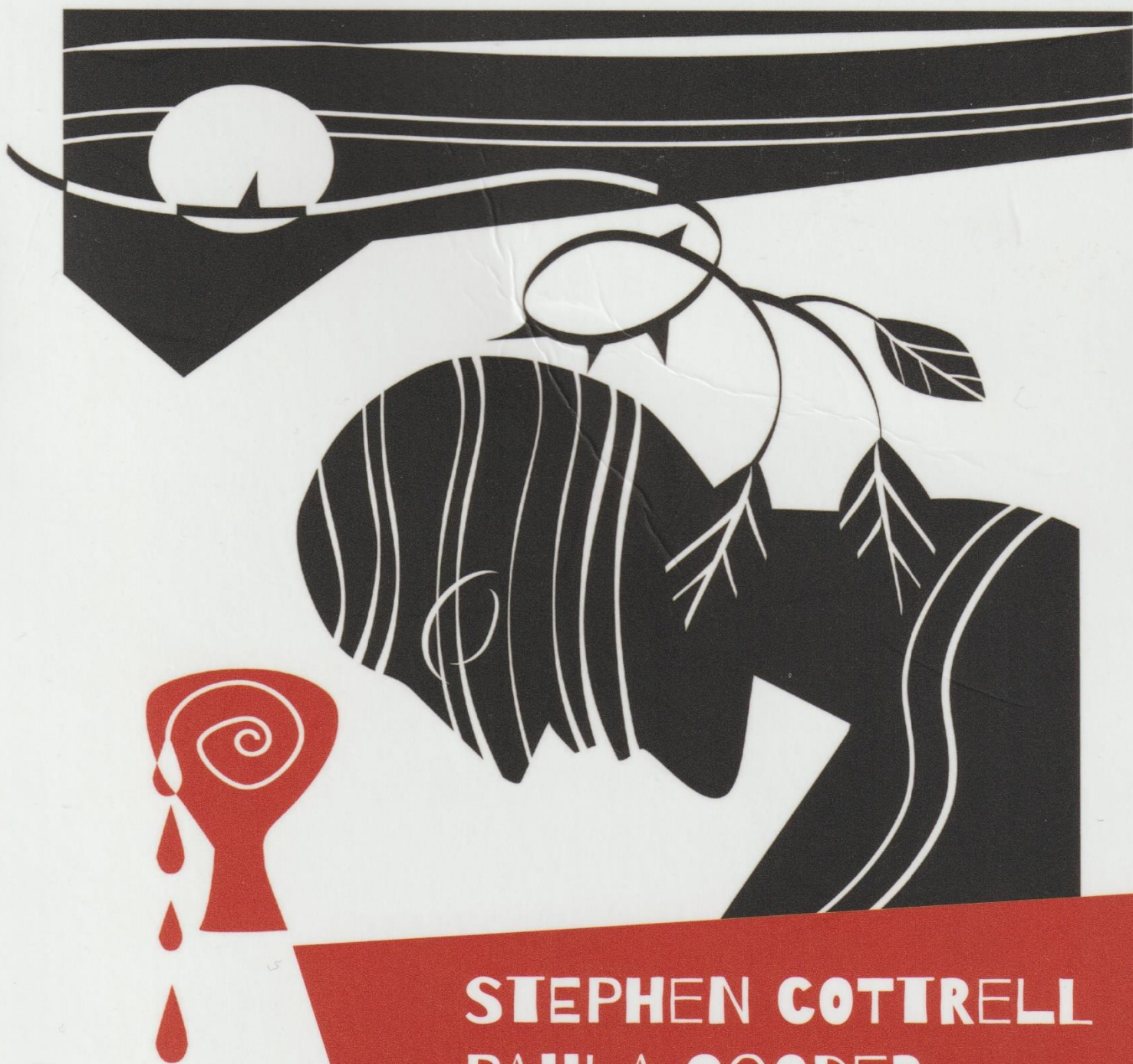


# WALKING **THE** WAY **OF THE** CROSS

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.**

¶ *Sixth Station:*  
*Jesus scourged and crowned*  
*with thorns*

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

**Reading**

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark.

And they clothed him in a purple cloak;  
and after twisting some thorns into a crown,  
they put it on him. And they began saluting him,  
'Hail, King of the Jews!' They struck his head  
with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in  
homage to him.

*Mark 15.17–19*

**Reflection / Meditation**

*Reflection or meditation may follow.*  
*See pages 48–50.*

*Sixth Station:  
Jesus scourged and crowned with thorns*

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## Reflection A

by Philip North

### *They spat upon him*

It must be revolting to be spat at, for your face to be covered in someone else's saliva and mucus, to taste it in your own mouth. Yet that is just one part of the appalling abuse that Jesus faces as the soldiers rough him up, ready for the cross.

The abuse is not just physical. It's mental. It's emotional. They pretend to worship him; they mock the kingly title that some had used of him; they press the thorns of a fake crown through his skin. It's horrible, humiliating abuse. And there is nothing Jesus can do. There is no point in fighting back or objecting. He just has to sit and take it.

As Jesus does so, he puts himself in the place of human suffering. Here he identifies himself with the child bullied in school, with the employee mocked in the workplace and with the victim of torture. Here he is alongside the victim of coercive control, the abused, the raped and the enslaved. Here he abides with the fearful and the anxious and those for whom the future is a thing of terror.

There are no quick fixes, no simplistic, instant solutions. He is just there with those who suffer, and remains there, lifting their pain onto his shoulders.

In Jesus, God locates himself with the victimized and the suffering. So when you suffer, Jesus is there with you in the midst of it.

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, you faced the torment of barbaric  
punishment and mocking tongue:  
be with those who cry out in physical agony and  
emotional distress.

You endured unbearable abuse:  
be with those who face torture and mockery  
in our world today.

To you, Jesus, the King crowned with thorns,  
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.*