

Holy Week Service – The Way of the Cross

Reader 1

We have come together this evening to reflect on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.

It is the story of what Jesus did for us a long time ago.

We remember the story because Jesus showed his great love for us by what he did.

We remember the story because, by his love, Jesus united us to himself and will bring us to eternal life.

Reader 2

This evening, we will make a journey.

We will discover Jesus’ love for us;

We will discover ways to follow Jesus,

here and now,

in our own lives.

May we stay close to Jesus always.

*Year 6 dressed as 12 disciples enter from the front with Jesus. Other Year 6 follow.*

*Year 5 enter as in December but need to sit where the Year 6 were in December as they will all be reading.*

*Year 4 enter and sit as in December.*

*Year 3 enter and sit in front bench as in December.*

*Some will sit on the sanctuary to form a path. (but not at the beginning)*

*All sing:* ***Stay with me*** *as they enter.*

*Year 6 will position themselves round the altar ready for the first reader.*

Reader 3 (3 readers - *Different voice for words of Jesus & Simon Peter*)

The night before Jesus was betrayed, he shared a meal with his friends.

As they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and when he had said the blessing, he broke it and gave it to the disciples.

“Take it and eat,” he said. “This is my body.”

Then he took the cup, and when he had returned thanks, he gave it to them.

“Drink all of you from this,” he said. “For this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

“From now on, I tell you, I shall not drink wine until the day I drink new wine with you in the kingdom of my Father.

During the meal, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord are you going to wash my feet?”

Jesus answered, “At the moment, you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand .

“Never!” said Peter. “You will never wash my feet!”

Jesus replied, “If I do not wash you, you can never have anything in common with me.”

“Then Lord,” said Simon Peter, “not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!”

Jesus said, “No one who has taken a bath needs washing; he is clean all over.”

You too are clean, though not all of you are.”

When he had washed their feet, he went back to the table.

“Do you understand what I have done to you?

You call me master and Lord: so I am.

If I then, the Lord and master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other’s feet.

I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.”

Reader 5 (& Jesus as before)

During the meal, Judas left the table and went out to betray Jesus to his enemies; that is, to those who were plotting to arrest him.

After the meal, Jesus took his friends to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray.

“Wait here, while I go over there to pray. Stay awake and pray with me.”

Jesus knelt down on the ground.

“Father, take this suffering away from me.

Yet I will do what you want, not what I want.”

God gave him the strength he needed.

When Jesus came back to his friends, they weren’t praying.

They were all asleep.

Jesus said to them, “Wake up! Why are you sleeping?

Stay awake and pray that you will be strong no matter what happens.”

*All sing:* ***My Soul is Sad***

Reader 6

As Jesus was praying in the garden, his friend Judas came with soldiers.

He went straight up to Jesus and greeted him with a kiss.

The men grabbed Jesus, and put him under guard.

Everybody left him and ran away.

When it came to the crunch, Jesus was left on his own.

All his friends let him down.

Judas, a close friend, turned against him.

Peter, whom Jesus had chosen as a leader, pretended he didn’t know him.

The rest ran away, and Jesus was on his own.

Lord, we’ve all suffered from loneliness.

We’re glad you know what it’s like.

Reader 1 - TIYA

Station One – Jesus is condemned to death

*Pause while picture is formed*

Pilate said, “Look, here’s your king.”

But the people yelled, “Crucify him! Crucify him!”

“Should I kill your king?” Pilate asked them.

“Yes, kill him! Crucify him!”

So Pilate allowed Jesus to be led away by the soldiers.

Reader 2 - FRANKIE

Would we have been brave enough to speak up for Jesus?

What if Pilate had arrested us too?

Here and now, do we have the courage to speak up for someone who is being treated unfairly?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 3 - ANDREAS

Station Two – Jesus carries his cross

*Pause while picture is formed*

The soldiers led Jesus away as Pilate had ordered.

They put a crown of thorns on his head.

They beat him, and then they made fun of him.

Then they laid a heavy cross on his shoulders and ordered him to carry it to a place called Calvary.

His whole body ached, and he was so tired he could hardly walk.

*All sing:* ***Take Your Cross***

Reader 4 - SOFIA

Would we have dared talk back to a group of sword-carrying soldiers?

What if one of them had pointed their sword at us?

Here and now, what do we do when someone is wrongly blamed for something she or he didn’t do?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 5 - JULIA

Station Three – Jesus falls under the cross

*Pause while picture is formed*

Jesus was so weak that he could not stand the weight of the cross.

He fell to the ground. But the soldiers had no compassion. They pulled Jesus up and pushed him forward.

Reader 6 - MICHAEL

Would we have wanted to touch Jesus and get blood and dirt on our clothes?

What if someone saw us like that.

Here and now, what do we do when our friends laugh at us for helping someone.

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 7 - SARAH

Station Four – Jesus meets his mother

*Pause while picture is formed*

Mary was following Jesus as he carries the cross.

Watching him stumble along, she must have remembered what the old prophet Simeon had said to her:

*Mary, your sorrow over this child will be great.*

*It will be as if a sword is piercing your heart.*

*All sing:* ***Born for This*** *(solo first verse)*

Reader 8 – CHLOE A

Would we have dared to get in front of an angry crowd of people?

What if we had been pushed and hurt?

Here and now, what do we do when someone shoves us or a friend out of line?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 9 - LOUI

Station Five – Simon helps Jesus carry the cross

*Pause while picture is formed*

Simon was an African who had come to Palestine to work in the fields

He had settled there but people still called him a stranger.

And so it was Simon who was called upon to help with the cross.

The soldiers grabbed him and pushed him towards Jesus.

He must have thought, *why me?*

*Is it because I’m different that they’re making me do this?*

When he saw how much Jesus needed his help, however, he quickly lifted the cross.

Reader 10 - NATHAN

Would we have taken our turn carrying the cross?

What if we had hurt ourselves?

Here and now, do we respond eagerly when others ask for help?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 11 - FRANCINE

Station Six – Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

*Pause while picture is formed*

Veronica saw Jesus, and she ran forward to wipe the blood and the sweat from his face. She helped Jesus as best she could.

Reader 12 - AANAY

Would we have dashed out towards Jesus with all those people around?

What if someone had made fun of us?

Here and now, what do we do when someone gets hurt on the playground?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 13 - CHARLIE

Station Seven – Jesus falls the second time

*Pause while picture is formed*

Jesus fell again under the weight of the cross.

The soldiers forced him to get up and pushed him on his way.

*All sing:* ***Fallen Again***

Reader 14 - MYA

What would we have done?

What if the soldiers had pushed us back?

Here and now, what do we do or say when we know that someone is doing something wrong?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 15 - SIENNA

Station Eight – Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

*Pause while picture is formed*

A huge crowd was following Jesus, including some women who were crying and weeping for him.

Jesus saw their tears and he said to them,

“Don’t shed tears for me. Cry instead for yourselves and your children.

Reader 16 - TEDDY

Would we have realised that Jesus wants us to be sorry for our sins?

Here and now, are we sorry for the pain we have caused others through the selfish things that we sometimes do?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 17 – FINN M

Station Nine – Jesus falls the third time

*Pause while picture is formed*

Once, twice and now for the third time, Jesus falls to the ground.

He must have been extremely weak to lose his balance so often.

It was only his faith in God that kept him going.

Now the soldiers forced Jesus up again and pushed him on his way.

Reader 18 - SOPHIE

Would we have helped carry the cross with the others?

What if it had fallen on us and hurt us?

Here and now, what do we do when someone old or sick could use our help?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 19 – CHLOE P

Station Ten – Jesus is stripped of his garments

*Pause while picture is formed*

By this time, Jesus was so weak he was unable to resist anything the soldiers did to him.

They cruelly ripped off his clothing, and they quarrelled over who would have it.

*All sing:* ***All Hail! King of the Jews!***

Reader 20 - MADDIE

Would we have even followed Jesus that far or demanded that the soldiers leave him alone?

Here and now, what do we do when someone is being made fun of at school?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 21 - ARAM

Station Eleven – Jesus is nailed to the cross

*Pause while picture is formed*

The soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross.

Pilate had written a notice to be put on the cross of Jesus.

It said: *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.*

The leaders protested that Jesus wasn’t really their king, but Pilate would not change what he had written.

So, the soldiers raised the cross upright with Pilate’s sign on it.

Reader 22 - RAYLAN

Would we have protested about what was happening to Jesus?

What if the leaders had become angry with us?

Here and now, do we ever speak out for people who are left out and being treated unjustly?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 23 - EMILY

Station Twelve – Jesus dies on the cross

*Silence as we all bow our heads*

*Pause for 20 seconds*

As Jesus hung on the cross, he cried out, “Father forgive them; they don’t know what they’re doing.”

The soldiers made fun of him.

At last, Jesus cried out again, “Father, into your hands, I place my spirit.”

After he said this, he died.

*Solo singer:* ***Father, Forgive Them***

Reader 24 - PHOEBE

Would we really have knelt beside the cross for all the world to see?

Would we, like Jesus, have asked God to forgive the soldiers and the crowd?

Here and now, do we pray for those who hurt us?

Do we really forgive with all our heart?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 25 – FINN B

Station Thirteen – Jesus is taken down from the cross

*Pause while picture is formed*

A man named Joseph, from the town of Arimathea, went to Pilate and asked permission to remove the body of Jesus from the cross.

He placed Jesus in Mary’s arms and together they wrapped the body in a linen sheet.

Filled with sorrow, Mary looked at the body of her son.

She had loved and cared for him, and now his life was over.

Reader 26 - ISABELLE

Would we, like Joseph, have admitted being a follower of Jesus?

What if Pilate had arrested us?

Here and now, what do we do to show that we are Christians?

Do we ever try to hide our faith from others?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 27 - FRASER

Station Fourteen – Jesus is placed in the tomb

*Pause while picture is formed*

Joseph of Arimathea carried Jesus’ body to a grave that had been carved out of a rock – a grave that had never been used.

After he put the body inside, he rolled a stone to cover the entrance. Slowly and sadly, Mary – who had gone to the tomb with Joseph – left her son there, believing that she would never see him again.

*All sing:* ***Precious Saviour***

Reader 28 - GENE

Would I really have given up my own pillow or my blankets, even for Jesus?

What if I had been unable to get any others?

Here and now, do I give up any of my comforts to help those in need?

Jesus, teach me how to follow you.

*All repeat:* ***Jesus, teach me how to follow you.***

Reader 29 - FILIP

Station Fifteen – Jesus is raised from the dead

Jesus, we know that after you died on the cross; your body was placed in the tomb.

But on Sunday morning, when some of the women who had followed you went to the tomb, your body was gone.

Two figures in bright clothing said to them, “Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive? He is not here. He has risen.”

Excited and full of joy, the women ran to tell the disciples and Mary.

Reader 30 – ZACH & SARAH

We praise you, God, for raising Jesus from the dead.

We thank you for the great gift of this life and ours. Help us to believe in the resurrection and to keep following Jesus all of our lives. Amen.

*All sing:* ***You are the Way***