

JUST STATIONS OF THE CROSS



A JOURNEY THROUGH INJUSTICE

FROM **SOUTH CARDIFF** MINISTRY AREA

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JUST STATIONS OF THE CROSS

These Stations of the Cross are part of a series of resources from South Cardiff Ministry Area exploring injustice in the world, and our response as the Church, as we seek God's Kingdom of Justice, Love and Peace. The following pages, whilst able to stand alone, are further informed and enriched by some of the other resources we offer on our website.

They are offered in a non prescriptive way which means we hope you feel free to use them in a way that is most useful to you. They can be accompanied by relevant Scripture Readings, further prayer, traditional prayers, or even discussion, and could be accompanied by the usual liturgical responses—for example at the arrival of each Station it is customary to say, “We adore you, O Christ and we bless you, **because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.**” Alternatively, they may be used for individual reflection.

The poetic reflections which accompany each Station are intended to provoke a reaction as they intertwine and confuse the imagined experience of Christ with that of someone else. We hope they prove of some use to you as we seek a JUST LENT.

INJUSTICE
ANYWHERE
IS A THREAT TO
JUSTICE
EVERYWHERE



The First Station

Jesus is condemned to death

It's a kangaroo court
with a weak judge
bowing to the tabloid press
and the fear of unkind headlines.
He moves quickly from the scene,
takes a back entrance to avoid the flash bulbs,
but not before a few quick beatings are ordered
administered by the bad cop
as the good cop looks on,
does nothing.
It was a 'fait accompli'
which was the only French he knew
apart from Liberté.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those who are wrongly convicted of a crime,
for those victims of crime and their families
who are left with no answer,
for those treated badly by governments and authorities
throughout the world,
for victims of miscarriages of justice everywhere.



The Second Station

Jesus receives his cross

The burden almost grounds him,
loads him like a labourer
run down by the long hours
and the fear of not getting paid.
This path he took some time ago now
is a dangerous occupation.
The foreman watches on,
watches his own back too
in case the fat cat makes an appearance,
and whips them both.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those who work long hours on low pay in dangerous
and unsafe environments,
for the poorly paid workers whilst others get rich from their labours,
for those who work in sweat shops to fill our shelves
with goods too good to resist
for those whose rights as workers are overlooked or threatened.



The Third Station

Jesus falls the first time

The first fall was the most difficult.
Every other time after that
it would become easier.
By then he would have already tasted the dust,
felt the embarrassment,
even heard a few faint cheers
of those who liked this kind of thing.
Yes, this was the most difficult fall.
After that,
each fall became easier.
Just a little deeper.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those whose childhood experience has limited their options,
for those who have fallen into a crime as a way of life,
for those drawn into criminal activity because of a hopeless situation,
for vulnerable children and young people.



The Fourth Station

Jesus meets his mother

He thought his mother had died some time ago,
and now, from the clean sheets,
he emerged as skin and bone,
thought he saw a vision.
Eighty winters seemed to have passed,
and still he cried for Mam.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those who are ill and elderly with no family or friends,
for those who work in social care, often poorly paid,
for those unable to receive the care they need from
an over pressured and under invested service.
for those in power who have to make difficult decisions
in the face of an ageing population.



The Fifth Station

Simone of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross

He stood out in the crowd
like a sore thumb
with a heritage wiped away
by this foreign land
speaking a narrative that made no sense to him,
like a lost language,
like it didn't matter,
'Black history' all but gone,
white-washed and washed out.
He tried to shield his children from the reality of life
but still told them to watch their back
and not go out late at night.
'They kill black kids around here,' he said.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for an end to racism of any kind,
for young people of colour growing up in our country today,
for an inclusive narrative which values the contribution
of all in our country,
for an honest appraisal of all our institutions
that they will be free of all discrimination.



The Sixth Station

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

She bathed his body whilst he slept in an induced coma,
a sleep which helped him breathe,
a sleep that seemed too comfortable to wake from.
She breathed words over him.
She was sure he didn't hear,
but they say the hearing was the last to go.
As she nursed the one who seemed to hang
between
life
and
death,
no other words are heard.
A few feet away stood a few others,
watching,
hoping for a release of some kind,
a final breath
or a first.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those who work in the nursing and caring profession,
for all who care for a loved one at home,
for young carers of parents or older members of the family,
for those in countries who cannot afford healthcare.



The Seventh Station

Jesus falls a second time

He has now become a repeat offender.
Released from his last fall
and given a chance to get back on his feet
and helped by someone to carry the load,
he becomes a statistic
sent back to the ground
where he belonged
with little chance ahead.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for prisoners and their families, and all who work
in the Prison and Probation service
for all who work in the criminal justice system,
for all victims of crime,
for a society where all can flourish.



The Eighth Station

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

She remembers the night
she heard the news,
ran out to the street,
ten streets away.
And, afterwards,
after the secured scene had been reopened
and her son's blood washed away from the street,
she would spend some time there
each day,
starved of tears.
And every year
she lay a violet flower there,
his secret, favourite colour.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for all our young people, that they will flourish and be safe,
for those involved in providing activities which divert
 young people away from crime,
for parents of children who have died as a result of knife crime,
for governments and politicians, that they will invest
 in the lives of young people.

A photograph of a brick wall with a black sign that reads "NO BALL GAMES" in white capital letters. To the left of the sign is a dark door with a silver handle. A yellow and black object, possibly a lock or a small device, is attached to the door handle. The brick wall is made of red and brown bricks with white mortar.

NO BALL GAMES

The Ninth Station

Jesus falls the third time

It's become a joke now,
so he's sent packing,
with a sentence that never seemed longer,
back to the place where he has learned to feel at home,
to learn a new trade
of being in the dust,
mistaken for dirt,
unable to move on,
wishing his childhood had been different.
Perhaps that was his problem.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for all whose childhood experiences has disadvantaged them,
for those who have the care of children,
for investment in deprived communities,
for justice for the underprivileged.



The Tenth Station

Jesus is stripped of his clothing

He is stripped of his clothing,
his shoes thrown onto a growing mountain of footwear.
Each one had walked a journey
to this place of death.
His clothes are arranged according to value.

His shaved head
shows every shape and bump
which, before all this happened,
remained hidden from the world.

He waits for the sound of water
or the hiss of gas
which will seal his fate.

He starts to die,
almost there and then,
but there is more to come.
He tries to breathe.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for all victims of racism, genocide and inhumane treatment,
for peace and reconciliation throughout the world
for those whose memories haunt them,
for a true valuing of the dignity of every single human being.



The Eleventh Station

Jesus is nailed to the cross

Nails, like needles,
pierce his skin,
bring some kind of relief
from the pain,
quicken the end.
He makes friends with a shoplifter.
They talk about another world,
like paradise.
but all seems lost.
The drugs kick in.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those dependant on drugs and alcohol,
for those who are homeless and all who work with them,
for those who support people with poor mental health,
for all who seek a better life but find it difficult
or impossible to move on.



The Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the cross

He is out of words
and out of breath.

It is a satisfactory conclusion
for those who wanted to comment on his life,
like he had made some kind of choice
to offend them.

He hears someone call him 'Bender,'
and 'a disgusting piece of filth.'

Then there is darkness.

He is left alone.

He has no words,
no breath.

Here, at this station,

we stay awhile to pray...

for those who experience homophobia of any kind,

and for those who have been beaten, abused or murdered,

for a change to the law in countries where it is

illegal, dangerous or deathly for those who are gay,

for all who experience discrimination because of

their sexuality or gender,

for those who struggle for justice for all.



The Thirteenth Station

Jesus is taken down from the cross

'A child shouldn't die before his mother,
it's not the natural way of things,'
she had heard others say.
But she said nothing then.
Only wondered
how the stones of their home had missed her
and not him
and how this place they called home
had become a place of death and dead children
as bombs exploded overhead,
and spent missiles
became the playground
over which he would never play again.
She wonders, as she holds him,
if they should have fled with the others.
It would have been quite natural.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those who live in countries affected by war and civil unrest,
for all refugees and asylum seekers, displaced by danger and war,
for a compassionate welcome to all who come to
our country seeking refuge,
for children and all who have died as a result of war.



The Fourteenth Station

Jesus is laid in the tomb

She knew that those who live on the street
die younger.
When he left that day
to wander in his own light
with his mad thoughts in his head,
his personality split between two worlds,
perhaps she should have given in
and bought a burial plot then,
like she never expected him to return home.
Instead, now, they borrow a grave.
She hears someone say,
'You did all you could,
you still have your memories.
Remember the good days.'
But she couldn't remember anything,
just the first time she held him
over thirty years ago,
as though it could all just start again.
Like none of this had happened.

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
for those who have been made homeless
for those who struggle with mental health,
for a fair distribution of wealth in our world,
for those who have died whilst homeless.



The Fifteenth Station

Jesus is risen from the dead

When it was his turn,
he stepped across the line,
walked right up to the window.
He looked into her eyes,
and wondered if he could trust her,
if she was the one to break the mould.
He tried to mouth and say the words
he had learned along the journey.
He felt the breath moving through his body,
like it was his first breath
in a new world,
in a different land.
'Refugee,' he said.
She pointed to a row of chairs
as she had done a thousand times before.
He joined the growing line of people.
And waited.
'Refugee,' he whispered to himself.
'I am Refugee.'

Here, at this station,
we stay awhile to pray...
For all refugees fleeing danger and death,
 seeking a new place to call home, far from home.
For our own communities and all who welcome refugees,
For governments, and all who make decisions,
 and for peace in the world

JUST LENT

God of Justice, Love and Peace,
you made us in your image,
and gave us the dignity
found only in Christ.

You looked upon us
and saw the face of your Son.

May we respect the dignity of all people
and every living thing
as flowing from you and part of you.

May your Kingdom of Justice come,
through lives obedient to your
loving design for the world.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.