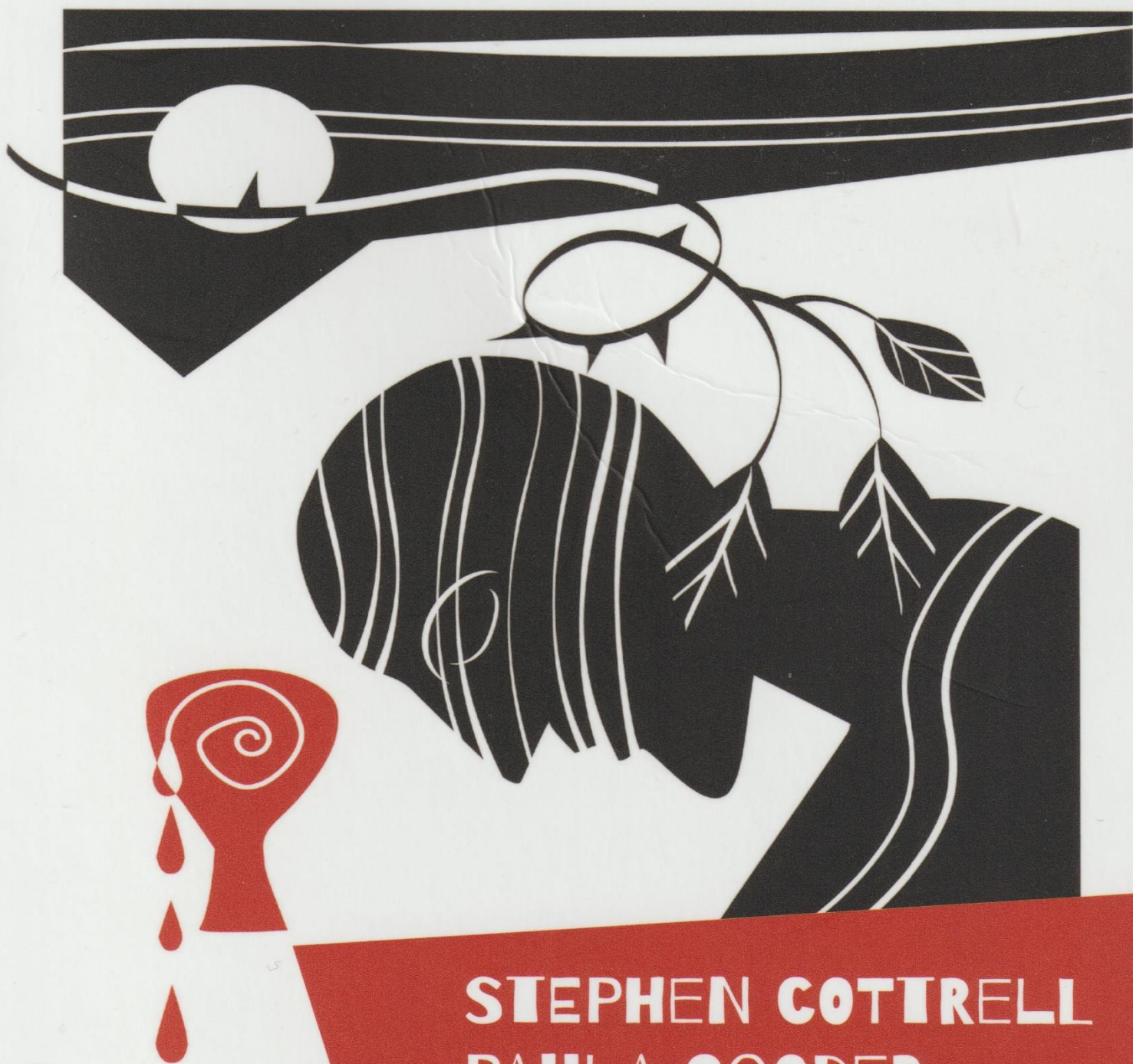


WALKING **THE** WAY **OF THE** CROSS

PRAYERS **AND** REFLECTIONS ON THE
BIBLICAL **STATIONS** OF THE **CROSS**



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The Gathering

The ministers enter in silence.

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit,

All **Amen.**

Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.'

Matthew 16.24, 25

Once we were far off, but now in union with Christ Jesus we have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood, for he is our peace.

Ephesians 2.13, 14

An appropriate greeting may be given.

A minister may introduce the service and then says

Let us pray.

A brief moment of silence follows.

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race
sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience
and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

¶ *Third Station:*
Jesus condemned by the Sanhedrin

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
All **because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Reading

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, 'We heard him say, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands".' But even on this point their testimony did not agree. Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, 'Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?' But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?' Jesus said, 'I am; and "you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power", and "coming with the clouds of heaven".' Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?' All of them condemned him as deserving death.

Mark 14.55-64

*Third Station:
Jesus condemned by the Sanhedrin*

Reflection A

by Philip North

'I am'

'I'm not upset that you lied to me. I am upset that from now on I can't believe you,' Friedrich Nietzsche is quoted as saying. Nothing is as corrosive of human relationship as lying. Most of us can handle mistakes, ineptitude, naivety, laziness and gross stupidity as long as they are done honestly. What infuriates us is being lied to.

Here we find Jesus surrounded by lies. The council of the Sanhedrin is stuffed full of people set up to give false testimony, and their lies are so stupid and ill-prepared that they even contradict each other.

In comparison to all these lies, the utter truthfulness of Jesus is almost shocking. 'Are you the Messiah?' the high priest asks in a question intended to trap. 'I am,' says Jesus. Simple as that. And those words 'I am' are much more than a 'yes.' In the Jewish Scriptures they are the name of God himself. It is not just that Jesus *speaks* the truth. He *is* the truth. In the midst of a courtroom full of liars stands the God of pure truth.

Jesus demonstrates the power of raw honesty. Here he stands alongside all those who, in a world of lies and fake news, tell the truth without fear. Those people (often unnamed and usually abused) who call out corruption, who give voice to the poor or who make a stand for justice in the workplace are Christ in our midst.

Reflection / Meditation

*Reflection or meditation may follow.
See pages 30–32.*

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were the victim of religious bigotry:
be with those who are persecuted by small-minded
authority.

You faced the condemnation of fearful hearts:
deepen the understanding of those who shut themselves
off from the experience and wisdom of others.

To you, Jesus, unjustly judged victim,
be honour and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal,
have mercy upon us.**

¶ *The Conclusion*

A response may be made to the preceding stations. This might take the form of praise, penitence, intercession or some other relevant action, accompanied by silence or singing.

Let us pray for the coming of God's kingdom in the words our Saviour taught us.

The Lord's Prayer is said.

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son
 Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world:
grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross
we may triumph in the power of his victory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

One of the following responsories is used

You are worthy, O Lamb, for you were slain,
and by your blood you ransomed for God
saints from every tribe and language and nation;
you have made them to be a kingdom and priests
serving our God.

All **We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

To him who loves us
and has freed us from our sins by his blood,
and made us a kingdom of priests
to stand and serve before our God;

**All to him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honour, glory and might,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

(or)

**All We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

Christ was manifested in the body,
vindicated in the spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed in throughout the world,
glorified in high heaven.

**All We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.**

The Lord be with you
All and also with you.

May God bless us,
that in us may be found love and humility,
obedience and thanksgiving,
discipline, gentleness and peace.

All Amen.

The ministers depart in silence.