity of my wrong-doing, and the grace to change, for yes, without the weight of my sin, he might not have fallen. To redeem me, a sinner, he will lay down his life as a grain of wheat buried in the earth.

O Jesus, you so love me that you bore the weight of my frailty and callousness. May your Precious Blood cleanse me of the sin that clings so easily and tight. Wash me thoroughly and make me yours, and yours alone. Make me drink of your living water. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

**Were you there when he stumbled to the ground?
Were you there when he stumbled to the ground?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.
Were you there when he stumbled to the ground?**



The Fourth Station of the Cross – Jesus meets his Mother

People might have wondered why Mary was here on the way to the Place of the Skull. We know of Simeon's prophecy that a sword would pierce her soul because her Son was a sign of contradiction but the crowds who had hailed the Saviour a few days before on Palm Sunday now only wanted to cry out, 'Crucify Him.' Few wanted to be associated with Him now. What good could she possibly do? It was too late to change His fate.

Fr Rowlands and I made our annual pilgrimage to Lourdes ready for 11th February to celebrate the anniversary of the first apparition to St Bernadette and to attend the conference of pilgrimage directors. Many wonder why there are present two priests from the Church of England. But we have a story to tell of Catholic life being lived out here in our churches and in our Society. People here stand with Mary wanting to be close to her Son, partakers in His Body from her womb.

Part of the reason that we're at the grotto and in those basilicas in unbelievably damp February weather is so we can keep the conversations going ready for our 2027 Pilgrimage, 16th – 20th August.

And part of the reason we're there (and it's not always straightforward) is to further our ecumenical work: Mary wants all Christians to be united in the worship of her Son. That damp, muddy grotto – sometimes with the crowds looking on wandering what on earth she was doing – cannot always have been an easy place for St Bernadette as she responded to what the Lady told her.

Mary is courageous and sometimes pretty lonely in her following of Christ, hence on the Cross He asks St John to look after her in a new type of relationship. We continue in this sometimes tricky place as Catholics in the Church of England because we know from our own experience that this is the only way some people like us will know anything of the joy of the Catholic Faith and of Catholic Life. May our Lady pray for us and all who find themselves in uncomfortable places in their following of our Crucified Lord. May all the Lord's followers be one.

**The Society of Mary
Fr Simon Morris**



Given she was at the foot of his Cross later, it is reasonable to assume she made the journey to Calvary as near to her Son as she might get. From the first moment of God's intervention in her life, God did not make it easy for Mary. Saints are not preserved from pain, and here the sword prophesied by Simeon hangs over her. It must have been impossibly hard for Mary to see her Son like this, but there was no going back on her first 'yes', her 'fiat' to God. Perhaps like Abram of old at Isaac's place of sacrifice, here she did his will with wild distress of heart. But her presence, as Son and Mother met, must have given the Son some hope that love was not dead. She was with him. And we too need that sort of reassurance, that God's love for us is undying, and his hope life-giving.

Hail Mary, full of sorrows, the Crucified is with thee. Most afflicted art thou amongst women, and crucified for our sake is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of Sorrows, pray for us sinners who have crucified thy Son, now and in the hour of our death. Amen.
Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

**Were you there when he met his Mother's gaze?
Were you there when he met his Mother's gaze?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.
Were you there when he met his Mother's gaze?**



The Fifth Station of the Cross – Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus

Jesus needs help. His falling along the way is delaying everything. The soldiers knew they had to get this execution over and done with; those were their orders. So enter Simon. Who is he? A foreigner, Jewish perhaps, who knows? He just happens to be caught up in the drama and he helps Jesus to carry his Cross. All we know is that he came from Cyrene. We will not hear from him again. What happened to him, we do not know. Yet his part is crucial. And what we do know is that he helped Jesus in this hour of need. He did what he could. Did he really want to associate himself with Him? Did he even know Jesus? But he did do his bit and helped the Lord along the way – the road to his death, but also to our salvation.

The Number One Trust exists to help the Church, to do its best to help where and when necessary, and to make a difference through the various projects it supports – but its resources are not limitless, in fact the opposite. There is nowhere near so much financial assistance available as some might think. Why so? The Trust is a collection of different funds, put together under one ‘umbrella’ with the same intention, to help “further Catholic Faith and Practice within the Church of England.” It’s not different from many of our other Catholic Societies – far too many in my opinion! However, many of funds are restricted or designated for particular purposes. Parishes deposited their funds with the Trust deliberately, so that the

money can be kept safe for particular purposes set down, and not to be used for general expenditure of parochial life. The Trustees have an obligation to oversee how this money is spent, and not to be used to simply pay the bills which are for ever increasing, like utilities or to cover Common Fund . This is often misunderstood, as some of the monies held for a while date back to previous office holders, no longer around in that Parish. So currently the present congregation do not always understand how their money can or cannot be spent. Each of these accounts form part of the whole and have to be audited each year. It involves a lot of work in preparation for the inspection. But it means that in the General Account, known as the 100 Fund (from which grants can be made), there is not nearly so much for general distribution, as the funds of the Trust overall would suggest.

All applications are considered carefully on their merits; preference is given to what we might call ‘people projects’ but increasingly parishes need help with some of the basic necessities, ie the roof, the floor, the heating , health and safety, as well as building projects and the like. The list goes on and inflation has taken its toll. So, whereas the Trust does try to help according to greatest need, it is not often that it can provide sufficient sums to cover all projects. This can often lead to disappointment. Frequently applications have to be turned down

altogether. There is no way this can be avoided. However, there is also the general rule that grants will only be made to ‘Society’ parishes, as we now call them, with ‘Society’ priests. This is in line with the furtherance of the Catholic cause. The Trust also holds a number of properties, from which it generates income. In recent years many of these properties required renovation and much work still needs to be undertaken. So it is ongoing, money having to be spent first in order to bring about an increased return by way of rental income. And after Covid, the Trust helped many parishes get back on their feet to recovery, and the Trust went over its annual budget and dipped into reserves quite deliberately. There is now the concerted effort to ‘correct’ that by making sure we do not go over budget and to put back the investments held previously. The Trust is proud of its work and wants to help wherever it can and is appropriate. It supports ordinands on placement, parish workers/nurses, the Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage , Pusey House, St Stephen’s House, The College of the Resurrection , Glastonbury Pilgrimage , clergy retreats and conferences, and much else. Not always as much as some would like, but with the intention of caring for the church and fostering its life.

The Number 1 Trust
The Revd Prebendary David Houlding
www.number1trustfund.org.uk

Cruel luck for Simon, coming in from the countryside for the Festival, that he should be pulled from the crowd to help a convict. Such contact with a ‘contaminated man’ would mean he could not celebrate the Passover. But even so, he has no choice but to help the man bear the cross, the instrument of his death. But instead of being ‘lessened’ by the chore, Simon finds himself blessed to be helping Christ save the world, and tradition says he and his family are among the first to become followers of the Crucified and Risen One.

Too often in life we find ourselves railing against having to help again and again. Why me? Not her (or him) again? Were we to see the face of Christ in the face of those in need, would that change things? It should. His is the face that confronts us over and over again. To accept, as Simon did, would make us realise how blessed we are, and blessed enough to give and not to count the cost. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

*Were you there when Simon shared the load?
 Were you there when Simon shared the load?
 Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
 Were you there when Simon shared the load?*





The Sixth Station of the Cross - Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

It is a hot humid day in Jerusalem. The procession of those to be crucified is underway. More people than usual are watching because Jesus, the man who cured the sick, gave the blind their sight and restored hearing to the deaf, is part of it. Veronica catches sight of Jesus and pushes herself to the front. Somehow, she halts the procession, gazes at Jesus and wipes his face covered in blood and sweat. Veronica brings human comfort to a man about to die. She tries to ease his pain but as soon as she does, Jesus is immediately pushed forwards, and he falls for a second time.

A Foodbank can sometimes be a noisy, frantic environment in which to be. How many food parcels are there to be picked? How many collections and deliveries to be made? Are there enough volunteers to cope with the demand?

On the surface, you can be quite clinical about those who have been referred for a food parcel. The voucher is for an individual,

a couple, a small family of four, a larger family of six or, potentially, a family of ten. The main causes for the referral can be: benefit reduction, debt, insecurely housed, homeless, poor health and the salary doesn't stretch enough for food having paid the bills. If I knew you well, I might ask to borrow £20. I doubt I would ask you for food.

Then comes the more human side of enquiry. We know the reason why this person/this family needs a food parcel, but who are they, where do they live, what does their home look like? It is at this point that I believe we become a Veronica. We see someone in crisis, someone struggling and, for a moment, we are able to offer comfort and alleviate the burden of their suffering – they have no food.

The 'pick list' of food to be put in the parcel is matter of fact. If you are experienced in this, it is straightforward and for some, you know the list so well, you can pick without the list. I choose to imagine who I am picking for and

offer what I am doing as a prayer. I want to break through the crowd and reach out to the person in need.

Relying on donations means staple items can be from any supermarket. When I pick, I imagine what would be in the kitchen cupboard and, therefore, choose the same brand for soup or beans for example. When it comes to a halal parcel, I search for cooking oil, lentils and spices. In the 'treats' section, I try to imagine what a 'luxury' might look like and would it make someone feel wholesome again.

When the parcel is packed and out for delivery, my hope is that through me, the recipient has felt the tenderness of Veronica when it seems there is no hope. My final prayer is that, unknowingly, their face has been touched by God.

*Father Tom Davis SSC
Parish Priest of Hollinwood and Limeside*

Without scriptural warrant, nonetheless we hope it may be true, that a woman who saw Jesus covered in blood and sweat should reach out to him, to wipe his face, and assure him of simple but heartfelt human compassion. And the result? The true image of his face impressed for ever on the cloth. Of course, 'the true image' is what this station is about. Veronica in Greek means 'the true image' – the image of the creator that each one of us bears, an image that cannot be obliterated even by sin. Veronica reveals what a human – and godly – response should be in the face of such suffering – to intervene and to do what good we may, whatever the circumstance. Not to pass by like pharisee, priest, or lawyer. May Veronica's example,

and her intercession, make us to be more like a human being should be, true images of the God of love who walks the Calvary Way for you and me.

Lord Jesus, you came to our aid as God, yet in your humanity you had need of our help on this dreadful journey. Like Veronica, may we never stand back from doing the good we may.
Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

*Were you there when she offered him her love?
Were you there when she offered him her love?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble.*



The Seventh Station of the Cross - Jesus Falls a Second Time

As we age, no longer do we ‘stumble’ but rather medics speak of us ‘having falls’, and many of them we find it hard to explain. Our legs just give way or whatever. And the same is true of our spiritual life – there are falls from grace. Far from being an almost irrelevant loss of our footing on this earthly pilgrimage, they are important to address, correct, safeguard against. In the home one frequent cause is the layering of rugs, where corners ride up to trip up the unwary, another the clutter of too much furniture. And we are advised to remove them for safety’s sake. So too with our spiritual life. One recognised, we need to address not just the consequences but the cause of sin – to remove ourselves from the orbit of a person or the place and context of our sinning. At this Station we see the Sinless One fall under the weight of the Cross, despite Simon’s help. We sinful ones need to learn from him to raise ourselves again, and move onward – not ignorant of, but fully conversant with the sin that brings us low. And rely not on our own resources but his.

O Lord Jesus, who offered hope and forgave the sinner, who raised even the dead, raise us up from the death of sin to rejoice in the fulness of life you offer all who truly turn to you. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

Were you there when he fell that second time?
Were you there when he fell that second time?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when he fell that second time?





THE SEE OF BEVERLEY



THE SEE OF BEVERLEY Chrism Masses 2026

22nd March	29th March	30th March	31st March
St Peter & St Leonard Horbury Wakefield 6:00pm	St Aidan's Grangetown Sunderland 6:00pm	Priory Church of Our Lady & St Cuthbert Worksop 12:00pm	St Mary, St Denys & St George Cathedral Manchester 11:30am



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



The Society
under the patronage of Saint Wilfrid and Saint Hilda



THE SEE OF BEVERLEY

Save the Date

18 July 2026



#BishBevFest

The Eighth Station of the Cross - The Women of Jerusalem

'Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee,'

'We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you'. Those familiar, solemn ritual-words, said by each pilgrim at every Station of the Cross, echo deeply in my mind at this time of the year. The special station for the Saint John's Guild is the 8th Station. Here Jesus meets the weeping women of Jerusalem. He pauses with the reluctant permission of brutal military guards. He sees the women of Jerusalem sobbing over his pain and torment. He is still in agony from the beating and scourging of his naked back with a 'cat-o-nine-tails' laced with metal barbs, so as to



tear and strip the very flesh from his body. Brutal torturers now set about making him carry a heavy splinter-ridden, wooden cross on his bloody shoulder.

But wait; he stops, not to wallow in self-pity, but to comfort those mourning at his suffering! They know that Jesus is already a



'dead man walking'. Despite his last steps being in unbelievable agony, he stops and consoles the women, saying "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children". Jesus is showing his compassion on those weeping at the side of the road, for they are in grief, even before his death. While their hearts go out to him in sorrow, he takes the time to bless them with those words of comfort. There was no miraculous escape from this certain torturous death. Many cancer sufferers have felt this indomitable end like we see in this scene. Jesus shows concern for others even while he is carrying his instrument of death. His comfort stretches to all who suffer disability and painful illness, including the blind.

Bearing in mind how Jesus responded to need of others rather than his own, the Saint John's Guild Trustees reach out to those who grieve and struggle with sight impairment. The sponsored Annual Pilgrimage to The Shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham in October each year, comes to my mind. I recall our corporate walk with the group of sight impaired pilgrims and their companions, as they humbly process with me around the

Walsingham Stations in those ever so beautifully kept gardens.



Just as Jesus urged the women to weep not for him, but for their future, we encourage those with this sensory incapacity to look to the future glory and not to their immediate disability. It highlights that in our dire circumstances, even when our functions may fail, and our body or our sight give way, we walk within the love of Christ. We walk with him along the Via Dolorosa, the Way of Sorrows, the Pathway to the Cross and to Victory. But for those helped each year by the Guild's generous grants and assistance, they can see clearly the glory of the Cross. So, this 8th Station of the Cross reminds believers to look beyond their own suffering and to recognize the need for caring for others.



I am continually reminding myself that my personal blindness may not be physical, like theirs, but just the simple inability to see God at times of my busy life, for 'Tis only the splendour of light hideth Thee,'

Saint John's Guild – Father Brian Regan

These women probably all knew Jesus, his kindness, his courtesy in a society not necessarily congenial to women, his interest in what they thought, his interest in their eternal salvation. And seeing him so abused and on the way to an inevitable death, they weep for him and for their loss. He could simply have accepted their compassion. But even here, overshadowed by his own death, he continues to be concerned for others and their real need. Weep for yourselves and for your children. He wants them to know what he was addressing on this journey to his throne of wood and nails. He wants them to embrace what he is offering them – salvation, full and free,

purchased at the cost of his own life. And like the women, we need to address our need of him, our need of a redeemer. All the self-help advice in the world cannot save us from our sin. Only Jesus can. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

***Were you there when the women wept for him?
Were you there when the women wept for him?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.***

Were you there when the women wept for him?



The Ninth Station of the Cross – Jesus Falls One Final Time

The soldiers must have been frantic. For him to die before the summit of the hill and the ignominy of the cross was unthinkable. Yet from loss of blood, the scourgings, the lack of sleep, the weight he bears, Jesus falls face down

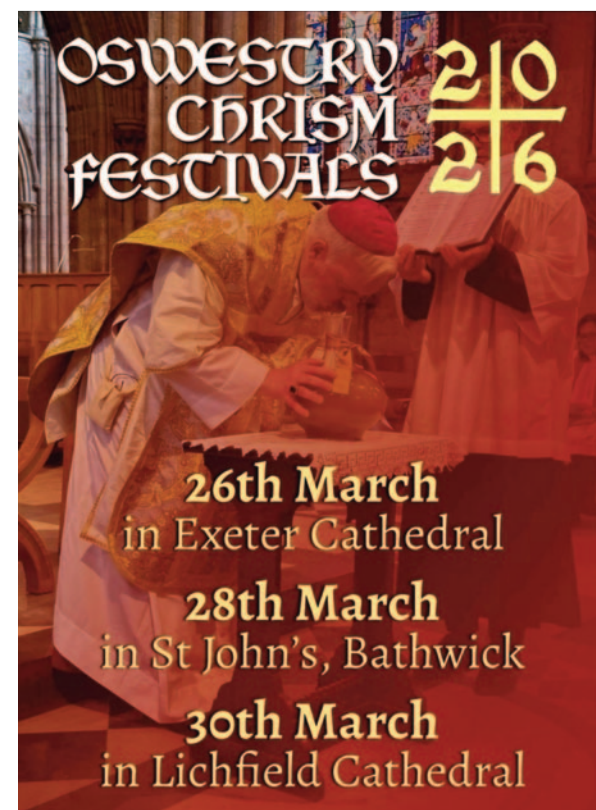


upon the ground. But unlike us who will so often give up through despair or lack of purpose or fear of what change may bring with it, Jesus rises and resumes the pilgrimage he has undertaken. Learn from me, for I am gentle in heart, and you will find rest for your souls ... Not my will, Father, but yours be done. And the journey recommences to the altar of sacrifice that waits above him. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us,

*Were you there when he struck the ground again?
Were you there when he struck the ground again?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.*

Were you there when he struck the ground again?



The Tenth Station – Jesus Is Stripped of His Garments

“He is to be stripped of everything of his own that he is wearing and clothed in what belongs to the monastery.”

So we read in the rite of profession according to the Rule of Saint Benedict, Chapter 58. (RB 1980, 58:26)

In one last act of humiliation, Jesus is stripped of his clothes. One final indignity before the reality of crucifixion. It is not something that we expect will ever happen to us. We would not voluntarily make ourselves so vulnerable. Or would we?

This is exactly what we are asked to do by Saint Benedict when we make our profession in Community – unlike Jesus, however, we are allowed to keep our modesty! When we seek to bind our life to that of the Community, we are to remove all outward signs of individuality and put on the habit. We give away all that is personal to us, we give ourselves – body and soul – to the Community which will clothe, feed and house us for life. We take a leap of faith, encouraged by him who has given everything for us, and we clothe ourselves in Christ. As Saint Paul says, *“Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh”* (Romans 13:14).

In doing this, the monk or nun, brother or sister, quite literally removes their old life and puts on Christ. This is something which would seem preposterous to any secular 21st Century mind. However, we seek to live a life closer to God, and so we live a life stripped of our “self” and clothed in only what is given to us for our service to God and our brethren. Our vocation is a very personal thing, and not all are called to live a cloistered religious life. Yet in answering the call to follow Jesus, we are all called to remove our old ‘self’ and be

clothed in Christ. It is a daily reminder to us that we are called to lead a life of consecration, attempting to draw ourselves and others closer to God.

Every baptised Christian is clothed in Christ; “You have been clothed with Christ. As many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” This is said to us by the priest at baptism if we are to put on a white garment, that symbol of our casting away of the works of darkness and putting on the armour of light.

“Christian faith is not only a matter of believing that certain things are true, but above all a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is an encounter with the Son of God that gives new

energy to the whole of our existence. When we enter into a personal relationship with him, Christ reveals our true identity and, in friendship with him, our life grows towards complete fulfilment.” (Pope Benedict XVI, World Youth Day message 2011)

Whether we are called to religious profession, to the single consecrated life, or to marriage, our baptism calls us to be clothed in him who was stripped of everything, that we might live a new life in him: freed from sinfulness to live in hope, in service and in love for our brothers and sisters.

The Community of the Holy Cross



Reaching finally the place of his self-offering in the Sacrifice of the Cross, Jesus faces a final indignity as his clothes are stripped from him, and the throw of the dice decides which soldier will get to possess them. There is nothing to hide Jesus from the crowd left. And God is

revealed in helpless splendour. If you, or someone you know, is ‘unmasked’ in the pages of the press, or vilified in some report or other, you can understand what the loss of reputation, of worth in the face of the world, is. Even if later it is all revealed as untruth, it is too late. No smoke without fire, we mutter. But Jesus allows himself to be stripped of all but love. We may surround ourselves with possessions, reputation, stuff. But in the last resort none of this can save us. The only thing that saves is the love of this God-made-man, whose body is here displayed before the world. O Lord Jesus, do not let us take refuge in anything or anyone other than you. You are the lover of our souls, and though you see us

draped in sin and self-interest, you look further than the human eye can see, deep into our souls. And knowing everything about us, still you love us and you will never let us go.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

Were you there when the soldiers stripped his clothes?

Were you there when the soldiers stripped his clothes?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when the soldiers stripped his clothes?

The Eleventh Station – Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross

By the image of the Cure d Ars in the shrine church at Walsingham hangs a small framed prayer drawn by Enid Chadwick and briefly explaining the foundation and



reason for being of The Society of the Holy Cross. Before the prayer and designed around an image of the Cross it states, “Founded in 1855 in the Church of England The Society of the Holy Cross is a worldwide society of priests who seek under a common rule of life: to strengthen and consolidate their own interior lives according to Catholic belief and practice.” There then follows the prayer.

The Society of the Holy Cross (SSC) was founded in London in 1855 by a small group of Anglo-Catholic priests led by Father Charles Lowder. At a time when the Catholic Revival in the Church of England was threatened by persecution and misunderstanding, these priests came together for support, mutual prayer and encouragement. Fr Lowder spelled out the objects of SSC:

“To defend and strengthen the spiritual life of the clergy, to defend the faith of the Church,

and to carry on and aid Mission work both at home and abroad”.

The members of this society, meeting together as they did in prayer and conference, were deeply distressed by the evils existing in the Church, and saw also, in the remedies adopted by St Vincent de Paul, the hope of lessening them.

There are currently over 630 members around the world in parishes, missions, chaplaincies, schools and other areas of pastoral ministry, committed to witnessing to the Cross of Christ by their lives and ministry. Priests of the Society live under a common Rule and meet together in their local SSC Chapters every month or two for prayer, Mass and some kind of study or conversation. Presiding over the Society worldwide is a Master-General who has a special responsibility to ensure an on-going fidelity among the Brethren to the spirit of the Society.

SSC is not a devotional guild, but takes its stance upon a shared vision of :

‘a disciplined priestly life fashioned after a definite spiritual rule.’

It is this Rule of Life which unites the Brethren in their various priestly ministries and lives. They are required to:

‘consider their obligation to the Society as a close spiritual bond...which takes precedence to that of any other voluntary society.’

This obligation includes a commitment to attend local SSC Chapter meetings and annual Regional and Provincial Synods. The life of the Society is experienced primarily through the local Chapter, and attendance at Chapter is of obligation unless prevented by genuine pastoral duties and to hold I each other in prayer and the bond of love.

Priests of the Society can be recognized by the small gold lapel cross that they generally wear. On it is inscribed the motto of the Society - in hoc signo vinces - in this sign, conquer!

Please pray for your Priests and for our Society that we may always remain faithful to our vocation and to the Cross of Christ that God may be glorified in our work.

*The Society of the Holy Cross (SSC) –
by a Brother of the society*



What depths of inhumanity we men and women can plumb! Hammer blows ring out, and iron nails split open the hands and feet of the Jesus as his enemies nail him to the wood of the cross. Would that were the end of it, but daily humanity shows how inhuman we can be. Rape and murder, warfare, greed, deceit, all on an industrial scale. The pain Jesus endured must have been incredible. But hammers do not wield themselves. Always the hammer is wielded by a human hand. And we must choose to use our hands to soothe and care and do good, or inflict pain and harm. Yes, we must choose.

O Lord Jesus, in the course of life we suffer many blows, great or small. We inflict pain in great or small measure too. May your wounded hands help us to bear pain that we cannot avoid. May your compassionate hands hold us back, never to inflict pain. May we choose to walk your way, O Crucified Redeemer.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

*Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble,
tremble.*

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?



The Twelfth Station – Crucified, Jesus Dies for Us

In taking part in the Stations of the Cross, I was taught to make my devotions at the Twelfth Station – the death of Jesus on the cross – on my knees. At All Saints' Church, Blackheath in South-east London where I learnt the Faith, I first did this as a teenage acolyte. It wasn't so difficult then, but now that I am older it is rather more demanding. Of course, it is meant to be demanding, at least for a little while, as we ponder the Lord's three hours' of "griefs and torments numberless, and sweat of agony."

Those lines come from Edward Caswall's translation of an older Latin hymn which we know as *My God, I love thee; not / because I hope for heaven thereby*. As a server I found that, if I was to do my job properly as well as enter into the worship of which I was a part, I would do well to learn some hymns by heart. After all, the writers of hymns do want us not just to sing but to digest what they teach us. Learning these hymns over time – or at least snatches of them – has stood me in good stead and the words (at least those from the English Hymnal!) usually come to me easily. And, thinking now of kneeling at the Twelfth Station and gazing on the crucified Christ, I am brought to another hymn which is often sung and which powerfully links what happens at the Eucharist with what happens upon the Cross. It was written by the priest and historian William Bright (1824-1901).

And now, O Father, mindful of the love
That bought us, once for all, on Calvary's tree,
And having with us him that pleads above,
We here present, we here spread forth to thee
That only offering perfect in thine eyes,
The one true, pure, immortal sacrifice.

St Paul, the earliest New Testament witness to the celebration of the Eucharist amongst the first Christians, teaches that "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26). Looking at one of the devotional books which I used as a parish priest (*Steps of Pain, Steps of Hope – Reflections on the Way of the*

Cross by Matthew Dickens), I see that Father Dickens is thinking of the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples. He writes: "Under the forms of bread and wine, he gave them the fullness of himself. Deserted now by all except his Mother and Saint John, Jesus truly became the Lamb of Sacrifice, pouring out his life-blood on the altar of the Cross." And then comes the important link with St Paul's teaching about our



eating of the bread and drinking of the cup "Every time we celebrate the Eucharist, we remember and make present the saving death of Jesus. In this sacred act we are caught up in the self-offering of Jesus to the Father, making of ourselves a living sacrifice to the glory of his name. And we are nourished by his body and his blood, the food of eternal life."

The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament has been engaging in the proclamation of the Lord's death in this manner since its foundation in 1862. It has encouraged the worthy celebration of the Eucharist as part of the Tractarian revival of catholic life and faith in the Anglican Church. It is rooted in the core belief that we must strive earnestly to see Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament and to honour him more in his sacramental presence. If this is your belief too, as you reflect on the Lord's death as you walk with him on the Way of the Cross, why not consider CBS membership? CBS seeks to maintain the historic faith of Anglicans as part of its mission to promote catholic theological teaching, learning and development. You can check all this out at www.confraternity.org.uk.

Looking on the "anointed face" of the crucified Jesus, as William Bright's lovely eucharistic hymn invites us to do, CBS members offer this prayer daily:

Almighty God, look, we pray, on the face of your beloved Son,
and for the sake of his merits, mercifully hear the prayers
which throughout our Confraternity we continually offer to you;
and grant us unity, a true faith, and a life agreeable to your will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament –
The Right Revd Roger Jupp**



His broken body held to the wood of the cross more by love than by nails, when all have fled save those who loved him most, Jesus commends his Mother to the Beloved Disciple, and he to her. Jesus does not wish us to be orphaned by his death, but gives us the maternal care of his own Mother. And having loved his own to the uttermost, he bows his head and dies. The unthinkable, that God in Christ should suffer death, separation from the life which he himself brought into being. But this is the extent of God's love for us. He gives us everything, even the unthinkable, in order that we might be redeemed, so infinitely precious does he regard us. Before such mystery, what can we do but be silent?

O Lord Jesus, your body broken and your blood shed for our redemption, we gaze upon the mystery of your death. 'Were the whole realm of nature mine, / that we an offering far too small. / Love so amazing, so divine, / demands my life, my soul, my all.' Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

Were you there when he bowed his head and died?

Were you there when he bowed his head and died.

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when he bowed his head and died?

The Thirteenth Station – The Body Of Jesus Is Taken Down

Glastonbury is shrouded in legend, yet so little of its past remains. A bit like Walsingham an arch from its eastern end, a few walls, a few buildings. But legend aplenty. Avalon. The graves of King Arthur and Guinevere. A holy thorn bush that flowers at Easter and Christmas, grafted from the staff of Joseph of Arimathea. And it is Joseph of Arimathea that connects the present day with the journey of the Lord to Golgotha, for he is reputed to be related to the Lord and legend says he brought the child Jesus to Glastonbury. And did those feet in ancient times / Walk upon England's mountains green, / And was the holy Lamb of God / On England's pleasant pastures seen? Legend also bequeaths to us Joseph building in

the first century 'The Old Church', the first place of worship in this place.

Whatever truth the legends may bear, the reality is that Glastonbury over the last 100 years has been a place of pilgrimages for West Country (and other) Anglicans, and many of us have memories of the 1970s and 1980s with great processions into the nave of the Abbey Church, watching and worshipping crowds a dozen people thick in places, all gathering for Evensong, after the earlier Pilgrim Mass and a trip to the George and the Crown or other hostelries for lunch, thuribles filling the air with scented smoke, and banners unfurled, and copes held wide open by acolytes. 5000 to 8000

could be gathered in this ancient place for a holy day of praise and fellowship

Perhaps not quite so spectacular these days, nonetheless the pilgrimage continues, and pilgrims converge from London, the Midlands, and the West Country still for the Mass and a Sermon, and a procession with the Most Holy Sacrament leading into the Abbey for a Meditation and Benediction. The older June date has recently given way to a September fixture due to the Abbey's Trustees' busy schedule at the site, and this year the pilgrimage takes place on Saturday 5th September at 12.00 noon.

A Glastonbury Pilgrim



Pilate is shocked that Jesus has died so soon; and only after making sure that he is truly dead, does the governor accede to the request of Joseph of Arimathea to take the body and dispose of it. And so the iron nails are removed from hands and feet, and Jesus' body brought down to lie in the lap of his blessed Mother. As once at his birth she cradled the body of the infant Christ, so now in death he lies once more in Mary's arms. Before his conception, Mary trusted God. Here trust must have been stretched beyond the uttermost. How could there yet be hope with her child dead? But as Mary's response at the Annunciation is her 'fiat' – her 'let it be' – so even now as she holds the body of God's Son and hers, 'let it be' must suffice. And the body once wrapped in swaddling clothes is now wrapped in the shroud of death, and taken from her for his hurried burial.

O Lord Jesus Christ, comfort us as we entrust to you the souls of our loved ones, sometimes taken in old age, but sometimes taken all too young and in tragic circumstances. May Mary's 'let it be' be a comfort to us too, her unswerving faith an example for our own.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

And may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.

Were you there when they brought his body down?

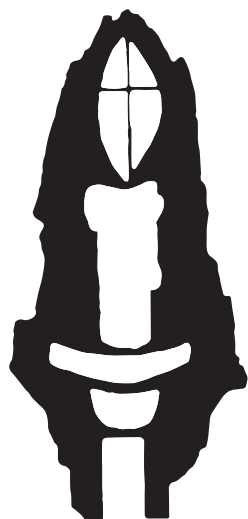
Were you there when they brought his body down?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they brought his body down.

The Fourteenth Station – Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb

The 14th Station of the Cross at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham – “Jesus is laid in the tomb”—is depicted by a rock-hewn grave with a stone rolled away, symbolising both Christ’s death and resurrection. It also reminds us of human mortality, while pointing to everlasting life and our final resurrection through Christ’s victory over death. Fittingly, nearby, and familiar to pilgrims, stands the octagonal Chantry Chapel of St Michael and the Holy Souls, belonging to the Guild of All Souls.



Three laymen of St James Hatcham founded the Guild in 1873, then appointed their parish priest, Fr Arthur Tooth, as its first President. Its purpose was to promote prayer for the dead and ensure proper funeral rites and burial furnishings – especially for the poor – at a time when burials often lacked due reverence. With the current rise of unattended, direct cremations, many see a return to those earlier conditions and a renewed need for the Guild’s witness. Over 150 years on, The Guild of All Souls remains a Catholic society within the Church of England, its new President, the Ven. Luke Miller, having succeeding Bishop Norman Banks after 12 years’ faithful service. Its founders’ work continues – of praying for the dying and the departed and promoting the doctrines of the Communion of Saints and the Resurrection of the Dead. Mass is normally celebrated daily in the Chantry Chapel, with names of all departed members printed on the Chantry List and

prayed for on the anniversaries of their death.

Membership is open to all who support the Guild’s aims. The Annual Intercession Paper lists members who have died in the past 15 years and provides two sets of weekly prayers; members commit to pray for those named in each appropriate week and are encouraged to attend an All Souls’ Day Requiem. After their own death, they, too, will be prayed for in turn. Parishes with a Guild branch and individual priest members are asked to celebrate a monthly Requiem for Guild members. Members are also urged to promote restoration the scriptural rite of anointing the sick and reservation of the Blessed Sacrament for the sick and dying. Since the early 21st century, these aims have enlarged into practical support for those having pastoral care of the sick, dying and bereaved.

Since 2013 the Guild has held a day conference at Walsingham – open to clergy and laity of all denominations – and aiming to equip them spiritually and pastorally. This year’s event on 11 June: “Living Well with Dementia,” features three speakers addressing spiritual and pastoral care for people with dementia and their carers. Last year’s theme was “Christians and Assisted Dying.” Past conferences have included ministry to bereaved children and young people; reclaiming the Christian funeral;

pastoral care after suicide, trauma or sudden death; funeral liturgies; pastoral care of the dying and terminally ill and the Church’s ministry of healing. Similar conferences have been held in Doncaster for those further north.

The Guild’s publications are also key to this ministry and include:

- (1) 26 different prayer cards for giving to the sick or bereaved;
- (2) A simple booklet, “Prayers for those who sit with the dying,” for parish priests, hospice chaplains or anyone who finds themselves sitting alongside a loved one in the last days or hours of their earthly life;
- (3) “Upon my death,” a booklet to help people plan and record funeral wishes; and
- (4) The website (www.guildofallsouls.org.uk) which offers many additional resources, including links to bereavement charities. Here you can find further information about the Guild’s work and details about joining.

The Guild of All Souls – Mrs Anne Gray



Joseph of Arimathea comes into the light at last. A follower of Jesus, but secretly because he was afraid of his status and standing, Joseph asks Pilate for the body. And with Nicodemus, another follower of the Lord under cover of darkness, he takes the body to a borrowed tomb. It is an extreme event – murder and death – that brings these two men from their place of cover to a place where they are named for all time in history. And the body is laid in the tomb. For them, it must have seemed an ending. But for the Lord it was but a semi-colon rather than a full stop. The tomb is a resting place for his body as he, the Lord of Life, ‘hallows hell’ (according to an ancient tradition), bringing Adam and Eve and the dead with him up to new and glorious life, And the tomb will be empty and the clutch

of death defeated for all those who with faith turn to Jesus. But for now, all is silent as a great rock seals the entrance to a stone-cold tomb.

O Lord Jesus, teach me to fear the tomb as little as my bed, for with you I am safe now and forever.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

Were you there when they sealed the stone-cold tomb?

Were you there when they sealed the stone-cold tomb?

Oh, sometimes it cause me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they sealed the stone-cold tomb?

together contact details

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