

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CRAYFORD

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

St Mary of the Crays : Stations V – VIII Reflections and Prayers

V: *Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the Cross:*

“The soldiers compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.” *Mark 15:21*

V/: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You:

R/: Because by Your Cross, You have redeemed the World

Reflect:

Simon of Cyrene comes into the city of Jerusalem on the day of Jesus' death. He finds himself in the crowds along Jesus' pathway to Golgotha and is enlisted to help carry his cross. He does not know Jesus but lends his strength to carrying the heavy weight of the wood.

Prayer:

Jesus, you know what it means to depend on someone and to need their help.
Walk with us.

When my friends need help, teach me to work with them to lighten their load.

Show me how to listen carefully so that I can offer what they need.

We are your global family of many different colours, cultures and religions.

Make us one family united in you.

VI: *Veronica wipes the face of Jesus:*

‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of our family, you did it to me.’ *Matthew 25:37-40*

V/: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You:

R/: Because by Your Cross, You have redeemed the World

Reflect: Moved by Jesus' pain, Veronica's love overcomes her fear and she courageously steps forward to wipe the blood and sweat from Jesus' face. She cannot change his fate, but recognising his dignity, she faithfully performs her small act of compassion. As the guards force Jesus onward, the image of his face is left on Veronica's veil.

We too are called to compassion. It is easy to be discouraged by the scale of poverty and need in the world, but each day offers us the opportunity to perform small acts of kindness and generosity. In doing so we recognise the face of Jesus in our neighbour and he imprints his face on each of us. Do we look for opportunities to do small acts of generosity and love? Are we attentive to the face of Christ in our brothers and sisters?

Prayer:

Jesus, you know how it feels to be hurt and to cry out in pain and fear.

Walk with us.

Show us how to walk together with others.

Show us how to love the people around us

And to be there for those who need us.

VII: Jesus falls for the second time:

“Come to me all you who labour, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light.” Matthew 11:28-30

V/: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You:

R/: Because by Your Cross, You have redeemed the World

Reflect: Under the weight of the cross, Jesus is once again brought to his knees. After this second fall, Jesus’ struggle to rise up again is much harder. We think of the people of Ethiopia, many of whom have faced poor harvest after poor harvest due to droughts. They show great resilience and strength in continuing to work for a better future. We think of those who are struggling to hold onto hope, due to the daily struggle against natural disasters and lack of opportunity.

How can we live in solidarity with those who feel despondent or invisible?

Prayer:

Jesus, you stumbled and fell.

You lost strength and became tired. And yet you carried on.

Walk with us. When we find it hard to keep going, give us the strength we need to finish our work as well as we can and show love to others.

VIII: Jesus Consoles the Women of Jerusalem:

“A great number of the people followed him, among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.” Luke 23:27-28

V/: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You:

R/: Because by Your Cross, You have redeemed the World

Reflect: As Jesus draws closer to the place of execution, he encounters the women of Jerusalem weeping for him. There is a shared empathy here as Jesus recognises their difficulties and tells them not to weep for him, but for themselves and their children.

As we recall this exchange, we remember the many societies where women face water are daily problems. She reflects; “The role of the woman in the home is very difficult. So difficult. All the activities in the home belong to me. I have to get food for my children and my husband – even preparing their clothes, washing. To get water, we travel long distances. When we gather, there are many people at the water point and you wait your turn, many times about five hours.”

What causes us to weep? Which situations in the world make us cry out to God?

Prayer:

Jesus, you cared and spoke out, even on the road to your death.

You knew and felt the struggles of others. Walk with us.

As we hear the stories of our sisters and brothers who live in poverty, give us the courage to raise our voices, so that together we can work for change.