

The Way of the Cross

drawing on the *Revelations of Divine Love* to Dame Julian of Norwich

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.

Officiant and People

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.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,
and 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.

Let us pray. (*Silence*)

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.*

First Station

Jesus is condemned to death

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

We know through our faith, and believe by the preaching and teaching of Holy Church, that the Holy Trinity made mankind in his image and in his likeness. In the same way we know that when man fell so deeply and so wretchedly through sin, the only help through whom man could be restored was he who made man. And he who made man for love, by that same love would restore man to that same blessed state, or to one more blessed. And just as we were made like the Trinity when we were first made, our Maker wanted us to be like Jesus Christ our Savior, in heaven without end, by the miracle of our remaking. Then between these two he wanted, loving and honoring humanity, to make himself as much like us in this mortal life, in our vileness and wretchedness, as a man without guilt might be.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

Second Station

Jesus takes up his Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

As far as the Godhead is concerned, Jesus is himself the highest bliss, and was from eternity and shall be so to eternity; and this endless bliss may never in itself be heightened or diminished. As far as his Humanity is concerned, it is known through our faith that through the power of his Godhead, and to bring us to his bliss for love, he endured pains and suffered and died.

Regarding Christ as our head, he is in glory and beyond suffering. But as regards his body, in which all his members are joined, he is not yet in full glory or beyond suffering; for that same longing and thirst which he had on the cross – a longing and thirst which had been in him from eternity – those he still has, and shall have until the time when the last soul which is to be saved has come up into his bliss.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Third Station

Jesus falls the first time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

If we fall, Jesus quickly raises us by calling us tenderly and touching us with grace. And when we have been strengthened like this by his dear actions, then we choose him willingly, through his precious grace; we choose to serve him and to love him for ever and ever. And after this he allows some of us to fall harder and more painfully than we ever did before, or so it seems to us. And those of us who are not very wise think that all our earlier effort has gone for nothing. But it is not so; for we need to fall, and we need to be aware of it; for if we did not fall, we would not know how weak and wretched we are of ourselves; nor would we know our Maker's marvelous love so fully. For in heaven we shall see truly and everlastingly that we have sinned grievously in this life, and we shall see that in spite of that his love for us remained unharmed, and we were never less valuable to him. That love which cannot and will not be broken by sin is strong and marvelous.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

Fourth Station

Jesus meets his afflicted mother

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Christ and our Lady Saint Mary were so united in love that the greatness of her love for him caused the intensity of her pain. In this I saw the essential character of the love, natural and maintained by grace, that all creation has for him. This natural love was shown in his dear Mother most abundantly, and indeed supremely, for just as her love for him surpassed that of anyone else, so did her suffering for him; for the higher, the stronger, the dearer that love is, the greater the sorrow that the lover feels to see the beloved body in pain. And all his disciples, and all those who truly loved him, suffered greater pain than they would for their own bodily death; for I am certain that the humblest of them loved him so much better than themselves, that it goes beyond all that I can say.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Fifth Station

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.

Because our Lord shows us a time of suffering, like the suffering he bore in this life and on his cross, we are in distress and suffer with him the hardships that belong to our frailty. And the reason why he suffers is that of his goodness he wants to raise us higher with him in his bliss, and in return for the little pain we suffer here on earth we shall have an endless, exalted knowledge of God, which we could never have without that.

Then our good Lord Jesus Christ spoke, asking, "Are you well pleased that I suffered for you?" I said, "Yes, my good Lord, thank you. Yes, my good Lord, blessed may you be!" Then Jesus, our kind Lord, said, "If you are pleased, I am pleased. It is a joy, a delight and an endless happiness to me that I ever endured suffering for you."

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ was lifted high upon the cross that he might draw the whole world to 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 lives and reigns in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

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

Sixth Station

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.

I have three kinds of understanding of the expression of our Lord's face. The first is the suffering face that he showed while he was here, dying. Although this is a sight of mourning and sorrow, it is also glad and cheerful, for he is God. The second face is pity, grief, and compassion; and he shows this face to all who love him, with the certainty of protection for those who need his mercy. The third is the blessed face which he will show for ever.

The more clearly the soul sees this blessed face through grace and love, the more it longs to see it fully. And in this I saw cause for mirth and cause for lamentation: cause for mirth because the Lord our Maker is so near us and within us, and we in him, through the sure protection of his great goodness; cause for lamentation because our spiritual eyes are so blind, and we are so weighed down by our mortal flesh and the darkness of sin that we cannot see our Lord God's fair, blessed face clearly.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Seventh Station

Jesus falls a second time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Union with the Godhead gave our Lord's Humanity the strength to suffer for love more than anyone who was completely and only a human being could suffer. I do not mean only more pain than any man could suffer, but also that he suffered more pain than could be reckoned or fully imagined by any of those who are saved, who have ever lived from the very beginning until the last day, considering the majesty of the highest, most worshipful king and the shameful, insulting, painful death; for he who is highest and most majestic was brought lowest and most utterly despised; for the very summit of what we can see in the Passion is to think and know what he is who suffered.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Eighth Station

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.

Our Lord takes tender care of us when we feel that we are almost forsaken and cast away because of our sin and because we have deserved it. And because of the humility which we gain through this, we are raised by God's grace right up high in his sight, with great contrition, with compassion, and with a true longing for God. By contrition we are made pure, by compassion we are made ready, and by true longing for God we are made worthy.

It is a supreme favor from our kind Lord that he should watch over us so tenderly while we are in a state of sin; and furthermore he secretly touches our inner hearts and shows us our sin by the pure, sweet light of mercy and grace. And then we hope that God has forgiven us our sins; and it is true. And then our kind Lord reveals himself, very joyfully and looking very pleased, with a friendly welcome, as though the soul had been in pain and in prison, sweetly saying this: "My darling, I am glad you have come to me. I have always been with you in your misery, and now you can see how much I love you, and we are united in bliss."

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

Most loving Father, whose will it is for us to give thanks for all things, to fear nothing but the loss of you, and to cast all our care on you who care for us: Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly anxieties, that no clouds of this mortal life may hide from us the light of that love which is immortal, and which you have manifested to us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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

Ninth Station

Jesus falls a third time

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Though an earthly mother may allow her child to perish, our heavenly mother Jesus cannot allow us who are his children to perish; for he and none but he is almighty, all wisdom, and all love. Blessed may he be! But often when our falling and our wretched sin are shown to us, we are so terrified and so very ashamed that we hardly know where to put ourselves. But then our kind Mother does not want us to run from him; there is nothing he wants less. But he wants us to behave like a child. For when a child is hurt or frightened it runs to its mother for help as fast as it can; and he wants us to do the same, like a humble child, saying, "My kind Mother, my gracious Mother, my dearest Mother, take pity on me." He wants us to take on the nature of a child that always trusts the love of its mother in weal and woe.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

O God, the strength of all who put their trust in you: Mercifully accept our prayers; and because in our weakness we can do nothing good without you, give us the help of your grace, that in keeping your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

Tenth Station

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.

Our foul mortal flesh which God's son took upon himself, which was Adam's old tunic, tight, bare, and short, was then made by our Savior newly beautiful, white and bright and eternally pure, full and ample. Christ's clothing is now of a comely, handsome mixture which is so wonderful that I cannot describe it; for it is all glory.

The Son does not stand in awe in front of the Father like a servant, plainly dressed and partly naked, but he stands immediately before the Father, dressed in holy munificence, with a crown of inestimable richness on his head; for it was shown that we are his crown, and that this crown is the Father's joy, the Son's glory, the Holy Ghost's delight, and unending and wonderful bliss to all who are in heaven.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Eleventh Station

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.

I saw, as I watched, the body of Christ bleeding abundantly from the scourging. The fair skin was very deeply broken, down into the tender flesh, sharply slashed all over the dear body; the hot blood ran out so abundantly that no skin or wound could be seen; it seemed to be all blood.

And then it came to me that God has provided us on earth with abundant water for our use and bodily refreshment, because of the tender love he has for us, yet it pleases him better that we should simply take his holy blood to wash away our sins; for there is no liquid created that he likes to give us so much; it is as plentiful as it is precious by virtue of his holy Godhead. The precious plenty of his beloved blood overflows the whole earth and is ready to wash away the sins of all people of good will who are, have been, or will be. The precious plenty of his beloved blood ascended into heaven to the blessed body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and there in him it bleeds and intercedes for us with the Father – and this shall be as long as there is need. And it flows throughout the heavens for ever, rejoicing in the salvation of all humankind who are there and shall be there.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Twelfth Station

Jesus dies on the Cross

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

At the time of Christ's dying, the firmament and the earth failed for sorrow, each according to their nature. For it is their natural property to recognize as their God him in whom all their natural power is grounded; when he failed, they by their very natures had as far as possible to fail with him from sorrow at his pain. And so those who were his friends suffered pain from love. And everyone without exception – even those who did not know him – suffered from a failure of all comfort except the strong and mysterious care of God.

Thus was our Lord Jesus brought low for us, and we are all brought low like him. And so we shall remain until we come to his bliss.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

Thirteenth Station

The body of Jesus is placed in the arms of his mother

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you:

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Our natural Mother, our gracious Mother (for he wanted to become our mother completely in every way), undertook to begin his work very humbly and very gently in the Virgin's womb. Our great God, the most sovereign wisdom of all, was raised in this humble place and dressed himself in our poor flesh to do the service and duties of motherhood in every way. So he sustains us within himself in love and was in labor for the full time until he suffered the sharpest pangs and the most grievous sufferings that ever were or shall be, and at the last he died. This fair, lovely word 'mother': it is so sweet and so tender in itself that it cannot truly be said of any but of him, and of her who is the true mother of him and of everyone.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Fourteenth Station

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.

With this bare word 'sin' our Lord brought to my mind the whole extent of all that is not good, and the shameful scorn and the utter humiliation that he bore for us in this life, and his dying, and all the pains and sufferings of all his creatures, both in body and spirit – for we are all to some extent brought to nothing and shall be brought to nothing as our master Jesus was.

But I did not see sin; for I believe it has no sort of substance nor portion of being, nor could it be recognized were it not for the suffering that it causes. And the Passion of our Lord supports us against all this, and that is his blessed will. And because of the tender love that our good Lord feels for all who shall be saved, he supports us willingly and sweetly, saying, "It is true that sin is the cause of all this suffering, but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*

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

Concluding Prayers before the Altar

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.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

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.*