Reflections on
Stations of the Cross
Episcopal Migration Ministries
Lent 2020
www.episcopalmigrationministries.org
The ancient Christian practice of walking the *Via Dolorosa* or *Via Crucis* – the way of sorrows or way of the cross – invites pilgrims to prayerfully experience moments in Christ’s passion as they retrace his steps to Golgotha. In Jerusalem, pilgrims walk the world-worn steps of the Via Dolorosa until their journey concludes at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Around the world, in parishes and public spaces, and increasingly through the written word, we are all welcomed to walk the Way.

We thank you for joining Episcopal Migration Ministries this Lent as we journey the Stations of the Cross.

In this booklet, you will find the liturgy of the Way of the Cross from the Book of Occasional Services alongside reflections that correspond to the Stations. Our reflection authors represent a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds; each offers a poignant reflection on a Station and its relevance to migration and what it means to welcome the stranger as we would welcome Christ. Each reflection calls us back to our essential identity as beloved children of God and asks us to prayerfully reflect on the meaning of the Cross in a world being transformed by migration.

We encourage you to use this booklet as you meditate on each Station, whether physically in a church space or in the silence of your home and your heart.

To supplement your experience of this booklet, we invite you to pray the liturgy with us, and listen to each reflection being read by its author. You may stream or download the audio compilation at [www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/stations20](http://www.episcopalmigrationministries.org/stations20).

We pray you have a blessed and holy Lent. Through your Lenten journey, may you be drawn ever closer in relationship with our loving, liberating, life-giving God.

In peace,

Allison Duvall
Manager for Church Relations and Engagement
Episcopal Migration Ministries
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Meet the Reflection Authors

Station 1
“Ben” is a pastor, evangelist, and asylum seeker from Nigeria. He lives in the Southeast United States and continues to fight for his freedom.

Station 2
A native of Central Florida, Rushad Thomas brings a passion for the Gospel of Welcome to his role as The Episcopal Church Office of Government Relation’s Policy Advisor for migration issues. After working for three years on civic education and historic preservation/interpretation at the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation, Rushad made his way to Washington, D.C., where he has worked for a variety of organizations, from a higher education policy nonprofit to a grassroots political action committee. Immediately prior to OGR, Rushad served as a press advisor at the center-left think tank Third Way, where he provided counsel on strategic communication and press operations. Rushad holds a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Florida A&M University, a Master’s degree in Government and a Graduate Certificate in Political Management from Regent University, and a Master’s degree in Political Communication from American University. A member of The Episcopal Church since November 2013, Rushad currently attends St. Monica and St. James Church on Capitol Hill.

Station 3
The Rev. David Ulloa Chavez serves as the Missioner of Border Ministries for the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona. Prior to serving as Missioner, Fr. David served as Priest-in-Charge of Iglesia Episcopal Santa Maria and as Curate of Hispanic Ministry at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Phoenix, Arizona.

His service to the larger church includes being on the Advisory Council for the Hispanic Latino/a Ministries of The Episcopal Church and as a member of the anti-racism committee of the Diocese of Arizona. Fr. David is a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary where he completed his Master of Divinity and Master of Theology.

Station 4
The Rev. Cristina Rathbone is an Episcopal priest. She served for ten years as the Canon Missioner for the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston, working primarily with homeless and marginally housed women and men in that city. Together with the homeless community, she birthed a new faith community named as MANNA (Many Angels Needed Now and Always) which is now a thriving and multi-faceted ministry of the Cathedral. In 2019, Cristina spent seven months developing the new Bridge Chaplaincy Program for the Diocese of the Rio Grande, helping them find pastoral, incarnate and flexible ways to serve migrants and asylum seekers in Ciudad Juarez and El Paso.

Before being ordained in 2009, Cristina worked as a journalist and author. She is the author of two award-winning books of narrative non-fiction: On the Outside Looking In: A Year in the Life of an Inner City High School (Grove/Atlantic Press, 1998) and A World Apart: Women, Prisons and Life Behind Bars (Random House, 2005).
Station 5
The daughter of a Syrian immigrant and a first-generation German American, The Rev. Deacon Paula Ott was raised in a Jewish household in the Reformed tradition. She was baptized into the Christian faith in 1979, becoming an Episcopalian in 1982. In response to God’s call to her, she was ordained as a vocational deacon in the Diocese of Lexington in June of 2010.

Paula currently serves as deacon at Christ Church Cathedral in Lexington, Kentucky and St. Peter's Church in Paris, Kentucky. Her ministries include outreach, working with youth, and pastoral care. She has worked with immigrants to help them develop a clearer understanding of public school systems. She cares for her two granddaughters and serves as chaplain for her city’s fire department.

Station 6
The Rev. Francisco García is a PhD student at Vanderbilt University, focusing on Theological Studies and Ethics. A priest and former community and labor organizer, he also serves as an Assistant Chaplain at St. Augustine's Episcopal Chapel in Nashville. Prior to his doctoral studies, he served as an Episcopal school chaplain, and in leadership roles at two parishes--most recently as the Rector of Holy Faith Episcopal Church, a multiracial, multilingual congregation in Inglewood, California. Francisco convened and served as Co-Chair of the Sanctuary Task Force of the Diocese of Los Angeles, also known as L.A. Sacred Resistance, formed to implement a Resolution committing the Diocese to be a place of welcome, refuge, and sanctuary to members of the immigrant and refugee community and all who are targets of hate.

Station 7
Abraham Mwinda is a Congolese-born, Kenyan-raised singer and songwriter based in San Diego, California. His lyrics are birthed from life experience and real-life daily conversations with himself and others. His rhythms come from a rich home culture; his creativity draws each listener in to see a bit of their own story in every song.

You may learn more about Abraham on EMM's blog and Hometown podcast:
https://episcopalmigrationministries.org/where-is-home/
https://episcopalmigrationministries.org/meet-abraham-mwinda/

Station 8
The Rev. Gregory Han is a "half-Asian, midwestern-Raised, Jesuit-educated, Harvard-trained, Texas-residing, Presbyterian Minister." Since moving to Houston in 1998, Greg has worked at the intersection of religion, education, and dialogue. After a year as a hospital chaplain, Greg served Presbyterian congregations for eight years. He then taught courses in the study of religion and ethics, as well as English literature, for six years at the high school level. Since summer 2014, he has served as the Director of Interfaith Relations & Education at Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston. He is on the faculty of the Honors College at the University of Houston, and he also speaks and teaches widely across the Houston area. He holds degrees from Georgetown University and Harvard Divinity School.
**Elena Korbut** is the Community Engagement Manager in the Refugee Services Department at Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston. In this role, Elena works on connecting refugees to the local community as she believes that this connection is instrumental in helping refugees make Houston their home. Elena works with her staff, volunteers and the community in addressing the needs of refugee clients and designs projects and programs that meets those needs. Her passion for serving the refugee community is fueled by her experience as an immigrant and someone who is familiar with challenges one faces when moving to a different country.

Elena was born in Moscow, Russia and raised in Coimbra, Portugal. Elena holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Masters in Public Administration from Lamar University and Rice’s Leadership Institute for Nonprofit Executives (LINE) Certificate. Elena actively volunteers in the community through the Junior League of Houston.

**Station 9**

**Rob Coulston** is the lay campus minister at St. Augustine's Chapel, the Episcopal and Lutheran campus ministry at the University of Kentucky. Raised in the Diocese of Lexington, Rob has served in the church most of his life as a volunteer and professional, including as a director of Reading Camp, a literacy ministry in eastern Kentucky, as an intern at the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, MA, and as a youth minister in the Diocese of Upper South Carolina.

**Station 10**

Currently Canon for Immigration and Multicultural Ministries in the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, **The Rev. Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa**, Th.D. spent his early years in Rwanda, where much of his extended family still lives. In 1988 he earned a certificate in accounting and economics from the École d’Économie et de Commerce de Janja, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda, and then completed his Bachelor of Divinity degree at St. Paul’s United Theological College in Limuru, Kenya, in 1998. He was ordained to the priesthood in the Anglican diocese of Embu, Kenya. In 1999, he moved to Boston, where he completed his master’s degree in theological studies at Harvard Divinity School in 2001 and his doctorate in Ethics and Missions at Boston University in 2008.

His dissertation, “Cycles of Violence in Rwanda: Ethical Leadership and Ethnic Justice,” explores theological and ethical models for relationship that could be useful in curtailing centuries of violence in that nation. Before fleeing to Zaire in 1994 where he coordinated a small refugee camps at Évêché Anglican de Bukavu for a year, Ntagengwa held different leadership positions in Rwanda as Financial Administrator of an Episcopal hospital, Regional Representative in Butare of Banques Populaires and as a chaplain of a high school in Musanze. In the Diocese of Massachusetts, Ntagengwa has served as Director of Transition Ministries for six years, a supply priest, Associate Priest at St. Peter’s, Cambridge, Associate Priest at St. Paul’s, Brockton, Assistant Priest at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Mattapan and, before he joined the Bishop Staff, as Priest-In-Charge at St. John St. James Church in Roxbury. He also worked with the Refugee Immigration Ministry in Malden as Case Manager and Director of Direct Care.
He and his wife Christine live in Everett and have three children, Jean-Fidele, Peace, and Moses and one grandson, Josiah.

Station 11
**The Rev. Canon Amy Real Coultas** is Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of Kentucky. She serves on the board of Kentucky Refugee Ministries, which has worked with local congregations to resettle refugee families across Kentucky for 30 years. She is a native of Louisville, where she lives with her husband, Kevin.

Station 12
**The Rev. Jaime Briceño** is a transitional Deacon for Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, Director of Admission and Recruitment, and Digital Missioner for Bexley Seabury Seminary. Jaime is from Costa Rica, with a Master of Theology degree in Systematic Theology and Interreligious Dialogue from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Station 13
**The Rev. Matthew Dumont-Machowski** is a senior seminarian at Virginia Theological Seminary and has recently been ordained to transitional diaconate in the Diocese of Virginia. Originally from Poland, Matthew has lived his entire adult life as an immigrant on three different continents. Matthew moved to the United States from the United Kingdom with his husband in 2017. Prior to their move, he served as a research fellow and lecturer in Middle Eastern Politics and Security at the University of London. He has previously worked for the UK Houses of Parliament and political think-tanks in the UK and the Middle East. Matthew is passionate about interfaith relations, reconciliation, peace-making, and the refugee crisis around the world.

Station 14
**The Rev. Charles “Chuck” Wynder, Jr.** serves as the Officer for Social Justice & Engagement on the Presiding Bishop’s Staff of The Episcopal Church. He works to build capacity for advocacy, embodied witness, and community engagement around social and racial justice in communities throughout the Episcopal Church. His work includes building and enhancing local networks and leadership development.

Chuck previously served as the Executive Director of the Boston Workers Alliance. Prior to moving to Greater Boston to attend seminary, he served as Vice-President of Programs at the National Legal Aid & Defender Association. Chuck also served as the Executive Director of Legal Services of Eastern Virginia; as a Deputy Commonwealth’s Attorney in the Hampton Commonwealth Attorney’s Office and an attorney in the Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps. He served several years as an adjunct professor at Hampton University teaching Constitutional Law: Civil Rights & Civil Liberties.

Chuck studied at the Episcopal Divinity School, receiving his Master of Divinity in 2012. A Truman Scholar, he is a native of Hampton, Virginia and is a graduate of Syracuse University and the University of Michigan Law School. He is married to Bethany Dickerson Wynder. They reside in Washington, D.C. where they are raising their son Charles Allen Wynder, III (Chase).
The Liturgy of the Way of the Cross
The Liturgy of the Way of the Cross

From the Book of occasional Services\(^1\)

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Concerning the Service

The devotion known as the Way of the Cross is an adaptation to local usage of a custom widely observed by pilgrims to Jerusalem: the offering of prayer at a series of places in that city traditionally associated with our Lord’s passion and death.

The number of stations, which at first varied widely, finally became fixed at fourteen. Of these, eight are based directly on events recorded in the Gospels. The remaining six (numbers 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 13) are based on inferences from the Gospel account or from pious legend. If desired, these six stations may be omitted.

The form which follows is appropriate either as a public service or as a private devotion, particularly on the Fridays of Lent, but it should not displace the Proper Liturgy of Good Friday.

Traditionally, the stations are made before a series of plain wooden crosses placed along the walls of the church or in some other convenient place. With each cross there is sometimes associated a pictorial representation of the event being commemorated.

The hymn Stabat Mater (“At the cross her vigil keeping” Hymnal 1982, 158) has frequently been associated with this service, but is not an integral part of it. Selected stanzas of this hymn may appropriately be sung at the entrance of the ministers, and (after the opening devotions before the Altar) as the procession approaches the first station.

In the form which follows, the Trisagion (“Holy God”) is the chant recommended as the procession goes from station to station. Alternatively, the Trisagion may be used to conclude each station, and stanzas of appropriate hymns sung as the procession moves. It is appropriate that all present take part in the procession.

The presider at the service, whether clerical or lay, customarily leads the opening versicle at each station and reads the concluding Collect. The Readings (and the versicles which follow) are appropriately assigned to other persons.

\(^1\) Book of occasional Services, pages 46-63. Used by permission of Church Publishing, Inc.
The Way of the Cross

A hymn or other song may be sung during the entrance of the ministers.

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.

Presider 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.

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.

The procession goes to the First Station.
Station 1: Jesus is condemned to death
Prayers at the 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.*

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation; and they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him to Pilate. And they all condemned him and said, “He deserves to die.” When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. Then he handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

V. God did not spare his own Son:  
R. But delivered him up for us all.

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.*
Reflection on the First Station

By “Ben”

In this station, let us reflect, think, meditate, and know that the condemnation of Jesus to death on the cross was for a course. Jesus is condemned to a death that he chose to die in order to save us. This is what I call a death of love. This is Jesus the Son of God, who died that we may live.

All around the world, people are condemned to death because of their faith in Jesus Christ. Some become refugees. Refugees are people who migrate to another country from their country of origin due to war, famine, religious persecution, gang violence, or political unrest. They migrate here to seek refuge, protection, and a better life. Some of these refugees never planned on leaving their country. They never predicted or imagined that things would change for them drastically. But life is unpredictable. Persecution happens, war happens, and political unrest happens, all displacing people.

I know this because I had to flee my country to save my life. I preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Muslims in the northern part of Nigeria and was persecuted and threatened by Boko Haram for preaching the Gospel and doing charity work in the community. I came to the United States for protection. On arrival at the airport, I asked for asylum and was taken into detention, where I was imprisoned for over five years even though I never committed a crime. After searching for me, Boko Haram murdered some of my family members.

Jesus told us in the Gospel of Matthew (25:31-46) to welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, and clothe the naked. The question I want every one of us to ask ourselves is, have I done what Jesus Christ commanded us all to do? Have I welcomed a stranger today? Have I fed a hungry person today? Have I visited a sick person or the prisoner? Have I welcomed a refugee? Have I cared for the needs of someone condemned to the death of love?

About the reflection author:

“Ben” is a pastor, evangelist, and asylum seeker from Nigeria. He lives in the Southeast United States and continues to fight for his freedom.
Station 2: Jesus takes up his cross
Prayers at the 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.*

Jesus went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Like a lamb he was led to the slaughter; and like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth. Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

V. The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all:  
R. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

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.*
Reflection on the Second Station

By Rushad Thomas

After his condemnation to death and mocking at the hands of the Romans, the Lord Jesus summoned the courage and fortitude to press ahead with his divine mission of redemption. In reading the passage from St. Matthew’s Gospel that recounts the mocking the Savior endured as he was led away to be crucified, I am reminded of the persecution and reproaches often aimed at our immigrant brothers and sisters. The shouts of “go back home!” or “speak English!” that are often hurled at these new members of our national family wound the spirit not only of our immigrant siblings, but also of those of us who strive to build a welcoming community for them. How do we confront the hatred that comes their way?

The Savior provides our model in this station. In the face of unjust rebukes he soldiered on with his head held high, with the spirit of confidence that came from being the only begotten Son of our heavenly Father. We too are sons and daughters of our heavenly Father, called to take up the crosses in our lives in imitation of the Redeemer. As the Savior said in St. John’s Gospel, if the world hates you, know that it has hated me first. In the face of the hate and lies they hurl at our immigrant brethren, we must remember the truth from Holy God that should order our lives: we are his children, no matter our immigration status, our nation of origin, our skin color, or our native tongue. As the Lord begins his journey to Calvary, may we enter into the mystery of his suffering by recalling the universal, unconditional nature of his love for us: there are no borders, or foreigners, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

About the reflection author:

A native of Central Florida, Mr. Thomas brings a passion for the Gospel of Welcome to his role as Policy Advisor for migration issues in The Episcopal Church’s Office of Government Relations. A member of The Episcopal Church since November 2013, Rushad currently attends St. Monica and St. James Church on Capitol Hill.
Station 3: Jesus falls for the first time
Prayers at the 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.

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and was born in human likeness. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name. Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, and kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is the Lord our God.

V. Surely he has borne our griefs:
R. And carried our sorrows.

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.
Reflection on the Third Station

By The Rev. David Chavez

Just to be clear, this is what happens when the way of love challenges the way of Empire. This is how Empire brands those who resist the impulse to conform, to acquiesce, to stay put, to exist within borders of control, to uphold arrangements that benefit some; to live in such a way that one never calls into question the powers-that-be with the power of love.

When such branding, like a cross, is used to criminalize and dehumanize, it functions surreptitiously to justify the cruelty of a system that harbors the sentiment that “society must be defended” and in the same stroke perpetuates a social imaginary that fuels the idea of an impending danger that can only be staved off by fueling the allergic reaction to others—a strategy and message codified in logical, clear, coherent, and concise regulations and press releases.

And so Jesus and many a migrant fall under the weight of a branding meant to call into question their very worth as human beings, hermanas y hermanos, that we confess demonstrate and proclaim the image and love of God in real time. And so the Empire detains, disfigures, and isolates; it parades the criminalized and dehumanized in an effort to advance policies and practices of deterrence meant to quell the righteous impulse that fuels the visceral desire and risky journey toward liberation: an impulse rooted in the belief that every person harbors and deserves to live a life marked by dignity, safety, and justice.

And so, this is what it looks like to follow the way of love. It’s a call to stand with and fall with those who have been criminalized by a system too afraid to receive the gift of resistance to Empire, the gift of redemption from exploitation, the gift of renewal for the sake of a just, grace-filled, and welcoming abrazo. It looks like the kind of resistance that taunts the Empire as it insists that love is stronger than death, that the way of love is not rooted in an abuse of power nor the destruction of human dignity. It is a call to stand, fall, and go in the name of the one that showed us the way of love is the way of solidarity, mercy, and justice.

About the reflection author:
The Rev. David Ulloa Chavez serves as the Missioner of Border Ministries for the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona. Prior to serving as Missioner, Fr. David served as Priest-in-Charge of Iglesia Episcopal Santa Maria and as Curate of Hispanic Ministry at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Phoenix, Arizona.

His service to the larger church includes being on the Advisory Council for the Hispanic Latino/a Ministries of The Episcopal Church and as a member of the anti-racism committee of the Diocese of Arizona. Fr. David is a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, where he completed his Master of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees.
Station 4: Jesus meets his mother
Prayers at the 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.*

To what can I liken you, to what can I compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What likeness can I use to comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For vast as the sea is your ruin. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. The Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended.

V. A sword will pierce your own soul also:
R. And fill your heart with bitter pain.

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._
Reflection on the Fourth Station

By The Rev. Cristina Rathbone

Mary couldn’t do much. Even in the face of her son’s terrible and unjust suffering, she roused no protests, gathered no crowds, pleaded with no one. As far as we know, she didn’t even say anything. But she was there, present in love to her son even then witnessing, step by step, the depth of his suffering and by so doing, joining him in it. Again, it’s not much if you look at it one way. But it is everything too, of course. Because through her simple presence to and with him, Mary drew love back into the picture - and so transformed it for both of them.

This, it seems to me, is the work Mary did from the very beginning.

And it is the work we are called to also, even when it seems both too much and too little at the very same time. As I write these words, men, women, and children are being tortured and terrorized across the globe, and when they flee to our country for protection we are closing our eyes and shutting our ears and then sending them away by the tens of thousands.

In the face of Mary’s astonishing openness to the suffering of her son, my question, I guess, is simply this: Do I dare do as Mary did? Even as I acknowledge my inability to stop the suffering, do I dare open myself to both meeting and being met by its truth? I will be changed if I do, I know. And it will surely be terrible at times. But if I remain, the way Mary herself remained, if I stay, I know that I too will meet Jesus himself - alive in the people I meet, and in the depths of my own heart as well. Then, perhaps, I will finally be able to say:

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.”

About the reflection author:
The Rev. Cristina Rathbone is an Episcopal priest. She served for ten years as the Canon Missioner for the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston, working primarily with homeless and marginally housed women and men in that city. In 2019, Cristina spent seven months developing the new Bridge Chaplaincy Program for the Diocese of the Rio Grande, helping them find pastoral, incarnate, and flexible ways to serve migrants and asylum seekers in Ciudad Juarez and El Paso.
Station 5: The cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene
Prayers at the 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.*

As they led Jesus away, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus. “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

V. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me:
R. Cannot be my disciple.

Let us pray. (Silence)

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son came not to be served but to serve: Bless all who, following in his steps, give themselves to the service of others; that with wisdom, patience, and courage, they may minister in his Name to the suffering, the friendless, and the needy; for the love of him who laid down his life for us, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

*Holy God,*
*Holy and Mighty,*
*Holy Immortal One,*
*Have mercy upon us.*
Reflection on the Fifth Station

By The Rev. Deacon Paula Ott

Growing up in Cincinnati, Ohio, I was often in the company of Jewish adults whose forearms bore the tattooed identification numbers they received upon their arrivals at German concentration camps. They were treated worse than cattle in a herd in an attempt to remove them from the face of humanity. I heard stories of loved ones and lives lost, of torturous injuries incurred at the hands of doctors and guards who served in the camps. I heard of the many suicides of Jews who chose to take their own lives rather than endure another day’s existence in a concentration camp.

Years before I became a teenager, I knew the story of the S.S. St. Louis, the German ocean liner which sailed from Germany to North America with over 900 Jewish refugees on board trying to escape Nazi persecution. Turned away by Cuba, Canada, and the United States, the ship returned to Europe where many of those 900 were captured by Nazis and sent to their deaths.

I read, with a heavy heart, the plight of refugees who seek sanctuary and safety from the dangers and death imposed by drug cartels, militia groups, the ongoing chaos in the Middle East, and even refugees’ own governments. I see our country once again turning its back on those whose very lives hang in the very delicate balance between the humane and inhumane behaviors of others.

The trauma suffered by modern-day refugees will leave indelible marks on their lives just like the tattoos on the forearms of those whose experienced the terror of concentration camps. Of this I am certain. What of the children who have been torn from their parents’ embrace, only to linger under the confinement of our government? What of the refugee who sold all he or she had to escape war, rape, and starvation only to live for decades in refugee camps where food, clean water, peace, and solitude are scarce commodities?

The Fifth Station of the Cross depicts the event when Simon of Cyrene was pulled from the crowd to help carry Jesus’ cross. I cannot help but wonder what that event implies for us.

As Christians, we are called to a higher standard than the banners of nationalism and prejudice, of turning our backs on those whose languages and customs are different from ours. Rather, we are called to be glorious standard bearers of Christ, who bids us to love our neighbors even as we love ourselves. We are called to take up and carry Jesus’ cross, to raise it high in the face of all that is unjust, of all that denies love and is unacceptable to the loving spirit of our Savior. How shall the world know we are Christians if we do not show Christ’s love for our neighbors both near and far?

About the reflection author:
The daughter of a Syrian immigrant and a first-generation German American, Paula was raised in a Jewish household in the Reformed tradition. She was baptized into the Christian faith in 1979, becoming an Episcopalian in 1982. In response to God’s call to her, she was ordained as a vocational deacon in the Diocese of Lexington in June of 2010. Paula currently serves as deacon at Christ Church Cathedral in Lexington, Kentucky and St. Peter’s Church in Paris, Kentucky.
Station 6: A woman wipes the face of Jesus
Prayers at the 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.

We have seen him without beauty or majesty, with no looks to attract our eyes. He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not. His appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of men. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed.

V. Restore us, O Lord God of hosts:
R. Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

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.
Reflection on the Sixth Station

By The Rev. Francisco García

Who was this woman who, according to popular tradition, engaged in this seemingly simple yet radically compassionate and risky gesture towards Jesus at his moment of great suffering? At this point on Jesus’ journey towards crucifixion, a crown of thorns had been forcefully placed upon his head, and he also had been brutally struck with reeds. The Sixth station says that “his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance.” It is at this moment, on the way to Golgotha, that this woman approached Jesus and wiped the blood and sweat off of his marred face. She later became known as Veronica, derived from Vera Icona (true image), because in the Stations of the Cross tradition it is said that when she wiped Jesus’ face, the true image of Jesus remained on the veil. Most likely, Veronica represents the many nameless women who followed Jesus to Jerusalem and “provided for him” according to the Synoptic gospels (Mt 27:55; Mk 15:41).

I’m reminded of the countless nameless women—mothers, teen girls, and younger—who have made the treacherous journey of migration, fleeing economic despair, persecution, and violence, in order to have just a small taste of freedom, dignity, and well-being. Like Veronica, their actions were desperate, risk-filled, and motivated by love. Yet who wipes the faces of these women and girls at a time of their greatest suffering and need? Who stands in risk-filled love, compassion, and solidarity with families who are being crucified by border walls, xenophobia, and lack of due process? Veronica, in her bold act of love, was giving back to Jesus what he had modeled for his followers—love one another as I have loved you. As people of the Jesus Movement, we are called to do no less today.

About the reflection author:
Francisco García is a PhD student at Vanderbilt University, focusing on Theological Studies and Ethics. A priest and former community and labor organizer, he also serves as an Assistant Chaplain at St. Augustine’s Episcopal Chapel in Nashville. Prior to his doctoral studies, he served as an Episcopal school chaplain, and in leadership roles at two parishes, most recently as the Rector of Holy Faith Episcopal Church, a multiracial, multilingual congregation in Inglewood, California. Francisco convened and served as Co-Chair of the Sanctuary Task Force of the Diocese of Los Angeles, also known as L.A. Sacred Resistance, formed to implement a Resolution committing the Diocese to be a place of welcome, refuge, and sanctuary to members of the immigrant and refugee community and all who are targets of hate.
Station 7: Jesus falls for a second time
Prayers at the 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.

Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.

V. But as for me, I am a worm and no man:
R. Scorned by all and despised by the people.

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.
Reflection on the Seventh Station

By Abraham Mwinda

It's so comforting to know that our Lord Jesus can relate directly to my story. It sure has not been an easy journey to get to where I am today. It's felt like a long walk with a big cross on my back. There are days when my spirit was so exhausted to hope or keep moving. In moments like that, prayer kept me going. How beautiful it is to know that, my prayers were going straight to my Heavenly Father who fully understands me and knows exactly how I felt.

I think about Jesus's walk to the cross. Everything he did in his ministry was leading up to this moment. He knew that it wouldn't be easy but he knew the victory that was on the other side for the people that he loved the most. Because of this he endured the cross. What a hope to know. This hope carried me in the dark days. On days when I was weak, I was able to be gracious towards myself and not beat myself up when I remembered that the walk was tough for Christ too; he fell along the way. Just like Simeon of Cyrene was able to help carry the cross, I can rely on Him to help me carry my burdens when they get heavy.

About the reflection author:
Abraham Mwinda is a Congolese-born, Kenyan-raised singer and songwriter based in San Diego, California. His lyrics are birthed from life experience and real-life daily conversations with himself and others. His rhythms come from a rich home culture; his creativity draws each listener in to see a bit of their own story in every song.

You may learn more about Abraham on EMM’s blog and Hometown podcast:
https://episcopalmigrationministries.org/where-is-home/
https://episcopalmigrationministries.org/meet-abraham-mwinda/
Station 8: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem
Prayers at the 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.*

There followed after Jesus a great multitude of the people, and among them were women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning to them said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.”

V. Those who sowed with tears:
R. Will reap with songs of joy.

Let us pray. *(Silence)*

Teach your Church, O Lord, to mourn the sins of which it is guilty, and to repent and forsake them; that, by your pardoning grace, the results of our iniquities may not be visited upon our children and our children’s children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Holy God,*
*Holy and Mighty,*
*Holy Immortal One,*
*Have mercy upon us.*
Reflection on the Eighth Station

By Rev. Gregory Han with Elena Korbut

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem. Much like the woman wiping the face of Jesus to offer Him comfort and love, we at Interfaith Ministries welcome the stranger and treat our refugee families like family with open arms as they work to settle into their new lives.

The Stations of the Cross narrative is filled with pain and suffering, as we are reminded of our own worst moments and fears.

- Jesus is suffering at the hands of state-sanctioned violence.
- In this time of violence, he stops, though, to mourn with those who mourn, especially with those who were near the bottom of the social structure at the time.

At Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston’s Refugee Services department, we work with refugee families who have come to America fleeing violence, often violence either sanctioned by the state, supported by the state, or tacitly endorsed by the state. Women and children have often been the most vulnerable in these situations. We look to many faiths and values within faiths to support our work: “the strength of shared beliefs” is at the core of our mission. Drawing from the Christian tradition and this story of Jesus’ final walk to his own death, we find strength and encouragement, resolve and determination, in seeing that Jesus noticed the women who were mourning, the women who had found in Jesus someone who respected them, and we do the same. Our Women’s Empowerment Group provides a safe space for refugee women and their children to connect to each other, to relevant resources in their new home, as well as members of our Houston community that volunteer tirelessly with the group.

Jesus tells the women of trials that are to come. Yet, perhaps in this example of Jesus’ actions, we also find a model. Comforting does not mean we wash over the difficulties or that we ignore the pains of the past and arrogantly boast of some bright future. And the same is with the women we work with: they have come through challenging, even horrific, events to come to America, and we do not ignore those. What we do find is that these past stories are the seeds of present strength; they are brave and resilient women who rely on their past stories to build their new lives in Houston and make our diverse community stronger and more resilient.

About the reflection authors:
The Rev. Gregory Han is a "half-Asian, midwestern-Raised, Jesuit-educated, Harvard-trained, Texas-residing, Presbyterian Minister." Since summer 2014, he has served as the Director of Interfaith Relations & Education at Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston.

Elena Korbut is the Community Engagement Manager in the Refugee Services Department at Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston. Her passion for serving the refugee community is fueled by her experience as an immigrant and someone who is familiar with challenges one faces when moving to a different country.
Station 9: Jesus falls a third time
Prayers at the 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.

I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light. He has besieged me and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me dwell in darkness like the dead of long ago. Though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer. He has made my teeth grind on gravel, and made me cower in ashes. “Remember, O Lord, my affliction and bitterness, the wormwood and the gall!”

V. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter:  
R. And like a sheep that before its shearers is mute, so he opened not his mouth.

Let us pray. (Silence)

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Holy God,  
Holy and Mighty,  
Holy Immortal One,  
Have mercy upon us.
Reflection on the Ninth Station

By Rob Coulston

When I think about this station on the Way of the Cross, I usually find myself thinking about the “a third time” portion of the title. Falling three times and then summoning the strength and motivation to rise each time. How much pain and anguish must that have caused? How soul-crushing to fall again? But to an outside observer, to one who had just come across this scene in Jerusalem, they would have just seen Jesus fall once. To that person, this is Jesus’ only fall. Or, to an observer even further down the road, who never sees Jesus fall, how can that person know the path Jesus has walked?

We are those witnesses. Human compassion and our Christian duty dictate that we lift up the stranger, the other, when they fall; that we lift them up regardless of the path they have taken. We don’t know how many times our refugee brother or our immigrant sister has fallen, and it doesn’t matter. We see their suffering abroad and invite them here, or we see it here and are compelled to serve them in their need.

It is easy to get caught up in Jesus’ divinity in our prayers and devotions, but today, let us recognize Jesus’ humanity and let us recognize that through our humanity we are connected to him and to his divinity. In his ministry he saw the stranger, had compassion, and acted to lift them up when they fell. Let us see the stranger and the other in the way Jesus did, and let us act as Jesus acted.

About the reflection author:
Rob Coulston is the lay campus minister at St. Augustine's Chapel, the Episcopal and Lutheran campus ministry at the University of Kentucky. Raised in the Diocese of Lexington, Rob has served in the church most of his life as a volunteer and professional, including as a director of Reading Camp, a literacy ministry in eastern Kentucky, as an intern at the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, MA, and as a youth minister in the Diocese of Upper South Carolina.
Station 10: Jesus is stripped of his garments
Prayers at the 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.

When they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And they divided his garments among them by casting lots. This was to fulfill the scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them; they cast lots for my clothing.”

V. They gave me gall to eat:
R. And when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

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.
Reflection on the Tenth Station

By The Rev. Canon Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa

Dear Friends in Christ,

Today we are meditating on the Tenth Station of the Way of the Cross. Jesus is stripped of his garments. At the foot of the cross, soldiers drew lots to divide Jesus’ garments. He was stripped naked and stood exposed before the world. This was an act of humiliation par excellence; an attack on his moral dignity, his purity, and his manhood. And this, we are told, was all about to fulfill the scripture. In other words, He did it willingly. Stripping Jesus of his clothing proved that He was willing to sacrifice his humanity for our salvation. Eddie Cloer tells us that this public humiliation of removal of his veil of privacy and modesty was an aspect of martyrdom that the early saints dreaded the most. Surely, Jesus must have dreaded this act.

Back in 2017, a group of us from the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts travelled to Israel for a Holy Land pilgrimage. One of the activities we did the day before the last was that early in that morning we walked the “way of the Cross.” As we were saying prayers related to the Station when Jesus was stripped of his garments my mind visualized all the sufferings and humiliations that He went through. At that moment, I realized how our salvation was bought by Jesus’ humiliation and degradation and not a glorious event. To save humanity, Jesus became like us in every aspect of true humanity and submitted himself to the worst types of torture and mental humiliation. My thought also drew closer all types of, mostly human made, sufferings that are happening around the world: injustice, oppression, wars, and human displacements. I wondered about for how long that will continue.

Friends in Christ, during this time of Lent we are called to reflect on this saving act of Jesus. We are encouraged to think about its aim and meaning. We are urged to seek healings. We are asked to work towards the fulfilment of Jesus’ ultimate goal by praying and working for positive change. We are encouraged to support those organizations, such as Episcopal Migration Ministries, that are helping those who are suffering. And knowing that Jesus accepted to suffer for our salvation, we also are urged to pray for grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed in due time. Amen.

About the reflection author:
Currently Canon for Immigration and Multicultural Ministries in the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, The Rev. Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa, Th.D. spent his early years in Rwanda, where much of his extended family still lives. His diverse career has included accounting, finance, and economics, academia, refugee resettlement and case management, hospital chaplaincy, parish and diocesan-level ministry in Rwanda, Kenya, and Massachusetts. He and his wife Christine live in Everett and have three children, Jean-Fidele, Peace, and Moses and one grandson, Josiah.
Station 11: Jesus is nailed to the cross
Prayers at the 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.*  

When they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him; and with him they crucified two criminals, one on the right, the other on the left, and Jesus between them. And the scripture was fulfilled which says, “He was numbered with the transgressors.”

V. They pierce my hands and my feet:  
R. They stare and gloat over me.

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.*
Reflection on the Eleventh Station

By The Rev. Canon Amy Coultas

“By your holy cross you have redeemed the world.” This is the statement we make at the opening of each station as we follow in the steps of Christ’s passion. In this introduction, we proclaim we are moved to adoration and blessing because the cross has brought redemption for the whole world. As we move together through Holy Week, looking forward to Easter, we will be brought to the foot of the cross. We will witness as Jesus is hung to the wooden beams with nails driven into his flesh. It is not an abstract suffering: it is a real body enduring real pain. We will continue proclaiming that this crucifixion brings forth adoration and blessing because it witnesses to God’s experience of sacrifice on behalf of the whole world.

Our acts of adoration at the foot of the cross bring into focus our shared identity with all those crowded into its shadow; we stand in the same place with our siblings who face the most brutal human injustices and suffering. From the perspective of the hard wood of the cross, every human is equal and worthy of its saving embrace. There is no one who does not come within its reach. We cannot look at the faraway neighbor, the family crossing borders, or the desperate sea-drifter as any less present to its witness. All of us come to the cross with hope, looking for grace and merciful rescue. Its power to assure us of a new future falls over all who come into its shadow.

About the reflection author:
The Rev. Canon Amy Real Coultas is Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of Kentucky. She serves on the board of Kentucky Refugee Ministries, which has worked with local congregations to resettle refugee families across Kentucky for 30 years. She is a native of Louisville, where she lives with her husband, Kevin.
Station 12: Jesus dies on the cross
Prayers at the 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.*

When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold your son!” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And when Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, “It is finished!” And then, crying with a loud voice, he said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” And he bowed his head, and handed over his spirit.

V. Christ for us became obedient unto death:
R. Even death on a cross.

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.*
Reflection on the Twelfth Station

By The Rev. Deacon Jaime Briceño

Dear God! The pain and the suffering of those forced to move away from their homes is your pain and suffering. The pain and suffering of those forced to look for a better way of life is your pain and suffering. The pain and suffering of those forced to seek a better future, those forced to die for the inequality that plagues our world, is your pain and suffering.

You had taught us to see you always in the poor, the persecuted, the sick, the migrant. Yet still, it is so high a price that you have to die for us. What unjust a price it is, that anyone would die for the life of others, that anyone would die for the promise of a better future, that anyone would die for the abhorrent injustice which plagues our world.

Please help us, to all of us who see your crucified people, to have a soft heart: a heart that moves to action, a heart that longs for justice, a heart that never ceases to see you in this world.

Lead us, oh God, by your redeeming cross to never waiver in the fight for a better future for all your people. That our redemption will lead us to fight for justice, that your cross and the cross of your people will move us to action.

May our hearts be troubled, our minds changed, our voices raised, our lives transformed to see what lies ahead of death, to ensure that no one dies in vain, to be at the foot of the cross wherever it might be: in our nations, in our neighborhoods, in our borders.

About the reflection author:
The Rev. Jaime Briceño is a transitional Deacon for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, and is the Director of Admission and Recruitment and Digital Missioner for Bexley Seabury Seminary. Jaime is from Costa Rica, and holds a Master of Theology degree in Systematic Theology and Interreligious Dialogue from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.
Station 13:
The body of Jesus is placed in the arms of his mother
Prayers at the 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.

All you who pass by, behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow. My eyes are spent with weeping; my soul is in tumult; my heart is poured out in grief because of the downfall of my people. “Do not call me Naomi (which means Pleasant), call me Mara (which means Bitter); for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.”

V. Her tears run down her cheeks:
R. And she has none to comfort her.

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.
Reflection on the Thirteenth Station

By The Rev. Matthew Dumont-Machowski

When Jesus’ body is taken down from the cross, Mary’s child is finally at rest in her arms again. His face is clutched to her breast. Her arms are wrapped around his mutilated body. Her heart, which for years has beamed with love for Jesus, is now overcome by deep and unfathomable sorrow. At that very moment, fulfilling Simeon’s prophecy, her soul is pierced with a sword of anguish and unspeakable pain. Beneath the cross at Golgotha and embracing the body of God incarnate, Mary now holds the whole hurting world in her arms.

Mary lives in the hearts of all who to this day suffer oppression or grieve over loss and death. Over 4,000 forced migrants and refugees have died around the world since 2014. Millions of us have cried at the sight of Alan Kurdi – a tiny three-year-old Syrian refugee – lying face down on the shores of Turkey; his body washed up by the sea. ‘I should have died with them,’ cries his father who survived. Having all his dreams suddenly crushed, it seems like his whole life drowned with Alan and his mother. Such anguish is also shared by Tania Vanessa Avalos, a young Salvadoran mother who lost her daughter and husband to the rapids of Rio Grande. Just like with Mary at Golgotha, Tania’s soul has been pierced with a sword, too.

Yet, Mary knew that Christ died so that we may live. She knew that our darkness will eventually be overcome by Christ’s light. Jesus is the Redeemer of our souls, the one who brings consolation to all our pain and despair. May we, the living Body of Christ, continue to bring light into the dark places. May we stretch the mantle of God’s love over those who lost their lives to war and violence, and who grieve the loss of their fellow refugees and migrants.

About the reflection author:
The Rev. Matthew Dumont-Machowski is a senior seminarian at Virginia Theological Seminary and has recently been ordained to transitional diaconate in the Diocese of Virginia. Originally from Poland, Matthew has lived his entire adult life as an immigrant on three different continents. Matthew moved to the United States from the United Kingdom with his husband in 2017. Prior to their move, he served as a research fellow and lecturer in Middle Eastern Politics and Security at the University of London. He has previously worked for the UK Houses of Parliament and political think-tanks in the UK and the Middle East. Matthew is passionate about interfaith relations, reconciliation, peace-making, and the refugee crisis around the world.
Station 14: Jesus is laid in the tomb
Prayers at the 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.*

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb.

V. You will not abandon me to the grave:
R. Nor let your holy One see corruption.

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.*
Reflection on the Fourteenth Station

By The Rev. Charles “Chuck” Wynder, Jr.

Jesus, your body is prepared for burial. Joseph gave you his own tomb. He laid your body there and rolled a large stone in front of it, then went home.

Walking the stations of the cross provides us an opportunity to experience Jesus as the embodiment of the crucified classes of people in the world. If we understand Jesus as a poor Palestinian Jew living everyday as a subject of the Roman Empire, we can better relate to those among us whose “backs are against the wall.” It is the disinherited among us who like Jesus bear the burden of the cross. As we come to the 14th Station of the cross, my invitation to you is to envision the crucified people of our times. Who do you see? Is it the two-year old child who has been separated from her mother, her father, her siblings, and cousins now jailed in a cage at the border? Is it the formerly incarcerated person who no one will hire and is homeless, hungry and unable to vote? Or, is it the young Black and Brown families that breathe the fumes of the manufacturing plants and the bus terminal intentionally placed on their side of town? Perhaps it is the family who lives in a food desert where the only place to purchase food is the local gas station or convenience store where fruits, vegetables, and meat are not sold.

The 14th station also invites us to mirror Joseph’s response to witnessing the crucified body of Jesus. Joseph takes Jesus’ disowned body and lays it with love in Joseph’s own tomb. He goes beyond himself and turns his back on himself through his loving actions. How can we do the same in our accompaniment of the crucified classes of people in our communities? What will we do individually and in community to embrace the bodies and needs of the dispossessed, dispossessed, and disowned? Let us re-remember Joseph’s actions as part of our commitment to repent and live anew in love and compassion.

About the reflection author:
The Rev. Charles “Chuck” Wynder, Jr. serves as the Officer for Social Justice & Engagement on the Presiding Bishop’s Staff for The Episcopal Church. He works to build capacity for advocacy, embodied witness, and community engagement around social and racial justice in communities throughout the Episcopal Church.

Chuck studied at the Episcopal Divinity School, where he received his Master of Divinity in 2012. A Truman Scholar, he is a native of Hampton, Virginia and is a graduate of Syracuse University and the University of Michigan Law School. He is married to Bethany Dickerson Wynder. They reside in Washington, D.C. where they are raising their son Charles Allen Wynder, III (Chase).
Prayers before the Altar

The liturgy of the Way of the Cross concludes before the altar.

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.