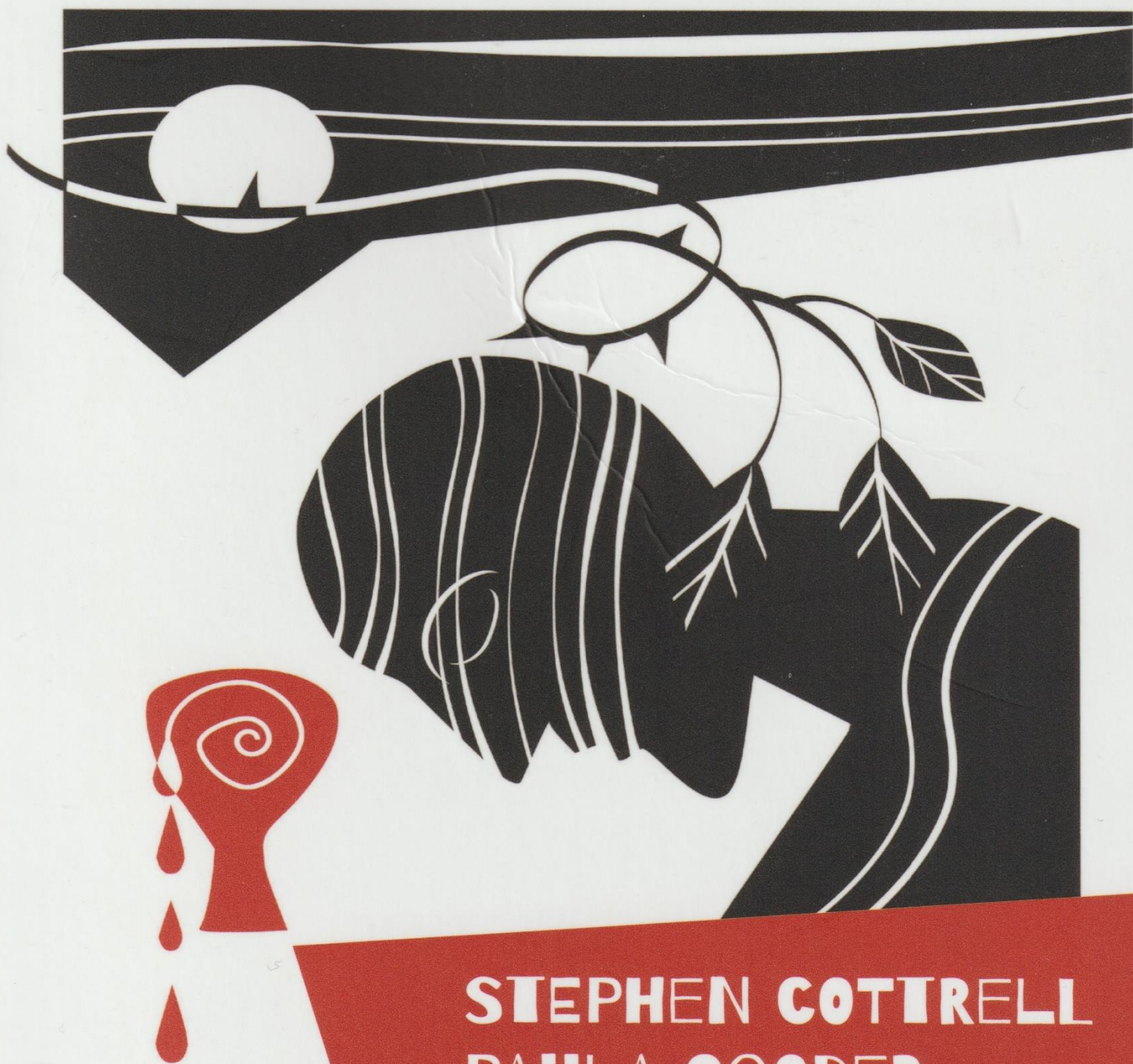


# WALKING **THE** WAY OF **THE** CROSS

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



**STEPHEN COTTRELL**  
**PAULA GOODER**  
**AND PHILIP NORTH**

## *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.**

¶ *Eighth Station:*  
*Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry  
the cross*

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.

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.

*Mark 15.21*

**Reflection / Meditation**

*Reflection or meditation may follow.  
See pages 60–62.*

*Eighth Station:  
Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry the cross*

---

**Reflection A**

by Philip North

*It was Simon of Cyrene*

Why Simon? Why was it him who was forced to undertake this demeaning, disgusting job of helping a condemned man to his place of death? There were numerous other people in the crowd. Why pick on Simon?

It could be his origin that gives it away. Simon was from Cyrene, a Libyan whose face or dress would have stood out in the crowd. He was an outsider and so easy prey for a gang of bullying soldiers.

Yet today we remember his name. And not just his name but also the names of his sons. By drawing near to Jesus in this hour of need, even though he had no choice, Simon found the dignity, the humanity, the personhood that the soldiers sought to deny him.

It's still all too easy to label people. Poor. Gay. Black. Jew. Immigrant. Youth. Then once we have labelled someone, we can bury their identities and strip them of their personhood. Labels negate the need for proper relationship and so are the first step in justifying prejudice and abuse.

Through his encounter with Jesus, the man from Cyrene becomes not a label, but Simon. So often in the Gospels it is the outsider – women, children, the outcast and the marginalized – who are closest to Christ and that is because in relationship with him they find an identity that others deny them.

To look at others as Christ looks at them is to see not labels, but precious individuals, loved beyond their wildest imagining.

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were worn down by fatigue:  
be with those from whom life drains all energy.  
You needed the help of a passing stranger:  
give us the humility to receive aid from others.  
To you, Jesus, weighed down with exhaustion  
and in need of help,  
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.*