

**Stations
of
the
Cross**

2021

Fr Brian Kealey

The First Station
Jesus is condemned to death

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

There is little that is, as it seems
Pilate is neither all powerful
Nor really interested in a vagrant preacher
Killing to the Romans simply a means of imposing discipline
Justice a naive concept
It is you and I that project respect
It is our needs that try to make sense of the absurd

Second Voice

This need to make sense places me in Pilate's seat
Neither all powerful
Nor really interested in the truth
I condemn and justify myself as useless
Avoiding the challenge of what I can do
Evading my participation
In the aspects of crucifixion that I am called to

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Second Station
Jesus receives the cross

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

Again it is the threat of pain
The symbol more powerful than the act
To kill was not enough to subdue
The victim's screams needed to echo in the brain
Obedience a willing escape
From the consequence of independence
Safety compliance and mediocrity

Second Voice

The symbol more powerful than the act
To touch, take on and expose
Fear failure concealed weakness
As real as the wood
But here the contradiction
Prepared for crucifixion
This life begins resurrection

I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will

The Third Station
Jesus falls for the first time

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

There is screaming and panic,
and pushing and power
As they herd the victims from train to chamber
In chains into stinking ships
Using fear to reduce with labour before death
And some fall
and are beaten

Second Voice

That the Son of God should fall
Through whom the stars and skies were formed
should accept human frailty
So who am I
In pride to condemn my weakness
Get up
Get up
Get up

*I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will*

The Fourth Station
Jesus meets his mother

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

Look now from this place
Beyond the soft romance and presentation
Through centuries of confusion
Past our needs
Past our fears
To this powerful woman
Prepared to suffer
And in real pain

Second Voice

To see from such a distance
From prayer to conception
From birth and the innocent love in Nazareth
To this confrontation
This sharing and letting go
As I too must share
And let go.

***My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Fifth Station
Simon of Cyrene is called to help carry the cross

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

He is dragged in
Wrong place, wrong time
Ordered to take up the burden of this victim
But who is he helping
The man so close to death
Or the powerful Legion
Who choose to preserve this specimen
The subject of their sport.

Second Voice

I don't know
Do I buy the drink
To preserve the peace?
Do I pamper the symptoms
To appease the patient
Am I helping?
Am I crucifying?
I don't know

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Sixth Station
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

Who did she see
Who did see recognise through the crowd
The victim
The criminal
The second-rate citizen
Was it a clear understanding
That here was a man

Second Voice

So many images
The news entertaining with disaster
Pain anaesthetised by familiarity
So look through the presentation
See beyond your comfort
The patronising position of your security
Then have the courage like Veronica
To act

I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will

The Seventh Station
Jesus falls for the second time

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

They want more
Not enough to destroy the body
They want the will
And Jesus falls
Through pain they seek submission
Probing beyond the physical
And Jesus falls

Second Voice

Trapped in this web of depression
With Jesus I fall
Taking poison for Cancer
With Jesus I fall
Reaching the years of frailty
With Jesus I fall
And with Jesus
I will arise
And go on

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Eighth Station
Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

They cry and wail
So sad for him
Keeping the distance
Between those who care
And those who fail
Safe maintaining the illusion
Of difference

Second Voice

This cross is ours
The crucifixion shared
That starving child is yours
These families are mine
The agony felt
A part of the life
Of those prepared to take with Christ this path

I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will

The Ninth Station
Jesus falls for the third time

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

Drained strained empty
There is no independence physically
What blows have not damaged
What cursing and cruelty have not cut
What is left
Is utter dependency
The son of God yields
The body has nothing left

Second Voice

When these bones have nothing
When I am close to death
When the kind nurse wipes my mouth
When they leave the room
So that I can be cleaned
Then Christ crucified share with me
The acceptance that becomes defiance

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Tenth Station
Jesus is stripped of his garments

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

Part of the ritual of humiliation
Is this stripping naked
Back to Adam's sin
But here the sinless one
Exposes our regret
Confronts the shame
We spend a lifetime covering

Second Voice

Take from me each layer
Remove the pretence
The cloak of wealth
The veneer of respectability
The trappings of security
In truth I have nothing but my love
That Lord is all that I am
have mercy on me a sinner

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Eleventh Station
Jesus is nailed to the cross

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

Insatiable
No justification no gratification
Those are the hands of God
Pierced and broken
Your act proves nothing
but the futility of your pride
While this humility
Redeems the world

Second Voice

I too crucify
One of this insatiable crowd
Draining the water
Burning the earth
Refusing responsibility
For My sister held down by production
My brother crucified by poverty

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Twelfth Station
Jesus dies upon the cross

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

This is where
the words lose meaning
the void too vast to cross
I am incapable of speaking
Deaf to all said
He is dead
I am lost

Second Voice

From the noise of violence
To this silence
From the impatience of the crowd
To these minutes hours days
I am beyond my senses
In this barren place and pray
Touch my life with love

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Thirteenth Station
Jesus is taken down from the cross

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

Unspoken strength
She wipes the blood
From limbs
first formed within her womb
She did not understand then
She does not understand now
Oh clement, Oh loving, oh sweet Virgin Mary

Second Voice

She is the faith
The one they seek to care for
She is the protection
The one they seek to serve
She is your mother
Fragile weeping accepting
Where the secret thoughts may be laid bare

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

The Fourteenth Station
The body of Jesus is placed in the tomb

*We adore thee Oh Christ and we praise thee
Because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world*

First Voice

There is still need for dignity
Ritual and familiarity
With spices and cloths
And a new tomb
This body placed into the earth
Having accomplished
At total cost

Second Voice

But there is no conclusion
They move away from the place
Meaning to return
But there is no return
Everything that was the same
Is now different
The new way begins

***I love you Jesus
My love above all things
I regret with my whole heart of having offended thee
Never permit me to separate myself from thee again
Grant that I may love thee always and then do with me what thou will***

Conclusion

So strange I can understand the death

So much easier than the resurrection

So sad I can appreciate the suffering

So much more than the joy

So I again begin this journey

To wherever it may take me

For there is always

More

There is always more

Have faith

Rejoice

There is always more