The Way of the Cross

with text from the Scriptures



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INDULGENCES

A *Plenary indulgence* is granted to the faithful, who make the pious exercise of the *Way of the Cross.*

Those who are "impeded" can gain the same indulgence, if they spend at least one half an hour in pious reading and meditation on the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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The Way of the Cross

Compiled and composed from biblical texts

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FOREWORD

The Second Vatican Council in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (art. 13) directs that popular devotions be in some fashion derived from the Sacred Liturgy and lead back to the Liturgy. Since the Liturgy is so Scriptural it would seem that popular devotions should also incorporate Scripture more abundantly into their exercises. This booklet is an attempt to provide some liturgical orientation to the Stations of the Cross. I am most grateful to the members of the Camden Diocesan Liturgical Commission, and especially to William Barnett, S.S.L. and James I. Ronan, S.S.L., for their assistance in the preparation of this booklet.

A "fifteenth station" of the Resurrection is added, since the Passion of Christ is meaningless unless the Resurrection is kept in mind. Passion, Death, and Resurrection is the new Passover, from the death of sin to the life of freedom in love. This "fifteenth station" should be done before the Resurrected Christ in the tabernacle.

A plenary indulgence may be gained by praying the Stations of the Cross. If, for some reasonable cause, the Stations are interrupted, a partial indulgence may be gained for each Station.

The basis for Scripture used is the Confraternity—Douay version.

OPENING PRAYER

(STAND)

Pr.: Jesus came with his disciples to a country place called Gethsemani, and he said to them, "Sit down here, while I go over yonder and pray." Then he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and he began to be saddened and exceedingly troubled. He said to them, "My soul is sad, even unto death. Wait here and watch with me." He went forward a little, and falling prostrate he prayed, saying, "Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; yet not as I will but as you will." (Mt. 26, 36 to 39)

(KNEEL)

All: Almighty and eternal Father, / accept our prayer of thanksgiving for your Beloved Son, our Saviour and Lord. / As we recall his Sacred Passion / send the Spirit of Christ into our hearts, / we beg You, / so that whether we pray or work we might do all in union with Christ our Redeemer. / Amen.

(STAND)

Sing: *(to the tune of Stabat Mater)*
Jesus, Lord, condemned, defiled,
May we too be meek and mild
As we tread your holy Way.

May we feel no bitter hatred,
When we too are persecuted,
Left alone to walk with You.



My people, what have I done to you?
How have I offended you? Answer me.
(FROM THE REPROACHES ON GOOD FRIDAY)

FIRST STATION

Jesus is condemned to death

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: Again the high priest began to ask him, and said to him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" And Jesus said to him, "I am. And you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven." But the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further need have we of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" And they all condemned him as liable to death. (Mark 14, 61 to 64)

All: (KNEEL AND PAUSE) The kings of the earth rise up / and the princes conspire together against the Lord and against his Anointed. / I will proclaim the decree of the Lord; / the Lord said to me: / "You are my Son; this day I have begotten you. / Ask of me and I will give you the nations for an inheritance / and the ends of the earth for your possession." (Psalm 2, 2 & 7-8)

Pr.: Let us pray. All-powerful and eternal God, for proclaiming the truth your Son, Jesus Christ, is condemned to death by crucifixion. Stir up your love in our hearts so that we might be ever faithful to all that You have told us and fear nothing more than the loss of your friendship through sin.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Now the Cross as Jesus bore it,*
Has become for us who share it,
The jeweled Cross of Victory.



Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,
our sufferings that he endured,
while we thought of him as stricken,
as one smitten by God and afflicted.
(IS. 53, 4)

SECOND STATION
Jesus carries his Cross

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: And Pilate said to the Jews, "Behold, your king!" But they cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. And so they took Jesus and led him away, bearing the cross for himself. (John 19, 14 to 17)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: Who would believe what we have heard? / To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? / He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; / there was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him, / no appearance that would attract us to him. / He was rejected and avoided by men, / a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity, / one of those from whom men turn away, / and we held him in no esteem. (Is. 53, 1 to 3)

Pr.: Let us pray. Father in heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ, still carries his Cross in his persecuted brothers and sisters throughout the world. Make us feel the needs of all persons so that we might as readily help them as we would help Jesus himself.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Weakened, prodded, cursed, and fallen,*
His whole Body bruised and swollen,
Jesus tripped and lay in pain.



Save me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked;
preserve me from violent men who plan to trip my feet
— the proud who have hidden a trap for me.

(PS. 139, 5-6a)

THIRD STATION
Jesus falls the first time

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before you. If you were of the world, the world would love what is its own. Because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I have spoken to you: No servant is greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also. (John 15, 18 to 20)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: Why are your clothes red, / and your garments like those of the wine presser? / "The wine press I have trodden alone, / and of my people there was no one with me. / I trod them in my anger, and trampled them down in my wrath; / their blood spurted on my garments and I stained all my clothes. / I looked about, but there was no one to help, / I was appalled that there was no one to lend support; / so my own arm brought about the victory." (Is. 63, 2 to 5)

Pr.: Let us pray. O God, to free us from sin and weakness your Son, Jesus Christ, embraced his fearful passion and crucifixion. Strengthen us in our baptismal resolutions by which we renounced sin and Satan, so that through the passion of this life's sufferings we might rise to a new life of joyful service free of all selfishness.

All: Amen. (STAND)

Sing: *Jesus met his grieving Mother,*
She who made the Lord our Brother;
Now the sword her heart has pierced.



I will put enmity between you and the woman,
between your seed and her seed;
he shall crush your head,
and you shall lie in wait for his heel.
(GEN. 3, 15)

FOURTH STATION

Jesus meets his afflicted mother

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: Now there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus, therefore, saw his mother and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. (John 19, 25 to 27)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: To what can I compare you, O daughter Jerusalem? / What example can I show you for your comfort, virgin daughter Sion? / For great as the sea is your distress; / who can heal you? (Lam. 2, 13)

Pr.: Let us pray. O blessed Lord, at your passion a sword of sorrow pierced the loving heart of your mother as Simeon had foretold. Grant that we who look back on her sorrows with compassion might receive the healing fruits of your sufferings.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Simon stopped in hesitation,*
Not foreseeing his proud station,
Called to bear the Cross of Christ.



Can you drink of the cup
of which I am about to drink? . . .
We can.

(MT. 20, 22b)

FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his Cross

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: And when they had mocked Jesus, they took the purple cloak off and put his own clothes on him, and they led him out to be crucified. Then they forced a certain passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, to take up his cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, a name meaning 'the place of the skull.' (Mk. 15, 20 to 22)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: With a loud voice I cry out to the Lord; / with a loud voice I beseech the Lord. / My complaint I pour out before him; before him I lay bare my distress. / When my spirit is faint within me, you know my path. / In the way along which I walk they have hid a trap for me. / I look to the right to see, but there is no one who pays me heed. / I have lost all means of escape; / there is no one who cares for my life. (Ps. 141, 2 to 5)

Pr.: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, help us to see in the sufferings and shortcomings of our lives a share in Your Cross; strengthen and console us in the belief that we bear all things in union with You, who have taken upon Yourself even our guilt.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Brave but trembling came the woman,*
None but she would flaunt the Roman,
Moved by love beyond her fear.



Though constantly I take my life in my hands,
yet I forget not your law.
(PS. 118, 109)

SIXTH STATION
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: "Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you? Or when did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?" And answering the king will say to them, "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me." (Mt. 25, 37 to 40)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; / he who finds one finds a treasure. / A faithful friend is beyond price, no sum can balance his worth. / A faithful friend is a life-saving remedy, such as he who fears God finds; / for he who fears God behaves accordingly, / and his friend will be like himself. (Sirach 6, 14 to 17)

Pr.: Let us pray. Almighty and ever-loving God, we feel your love and understanding in the consolation and support we receive from one another. Give us, we beg You, the courage and dedication to sacrifice and suffer with those who are in need, the least of your people.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Prostrate on the dust He crumbled,*
Flogged in Body He resembled
All our brothers poor and scorned.



I am like water poured out; all my bones are racked.
My heart has become like wax . . .
My throat is dried up like baked clay.
(PS. 21, 15b-16a)

SEVENTH STATION
Jesus falls the second time

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: It was our weaknesses that he carried, our sufferings that he endured, while we thought of him as stricken, as one struck by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins; upon him was the punishment that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; but the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all. (Is. 53, 4 to 6)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: Though he was harshly treated, / he submitted and opened not his mouth; / like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, / he was silent and uttered no cry. / When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people, / a grave was assigned him among the wicked and a burial place with evildoers, / though he had done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood. (Is. 53, 7 and 9)

Pr.: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, You shared in our weaknesses and accepted our guilt. Grant us the favor of rejoicing over our human weaknesses, so that in all we do, Your strength, dwelling in us, may be shown to all others.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *May our sympathy for Jesus*
Turn to those who here now need us,
May we see Christ bruised in them.



Hear me, you who know justice,
you people who have my teaching at heart:
fear not the reproach of men,
be not dismayed at their revilings.
(IS. 51, 7)

EIGHTH STATION
Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: There was following Jesus a great crowd of people, and among them were some women who were bewailing and lamenting him. Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." (Luke 23, 27-28)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: Come, all you who pass by the way, / look and see whether there is any suffering like my suffering, / suffering with which the Lord has afflicted me on the day of his blazing wrath. / At this I weep, my eyes run with tears: / far from me are all who could console me, / far away are any who might revive me. (Lam. 1, 12 and 16)

Pr.: Let us pray. Beloved Jesus, with tears of pity these women of Jerusalem responded to You, broken, bruised, and beaten, on the road to Calvary. Deepen our faith, we beg You, so that we may see You in our brothers and sisters, bruised by our envy, beaten down by injustice, and broken by our greed and our indifference.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Jesus fell again in weakness,*
Stumbling as we do, to lead us
Through our sorrow and our pain



. . . he shall take away the sins of many,
and win pardon for their offenses.
(IS. 53, 12b)

NINTH STATION

Jesus falls a third time

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: I lie prostrate in the dust; give me life according to your word. I declared my ways, and you answered me; teach me your commands. Make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will meditate on your wondrous deeds. My soul weeps for sorrow; strengthen me with your words. (Ps. 118, 25 to 28)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: The Lord is my light and my salvation; / whom should I fear? / The Lord is my life's refuge; / of whom should I be afraid? / When evildoers come at me to devour my flesh, / my foes and my enemies themselves stumble and fall. / Though an army encamp against me, / my heart will not fear; / though war be waged upon me, even then will I trust. (Ps. 26, 1 to 3)

Pr.: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, You permitted your Son to be weakened, crushed, and profaned so that He might rise from the dead freed from the ravages of sin. Help us to accept our weaknesses and failings as forerunners of our glorious resurrection in union with your Son.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Stripped and jeered by his own nation,*
Jesus stood in desolation,
Giving all He had to give.



All who see me scoff at me . . .
(PS. 21, 8)

TENTH STATION

Jesus is stripped of his clothes

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: They gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall; but when he had tasted it, he would not drink. Then after they had crucified him, they divided his clothes, casting lots, to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet, "They divided my clothes among them, and upon my garments they cast lots." (Mt. 27, 34-35)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: Happy is the man whom God chastises! / Do not reject the punishment of the almighty. / For he wounds, but he binds up; he smites, but his hands give healing. / Insult has broken my heart, and I am weak; / I looked for comforters, and I found none. / Rather they put gall in my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. (Job 5, 17 & 18; Ps. 68, 21 & 22)

Pr.: Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, stripped of everything, You stood exposed to the jeers and contempt of the people whom You loved. Clothe us with genuine love of others, so that nothing we suffer may ever fill our hearts with hatred or bitterness.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Pierced the hands that blessed and cured us,*
Pierced the feet that walked to free us,
Walked the hill of Calvary.



. . .they have pierced my hands and my feet:
I can count all my bones.
They look on and gloat over me: . . .
(PS. 21, 17b-18a)

ELEVENTH STATION
Jesus is nailed to the Cross

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

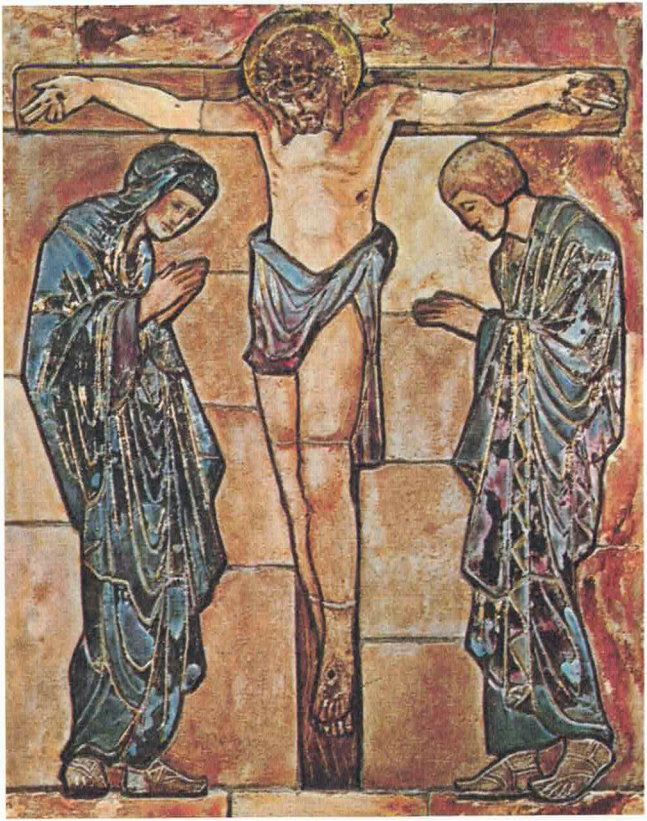
Pr.: When they came to Golgotha, the place called the Skull, they crucified Jesus and the robbers, one on his right and other on his left. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Lk. 23, 33-34; Jn. 19,18)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me, / far from my prayer, far from the words of my cry? / O my God, I cry out by day, and you answer not; / I cry out by night, and there is no relief for me. / All my bones are racked. / My heart has become like wax melting away within my chest. / My throat is dried up like baked clay, my tongue cleaves to my jaws; / they have pierced my hands and my feet; / I can count all my bones. (Ps. 21, 2-3, 15-16, 17b)

Pr.: Let us pray. Lord and Saviour, You have told us that we too must accept crucifixion if we are to accept resurrection with You. Help us to rejoice in the sufferings that come with the fulfillment of our daily duties, seeing in them the royal road of the cross to the resurrection.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Life eternal, death defiant,*
Bowed his head — the world was silent,
Through his death came life anew.



Just as by the disobedience of one man
the many were constituted sinners,
so also by the obedience of the one
the many will be constituted just.
(ROM. 5, 19)

TWELFTH STATION
Jesus dies on the Cross

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the curtain of the temple was torn in the middle. Jesus cried out with a loud voice and said, "It is finished. Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Then, bowing his head, he died. (Lk. 23, 44 to 46; Jn. 19, 30b)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: My people, what have I done to you? / or in what have I offended you? / Answer me. / What more should I have done, and did not do? / I led you out of the land of Egypt, and you prepared a cross for me. / I opened the Red Sea before you, and you opened my side with a lance. / I gave you a royal sceptre, and you have given me a crown of thorns. / With great power I lifted you up, and you have hung me upon a cross. / My people, what have I done to you, or in what have I offended you? / Answer me. (from the Reproaches of Good Friday)

All: 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. Amen. (STAND)

Sing: *Stunned and stricken, Mary, Mother*
In your arms was placed our Brother,
"Full of grace" now filled with grief.



Jesus, when delivered up by the settled purpose
and foreknowledge of God,
you have crucified and slain by the hands of wicked men.
(ACTS 2, 23)

THIRTEENTH STATION

The body of Jesus is taken down from the Cross

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

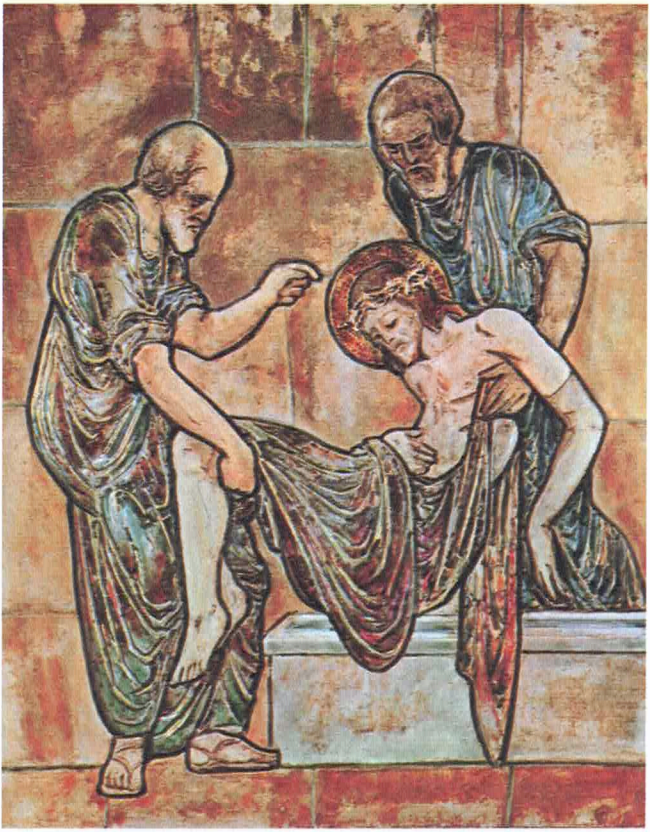
Pr.: When the soldiers came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead so that they did not break his legs, but one of them opened his side with a lance, and immediately there came out blood and water. Joseph of Arimathea, because he was a disciple of Jesus (although a secret one for fear of the Jews), besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave permission. (Jn. 19, 33-34, 38a.)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise from them, / and I will bring you back to your land. / Then you shall know that I am the Lord. / O my people! I will put my spirit in you that you may live. / You shall know then that I am the Lord. / I have promised it, / and I will do it, says the Lord. (Ezechiel 37, 12-14)

Pr.: Let us pray. Beloved Saviour, You returned to the Father all that He had given You, so that He might restore all to You a hundred-fold in the glorious resurrection. Help us, we beg You, to give generously of ourselves in all that we do for You, so that like You we might be made perfect in a new resurrection.

All: Amen.
(STAND)

Sing: *Jesus, Lord, your gift accepted,*
In three days You resurrected,
You did first what we shall do.



My heart is glad and my soul rejoices,
my body, too, abides in confidence;
because you will not abandon my soul to the nether world,
nor will you allow your faithful one to undergo corruption.
(PS. 15, 9-10)

FOURTEENTH STATION
Jesus is laid in the tomb

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.
(GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

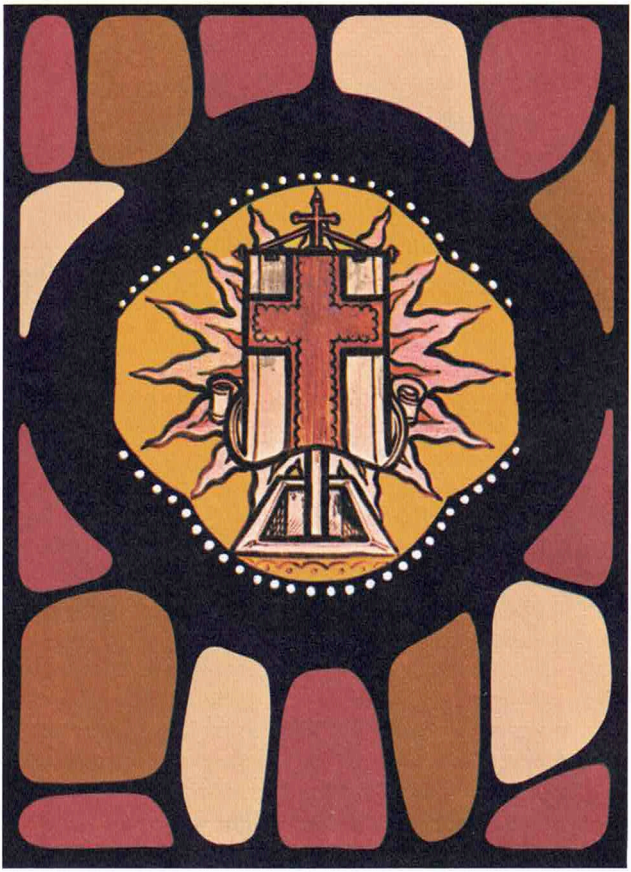
Pr.: Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus, and wrapping it in a clean linen cloth he laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn out of rock. Then he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and departed. (Mt. 27, 59-60)
(KNEEL AND PAUSE)

All: I will praise you, O Lord, for you drew me clear and did not let my enemies rejoice over me. / O Lord, my God, I cried out to you and you healed me. / O Lord, you brought me up from the lower world; / you preserved me from among those going down into the pit. / Sing praise to the Lord, you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. / For his anger lasts but a moment; his good will is for a lifetime. / At nightfall, weeping enters in, but with dawn comes rejoicing. (Ps. 29, 2 to 6)

Pr.: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, on the edge of sadness when all seemed lost, You restored to us the Saviour we thought defeated and conquered. Help us, we beg You, so to empty ourselves of self concern that we might see your hand in every failure and your victory in every defeat. These things we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen. (STAND)

Sing: *Jesus, Risen, be our lover*
In your Food and in our brother.
Lead us home to heaven with You.



Every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him....
"I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the beginning and the end, ...
who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty."
(APOC. 1, 7-8)

CLOSING*

The Resurrection of Jesus

Pr.: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You. (GENUFLECT)

All: Because by your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Pr.: When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices that they might go and anoint Jesus. Very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had just risen, they came to the tomb. They were saying to one another, "Who will roll the stone back from the entrance of the tomb for us?" for it was very large. But looking up they saw that the stone had been rolled back, and upon entering the tomb they were amazed to see a young man sitting at the right side and clothed in a white robe. He said to them, "Do not be terrified. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him." (Mk. 16, 1 to 6) (REMAIN STANDING)

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, / Creator of heaven and earth, / and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, Our Lord, / who was conceived by the / Holy Spirit, / born of the Virgin Mary, / suffered under Pontius Pilate, / was crucified, died, and was buried; / he descended into hell; / on the third day he rose again from the dead; / he ascended into heaven, / and is seated at the right hand of / God the Father almighty; / from there he will come to judge the / living and the dead. / I believe in the Holy Spirit, / the holy catholic Church, / the communion of saints, / the forgiveness of sins, / the resurrection of the body, / and life everlasting. / Amen.

* This closing may be omitted on Good Friday