

Responses for The Way: Stations of the Cross for Survivors of Abuse

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Introductory Prayers

All: In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Reader 1: Prayer Before the Crucifix

All: Look down upon me, good and gently Jesus, while before You I humbly stand, and, with a burning soul, pray and beseech You to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, while I contemplate with great love and tender pity Your five wounds. Pondering over them within me, I call to mind the words which David, Your prophet, said of You, my good Jesus: "They have pierced my hands and feet; they have numbered all my bones." Amen.

Reader 2: Lord, as we prepare...

All: We bring with us on this journey our confusion and crushed hopes of the past, our present feeling that You have stirred up, and our renewed hopes for a future of abundant life for which You became flesh, suffered, and died ...for me, Lord, ...for me. Spark in me an increased well of gratitude for Your love of me, a love that has no limits or expectations, a love for me that just is and has been ever since the moment of my conception. Inscribe in my heart a visceral certainty that it was not I that chose You, but You that chose me. I am Yours. I want the abundant life of Your promise ...show me The Way, Lord. Amen.

Station 1

Reader 1: Station 1: Jesus prays in the garden. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus, we are here with You...

All: Lord, grant me the courage and strength of Your Son, Jesus, who in this moment revealed both His human and divine nature, begging for pain to pass Him, yet surrendering to Your will in order to achieve a greater good for Himself and for me. Jesus has shown me the beginning of The Way to conquer the effects of sin in the world – by allowing Your divine grace to flow through His human fear and dread, thus surrendering it to Your holy will. By His Passion, He attained His rightful place by Your side and resorted to me a connection to You that was destroyed in the Fall. Help me to draw on this great gift as I face the challenges of my healing from the sin put upon me by another. I cry out to You as Jesus did and believe that You will give me what I need to move into the abundant life promised by Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Reader 1: Isaiah 43: 1-3

Station 2

Reader 1: Station 2: Jesus is betrayed by Judas. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You...

All: Lord, I know in my mind that You never willed for the abuse I suffered to happen to me, that those who abused me chose to do these things to me without regard for Your will in his/her or my life. Sometimes it is still hard for me to believe this in my heart. Help me to see and understand wholeheartedly that all You want for me is good, but Your gift of free will is not something You will ever take back from anyone, no matter how they choose to use it. That includes me. I am free to choose where I go from here. Help me to choose the path of love – for myself, for others, for You – and not the path of resentment of others, You, or myself. Heal me, Lord; help me know in my heart that You cry multiple tears for every tear I shed for the hurt that has been done to me.

Reader 1: Psalm 23:4

Station 3

Reader 1: Station 3: Jesus is denied by Peter. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You...

All: Lord, I know You won't deny what I truly need. Right now, what I truly need is to be close to You, to experience Your love and nearness. But I am afraid. I'm not sure what pure love is, and nearness often freezes my heart as I brace for what it usually means for me... pain. Help me to be open to Your love and closeness, melt my heart that I may know what true pure love is, so that I may seek it in my daily life and make it the cornerstone of abundant life You so want for me.

Reader 1: James 5:13-16

Station 4

Reader 1: Station 4: Jesus is scourged. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You...

All: Lord, help me to see that I am not helpless anymore. I may feel this way at times, but it is a lie that the abuse I suffered has been telling me for years. I am no longer a youngster or inexperienced at life. I can decide what is best for me and find ways to bring it to life. The physical pain or the repression of pain will keep me trapped until the emotional helplessness I feel is put to rest. Remind me, Lord, of the adult You have helped me to become. Help me to recognize the actions I am still taking that don't serve me well anymore, which I don't need to do to protect myself, as I am no longer defenseless. You are my rock and my salvation, my shield and my guide. With You at my side, we can conquer fear and move forward.

Reader 1: Matthew 10:28-31

Station 5

Reader 1: Station 5: Jesus is crowned with thorns. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You....

All: Lord, I now see that the only thing that got You through Your abuse, especially the crowning of thorns, was holding fast to the absolute genuine truth that You were God's Son, a Prince among men, a King in Your own right. I can and must hold fast to that too. Your life, your death, and resurrection have secured me as a child of God too. Nothing – and I mean nothing – that I do, think, or that is done to me can change that, ever! All those ugly thoughts I have about myself are lies the abuse I suffered is telling me. I in no way brought on, deserved, or willingly participated in any of the abuse I suffered...any more than You did. I was living my life true to who You made me to be when I was used as a prop for another's selfish wants, just as You were. It was not and never will be my fault. The fault lies solely with those who abused me. Help me to see myself as You saw Yourself, a child of God... royalty. I truly am Your Prince... Your Princess.

Reader 1: 1 Peter 2:24

Station 6

Reader 1: Station 6: Jesus is condemned to death. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You....

All: Lord, I've been living my life in an atmosphere of condemnation of myself and those who have hurt me. I sometimes unwittingly put myself in situations even now that have me re-living the abuse I suffered, triggering flashbacks, or allowing myself to be mistreated in some way. I can't seem to shake off the certainty that this is all I deserve or the belief that this is all that life has in store for me. Help me to see the hope You offer, to absorb the stand You took for me as You faced Your certain death. Help me to take a stand for myself, to begin to believe that You have great plans for me in this life that will lead me to a glorious eternal life. There is a way out now, Lord; You are showing me The Way. Grant me the desire and conviction of heart to follow the path that You have paved for me. "I can do all things through Christ who is my strength." (Philippians 4:13)

Reader 1: Romans 8: 1-3

Station 7

Reader 1: Station 7: Jesus takes up His cross. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You....

Reader 1: My sister / my brother...

All: Lord, help me to see that embracing my cross will bring me to the abundance of life You have promised. This abundance can then minister to others who have their own crosses to bear. We need to choose to do what needs to be done so that we can open ourselves to the newness of life You have in store for us as we heal. In this, You give our suffering a meaning beyond human understanding. In

this, we show others the way as well. Lord, I thank You for Your example of perseverance in suffering. Help me to lean on You and our Father as I continue to walk The Way with You.

Reader 1: Matthew 11: 28-30

Station 8

Reader 1: Station 8: Jesus meets His mother. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You....

All: Lord, help me to recognize the family of faith and love You have put in my path along The Way to help me keep up my strength and renew my spirit. Help me to know when I need this from them and give me the courage to ask for and accept it. This is one of the many gifts You have for me along The Way; help me to embrace it and see it as coming from You... a gift of Your love for me.

Reader 1: Isaiah 50:7

Station 9

Reader 1: Station 9: Simon helps Jesus Carry His Cross. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You....

All: Lord, help me to recognize or search out those You have provided along The Way to help me make sense of all the confusion and lies that the abuse I suffered has left me with. Help me to know when I need their gift of the Holy Spirit and give me the courage to reach out for it and accept it when it arrives. This is one of many gifts You have for me along The Way; help me to embrace it and see it as coming from You... a gift of Your love for me.

Reader 1: Luke 10: 33-34

Station 10

Reader 1: Station 10: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You....

All: Lord, grant me the courage to open myself to help from others. It is only in connecting to another heart that we are reminded of our human dignity. If we are not sure now that we have the skills to do this, we can at least acknowledge that those skills exist and there are ways for us to learn them. Lord, help me to recognize that You did not create me to live alone, that I am part of the human family and that only in communion with others can I realize the abundant life You have promised me. This is one of the many gifts You have for me along The Way. Help me to embrace it and see it as coming from You... a gift of Your love for me.

Reader 1: Psalm 27:1

Station 11

Reader 1: Station 11: Jesus is falls. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You...

All: Lord, You and I both know that I will fall many times along The Way. The fall is not the issue; it is how I choose to respond to it that counts. I can stay by myself on the ground in the pain and sorrow and dirt and grit that I find myself in, or I can reach out for help in rising and continuing on my way. Grant me the courage and humility to reach out for help to those You have put in my life as a gift of Your love... family, friends, doctors, 12-Step programs, spiritual directors, counselors, and my faith community. Do not let me live as an island, Lord; I cannot go this road alone.

Reader 1: John 16:32-33

Station 12

Reader 1: Station 12: Jesus is nailed to the cross. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You...

All: Lord, here with You at the foot of the cross is where I can choose to give up crucifying myself for the abuse I suffered, stop putting myself down as mattering less than others, cease condemning myself for what I had to do to survive, and stop blaming myself for not feeling able to change. Here I choose to nail the abuse I suffered to the cross with You, and allow You to take on my pain, my wounds, my past... and heal them. Here, I let go of blaming myself for the abuse. Here I choose You, Lord. You chose victorious death for me; help me to choose abundant life for You, for myself, for my life!

Reader 1: Isaiah 53:4-5

Station 13

Reader 1: Station 13: Jesus is dies on the cross. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are still with You...

All: Lord, gratitude is welling in my heart. Your sacrifice for love of me is beyond words to express. Help me to express my gratitude for Your love of me by walking The Way every day, choosing The Way to abundant life each morning, and leaning on You each day to make it happen. You are giving me a sense of relief, release, a new beginning unlike anything I've ever known before. Although I may lose the feeling of this "high" in the days to come, help me to hang on to the conviction of its truth; that You are the Way and the Truth and the Life!

Reader 1: Psalm 147:3

Station 14

Reader 1: Station 14: Jesus is laid in the tomb. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Jesus we are here with You...

All: Lord, again, thank You. Thank You a thousand, million times! You have renewed our trust in You by showing us how to surrender to what Your love can do for us. You are awesome, amazing, mighty, powerful, and wonderful! I will praise You all my days, the good and the not so good. You have shown me The Way to new life. I adore You and I bless You because by Your holy cross You have redeemed my life, my heart, my soul!

Reader 1: Psalm 118:17

Station 15

Reader 1: Station 15: Jesus rises from the dead. We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

All: Because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.

Reader 2: Cornithians 15:54

All: Alleluia, He is risen! Jesus, we cannot contain our joy and happiness that You conquered death – Yours and ours! God our Father never had as His plan a living death for me; He created me for an abundant life of knowing, loving, and serving Him. Thank You, Lord, for taking my wounds and my past onto Yourself and into the tomb in which You were laid. Now that You have come forth from the grave, You have left all of those wounds in the death You left behind. I am free to choose the life God wants for me, free to learn ways to live abundantly, love freely, and trust in You, Jesus, who loves me as I am, including my wounds of the past, which You have begun to heal and will continue to heal. For You promised us: “...I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live...” (John 11:25) I love You, Lord, and I thank You for Your love of me!

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Responses are excerpts from *The Way: Stations of the Cross for Survivors of Abuse* by Sue Stubbs (2020) available on Amazon.

