

# Prayers for Reflection and Preparation for Walking the Stations of The Cross,

Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross that he might draw the whole world unto himself: Mercifully grant that we, who glory in the mystery of our redemption, may have grace to take up our cross and follow him; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen. (BCP, p. 192)

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP, p. 264)

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light riseth up in darkness for the godly: Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldest have us to do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light, we may see light, and in thy straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 832)

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to thee, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly thine, utterly dedicated unto thee; and then use us, we pray thee, as thou wilt, and always to thy glory and welfare of thy people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (BCP, p. 833)

O Almighty God, who pourest out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and of supplication: Deliver us, when we draw near to thee, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship thee in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 833)

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## AN INVITATION TO WALK THE STATIONS FROM St. Martin's Rector:

Like many of you, I suppose, I have spent a lot of time in stations over the years—train, metro or gas stations. As a child, I spent a good bit of time at the *Greyhound* bus station waiting with my sisters to travel to my grandmother's home in rural Alabama. Stations are places where we wait, and in that waiting we have all kinds of options—we can read, think, pray, sleep. In today's world, you can talk, send text messages or play a game on your cell phone; listen to songs on your iPod; or even watch a movie on your iPad when you are waiting to go or waiting on someone to arrive.

In the spring of 2010, the fine work of artist and sculptor Alex Hallmark was brought to my attention. One of his most enthralling works was a collection of the *Stations of the Cross*. Walking the *Stations* during the Lenten season has been a tradition at St. Martin's for many years, but when I saw, touched and even meditated on and with these physical representations of the *Stations*, I was moved to bring them to St. Martin's.

This is an invitation to "walk" the Stations on your own. The Stations of the Cross is sometimes called the Way of the Cross, or as in Latin, Via Crucis and sometimes called the Via Dolorosa

meaning the *Way of Sorrows*. The *Stations* represent a depiction of the Passion, the final hours of Jesus.

Tradition and historical record tell us that the *Stations of the Cross* originated in pilgrimages to Jerusalem. At a monastery of San Stefano in Bologna, a group of connected chapels was constructed as early as the 5th century, by St. Petronius, Bishop of Bologna, which was intended to represent the more important shrines of Jerusalem.

The earliest use of the word "stations," as applied to the accustomed halting-places in the *Via Sacra* at Jerusalem, occurs in the narrative of an English pilgrim, William Wey, who visited the Holy Land in the mid-15th century and described pilgrims following the footsteps of Christ to the cross.

During the 15th and 16th centuries, the Franciscans began to build a series of outdoor shrines in Europe to duplicate their counterparts in the Holy Land. The number of stations varied between eleven and thirty. In 1686, in answer to their petition, Pope Innocent XI granted to the Franciscans the right to erect stations within their churches. In 1731, Pope Clement XII extended the right of all churches to have the stations, provided that a Franciscan father erected them, with the consent of the local bishop. At the same time the number was fixed at fourteen. In 1857, the bishops of England were allowed to erect the stations by themselves, without the intervention of

a Franciscan priest, and in 1862 this right was extended to bishops throughout the church. (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "The Way of the Cross," 1907).

The purpose and spiritual significance of walking these stations is to assist Christians, or even inquiring "pilgrims," to reflect in prayer and meditation upon the chief scenes of Christ's sufferings and death. In doing so, they may be drawn into a deeper relationship with Christ and a life of faithful Christian discipleship.

As you begin your own pilgrimage, we invite you to use this brochure as a guide. Each station is illustrated by a photograph, and accompanied by a reading describing the station and reflective words and prayers. Along the bottom of the pages, we have printed the artist's description. I bid you to let this guide and help you in your own spiritual journey. Jesus said, "I am the Gate; whoever enters through me will be saved," (John 10:9). May these stations give you stepping stones toward that saving power, that you may know even more deeply His power, health, life and peace in Him.

#### OPENING DEVOTIONS

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

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.

V. We will glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ:

R. In whom is our salvation, our life and resurrection.

#### Prayer

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.



#### STATION I

#### Jesus is Condemned to Death

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation; and they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him to Pilate. And they all condemned him and said, "He deserves to die." When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. Then he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

V. God did not spare his own Son:

R. But delivered him up for us all.

#### Prayer

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. *Amen.* 

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.

The Roman Empire needed to suppress any civil unrest. To maintain their power, trouble-makers were dealt with publicly and with extreme cruelty. Also, Jewish leadership did not like anyone challenging their institutions to the point of blasphemy. Whoever was responsible for Jesus' death sentence, we should consider ourselves to be among them.



I have used Pontius Pilate and a gentile (no beard) in this station because we, today, mostly resemble Rome, as opposed to the Jews of that time. Pilate is portrayed as reticent to remind us that there were others who wanted Jesus dead. He leans on the symbol of Rome's power, a *fascio*, the two headed ax with bundled sticks for a handle. Jesus' face is conventional to avoid any statement about race or ethnicity.



## STATION II Jesus Takes up His Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Jesus went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Like a lamb he was led to the slaughter; and like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

V. The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all:

R. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

#### Prayer

Almighty God, whose beloved Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen*.



The cross is heavy; it takes two Roman soldiers to place it on Jesus' back. The soldiers are merely doing their job. Jesus touches the cross and one of the soldiers. His touch is gentle and loving, even to these instruments of his torture and death. Jesus now wears the crown of thorns.

#### STATION III

#### Jesus Falls for the First Time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and was born in human likeness. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name. Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, and kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is the Lord our God.

V. Surely he has borne our griefs:

R. And carried our sorrows.

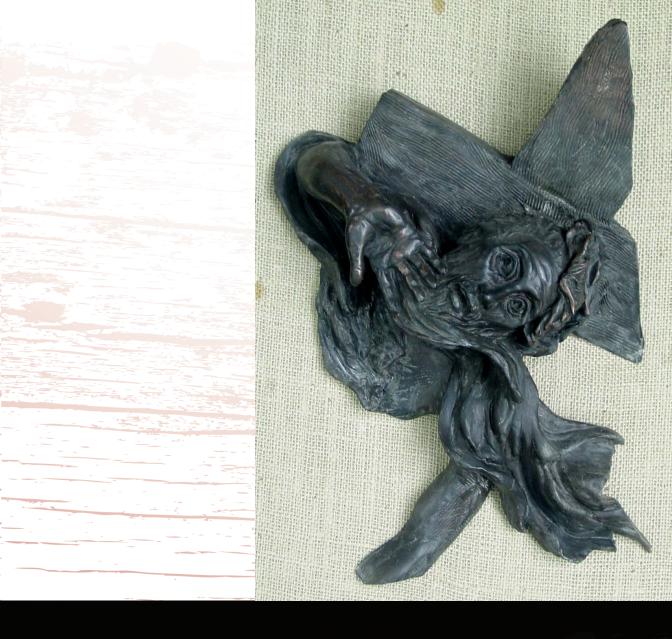
#### Prayer

O God, you know us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright: Grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.

Although Jesus falling is not found in the Scriptures, there are three stations portraying Jesus falling. I have portrayed the three in a sequence: this station is the act of falling. The second time, the fall has occurred and Jesus is portrayed as being down. The third time shows the reaction of bystanders.



The act of falling, especially in a dangerous situation, can serve as a division in time. There is the time before the fall and a time after. During a fall we think both about nothing except falling and about everything else. A fall can be cathartic.

## STATION IV Jesus Meets His Mother

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

To what can I liken you, to what can I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What likeness can I use to comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For vast as the sea is your ruin. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended.

V. A sword will pierce your own soul also: R. And fill your heart with bitter pain.

#### Prayer

O God, who willed that in the passion of your Son a sword of grief should pierce the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary his mother: Mercifully grant that your Church, having shared with her in his passion, may be made worthy to share in the joys of his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen*.



The Blessed Virgin Mary cradles Jesus' head in her arms as she lays her head on the cross. All mothers can imagine her grief and anxiety in seeing their son about to be cruelly killed. All mothers (parents) know that Mary would gladly put herself in his place to save his life.



#### STATION V

#### The Cross is Laid on Simon of Cyrene

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

As they led Jesus away, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus. "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

V. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me:

R. Cannot be my disciple.

#### Prayer

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.* 



Because Simon is from Cyrene, he is often thought of as being black. He is also thought to be wealthy, and I have portrayed him as both. He looks away from Jesus, more interested in the crowd and the Roman soldiers around him.

Jesus is shown relieved, but still holding a symbol of his humiliation.



#### STATION VI

#### A Woman Wipes the Face of Jesus

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

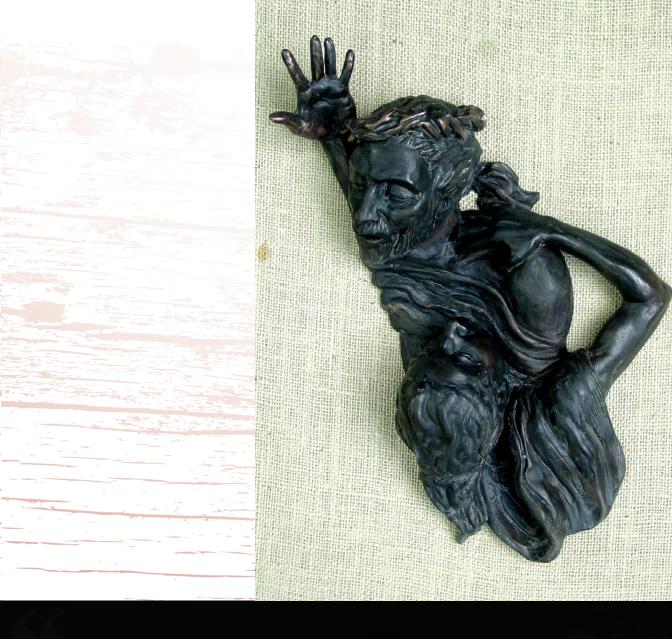
We have seen him without beauty or majesty, with no looks to attract our eyes. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not. His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of men. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.

V. Restore us, O Lord God of hosts:

R. Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

#### Prayer

O God, who before the passion of your only-begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant to us that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance, may be strengthened to bear our cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* 



This woman is over-wrought with grief. I have portrayed Jesus as ambivalent to her help. Is her act of kindness helpful or is it actually annoying? This station is also not Scriptural.

#### STATION VII

#### Jesus Falls a Second Time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

V. But as for me, I am a worm and no man:

R. Scorned by all and despised by the people.

#### Prayer

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.* 



Jesus' position is taken directly from a famous statue called *The Dying Gaul* (a Hellenistic sculpture, artist unknown). The station is bisected by the cross. Jesus is below the cross and above are devout Jews, ironically praying to God somewhere above them.

#### STATION VIII

#### Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

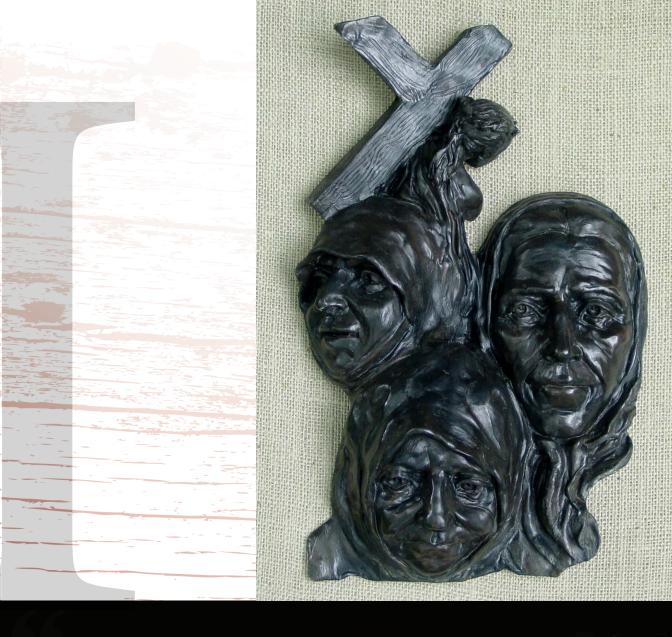
There followed after Jesus a great multitude of the people, and among them were women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children."

V. Those who sowed with tears:

R. Will reap with songs of joy.

#### Prayer

Teach your Church, O Lord, to mourn the sins of which it is guilty, and to repent and forsake them; that, by your pardoning grace, the results of our iniquities may not be visited upon our children and our children's children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* 



These women were probably paid, professional mourners, yet they are not portrayed as totally unsympathetic. Nevertheless, Jesus is walking away from them. The women epitomize a tradition that has lost its meaning.



## STATION IX Jesus Falls a Third Time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light. He has besieged me and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me dwell in darkness like the dead of long ago. Though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer. He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes. "Remember, O Lord, my affliction and bitterness, the wormwood and the gall!"

V. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter:

B. And like a sheep that before its shearers

R. And like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth.

#### Prayer

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.* 



Jesus had a particular sensibility to the hypocrisy of others. These women are sincere and are meant to be compared with the women in the previous station. They are held back by a Roman soldier, once again, merely doing his job.

#### STATION X

#### Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

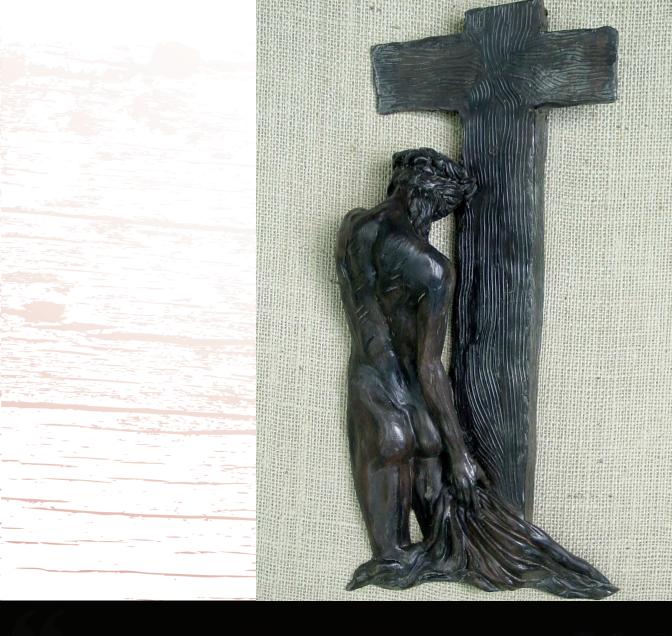
When they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And they divided his garments among them by casting lots. This was to fulfill the scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing."

V. They gave me gall to eat:

R. And when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

#### Prayer

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* 



Being naked in public was truly a disgrace for the Jewish people. I was worried about offending anyone viewing or worshiping at this station, but decided that the humiliation could best be shown by having Jesus naked. My decision was sealed after remembering Subirach's monumental, naked and crucified Jesus on *The Passion Façade* of *Sagrada Familia* in Barcelona.

#### STATION XI

#### Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

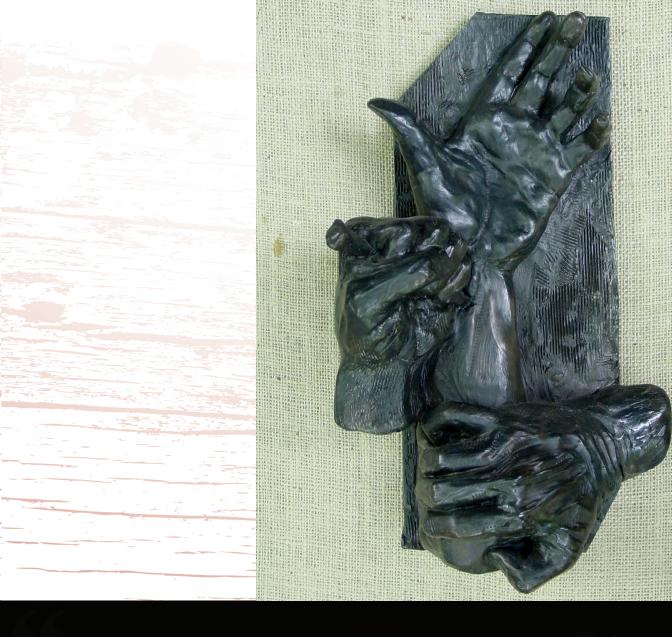
When they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him; and with him they crucified two criminals, one on the right, the other on the left, and Jesus between them. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

V. They pierce my hands and my feet:

R. They stare and gloat over me.

#### Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. *Amen.* 



What terrible things we can do to our enemies! What terrible things we can do to the innocent! In a way, showing only hands was a way to avoid showing the whole gruesome scene — the pain on Jesus' face and his contorted body. On the other hand, showing the scene in a close-up makes it more personal. We shake hands; we hold hands; we kiss hands; we can talk with our hands; or we can even hammer a nail through someone's hand.

### STATION XII

#### Jesus Dies on the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished!" And then, crying with a loud voice, he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." And he bowed his head, and handed over his spirit.

V. Christ for us became obedient unto death:

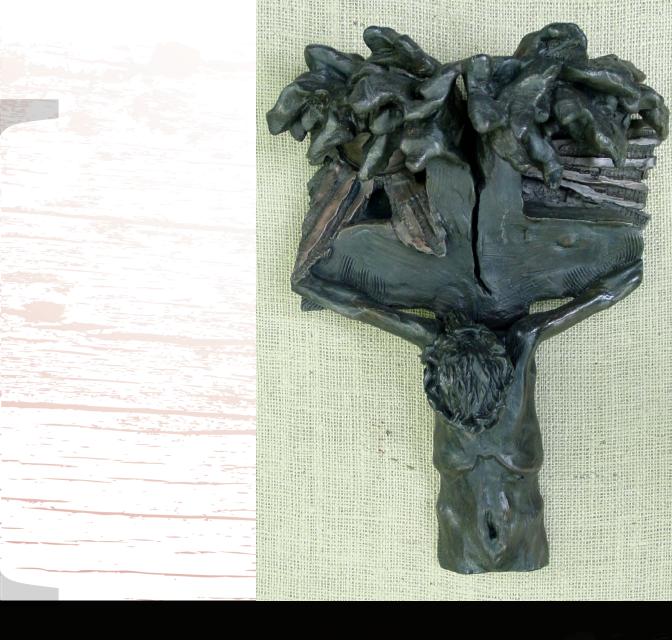
R. Even death on a cross.

#### Prayer

O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; who lives and reigns now and for ever. *Amen.* 

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have mercy upon us.

The Stations of the Cross are mainly used during Lent. At the end of Lent, Jesus is dead with the promise of the Resurrection three days off. To walk the Stations of the Cross / The Way of the Cross is to experience the last hours of Jesus' life in the manner that it was originally experienced. Eyewitnesses had no promise of resurrection.



Jesus, their anointed one, had died! Dark clouds filled the sky. Everything was torn in two, divided. I have attempted to show Jesus obviously dead on the cross.

#### STATION XIII

#### Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

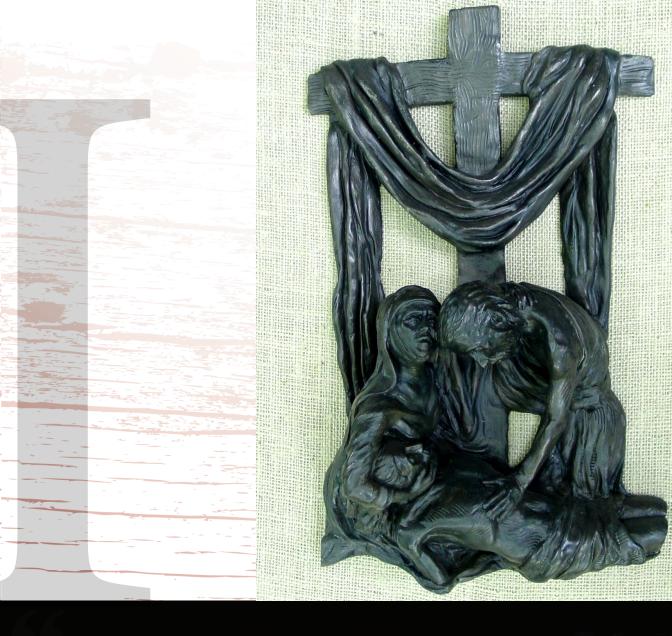
All you who pass by, behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow. My eyes are spent with weeping; my soul is in tumult; my heart is poured out in grief because of the downfall of my people. "Do not call me Naomi (which means Pleasant), call me Mara (which means Bitter); for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."

V. Her tears run down her cheeks:

R. And she has none to comfort her.

#### Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, by your death you took away the sting of death: Grant to us your servants so to follow in faith where you have led the way, that we may at length fall asleep peacefully in you and wake up in your likeness; for your tender mercies' sake. *Amen.* 



This is the typical *Pieta* scene, the Virgin Mary cradling the dead body of Jesus, frequently depicted in art. I don't think my representation of the *Pieta* adds much, if anything, to what others have said or artistically represented. The mother holding a dead son cannot be consoled. A man touches Jesus' chest, trying to feel that center of life – that great heart of Jesus.

## STATION XIV

#### Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb.

V. You will not abandon me to the grave:

R. Nor let your holy One see corruption.

#### Prayer

O God, your blessed Son was laid in a tomb in a garden, and rested on the Sabbath day: Grant that we who have been buried with him in the waters of baptism may find our perfect rest in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.* 



I used the gentleness of feminine hands in portraying the wrapping of the body with burial clothes. By the time I had gotten around to making the last station, I needed to have Jesus' body treated with kindness. The scale of Jesus' face in this station is the same as the scale of Jesus' face in the first station.

#### Concluding Prayers

Savior of the world, by your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us:

Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech you, O Lord.

#### Prayer

We thank you, heavenly Father, that you have delivered us from the dominion of sin and death and brought us into the kingdom of your Son; and we pray that, as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his love he may raise us to eternal joys; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.* 

To Christ our Lord who loves us, and washed us in his own blood, and made us a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.* 

#### A CLOSING THOUGHT...

"...there must be a real giving up of the self. You must throw it away 'blindly' so to speak. Christ will indeed give you a real personality: but you must not go to Him for the sake of that. As long as your own personality is what you are bothering about you are not going to Him at all. The very first step is to try and forget about the self altogether. Your real, new self...will not come as long as you are looking for it. It will come when you are looking for Him.

"The principle runs through all life from top to bottom. Give up yourself and you will find your real self. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favourite wishes every day and death of your whole body in the end: submit with every fiber of your being, and you will find eternal life. Keep nothing back. Nothing that you have not given away will be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in."

C.S. Lewis from Mere Christianity

O God our King, by the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ on the first day of the week, you conquered sin, put death to flight, and gave us the hope of everlasting life: Redeem all our days by this victory; forgive us our sins, banish our fears, make us bold to praise you and to do your will; and steel us to wait for the consummation of your kingdom on the last great Day; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, p. 835)



#### ABOUT THE ARTIST



Alex Hallmark is an Associate of the National Sculpture Society and a member of Tri-State Sculptors. His work is permanently installed at St. Mary of the Hills Episcopal Church in Blowing Rock, North Carolina; at St. James Episcopal Church, Monkton, MD: at the Grandfather Home for Children in Banner Elk, NC; at Davant Field in Blowing Rock; at the Blowing Rock Community Arts Center; and at Veterans Memorial Park in Blowing Rock, NC. His World War II Memorial was dedicated in Morganton, NC on Veterans Day, 2005. His life-sized portrait of Sen. Sam Ervin, Jr. was installed in Morganton, NC in 2007.



