



A SCRIPTURAL WAY OF THE CROSS

**Eastbourne Men's Way of the Cross
(Friday, March 22, 2024)**

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, you of infinite power, glory, and mercy, you sent us your Son so that we might be cleansed of all our sins and live forever in your house. With your grace bless us as we gather in fellowship, so that we may learn from your example and be surefooted on our path to righteousness. Amen.

Men of St Joseph

A Scriptural Journey

Based on those celebrated by Pope John Paul II on Good Friday 1991

And

Inspired by the writings of St. John Henry Newman

Compiled for the Men of Saint Joseph by Neil Taylor

We are all called to pick up our cross. As Christ said “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. What will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?” (Mt. 16:24-26).



In this season of Lent, we are called to contemplate our past, and the days to come. As we prepare to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord this time of prayer and fasting, is a time to remember that we are also called to follow Christ more deeply. By following Christ on his journey to the Cross through scripture reading, we hope to understand more fully what we are called to do in his name.

We, the Men of St. Joseph will develop a more profound relationship with God as we journey through the streets of Eastbourne and along the South Downs. Our pilgrimage of prayer takes place in the hours of darkness, a time of quiet prayerful contemplation.

The First Station - Jesus Prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

Location: Western Lawns

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Stand

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (26:36-41)

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou will." And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Sit/Kneel

Leader:

Prayers and love are learned in the hour when prayer has become impossible, and our hearts have turned to stone. Jesus knew that the hour for his departure had arrived, and he turned in prayer to his Father. If the hour and the cup could not pass, then he must let be what his Father wills. He returns to find his disciples not much help. On returning he finds them sleeping, 'in sorrow'. Jesus tells them to pray, not to be tested.

Let us pray:

O Lord, as you prayed in the garden, let your will guide us, may we be strengthened by your love and overcome the tribulations of life. Please help us to follow your path and accept your plan for us. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Second Station - The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

Location: Helen Gardens

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

All stand

Reader:

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark (14:43-46)

And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I shall kiss is the man; seize him and lead him away safely." And when he came, he went up to him at once, and said, "Master!" And he kissed him. And they laid hands on him and seized him.

Sit/Kneel

Leader:

God does not require of us the sacrifice of the body; God requires only the sacrifice of the heart and will. Jesus was betrayed by one of his most trusted disciples, opening the door to sin because of the lack of prayer, and powerlessness to fight evil. Violently taken, Jesus responds with love.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as you were rejected by one who was close to you, help us to recognize the false affections of others and let us not be enticed by earthly rewards. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Third Station - Jesus is brought before the Sanhedrin.

Location: Heathy Brow

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Luke 22:66-71

When the day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered, both chief priests and scribes; and they led him away to their council, and they said, "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I ask you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God." And they all said, "Are you the Son of God, then?" And he said to them, "You say that I am." And they said, "What further testimony do we need, we have heard it ourselves from his lips."

Sit/Kneel

Leader: As the sun rose in the east, accused of trying to destroy the temple. Jesus spoke the truth, fulfilling the teachings of the prophets. Unable to condemn him for cleaning the temple of corrupt practices and for being on the side of the poor. So, they invent the charge.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as our protector be our shield against false accusations, let your truth and love open the eyes of the accusers, so they can speak with truth and honesty, let us trust in your justice. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Fourth Station - Peter denies Jesus.

Location: RAF Memorial

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (26:69-75)

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a maid came up to him, and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean." And when he went out to the porch, another maid saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." And again, he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the cock crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: In times of great pressure, the darkness can fall all around us, After Jesus had been condemned and led away, he caught sight of Peter. It was painfully clear to see that Peter missed the opportunity to show a disciple's loyalty and leadership. With this and with God's will, the cock crowed.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, be our strength, always stand by us, and let us not be tempted by those who would lead us in the wrong direction, we vow to commit our lives to you, our faith, our hope, and our love are for you. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Fifth Station - Pilate judges Jesus

Location: Beach Head

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Mark 15:1-5,15

And 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 Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate wondered. So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas; and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: Persuaded by the chief priests, Pilate yielded to their demands and to avoid civil unrest. Representative of the mightiest military power on Earth at that time, Pilate is himself being judged, from the powerless, vulnerable one who stands before him.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as I carry the wounds of my earthly existence, help me to carry the weight of those times when I have sinned, sins that were mine, but I know will be forgiven by you. Amen

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Sixth Station - Jesus is Scourged and Crowned with Thorns

Location: Belle Tout Lighthouse

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: **A reading from the Gospel of John (19:1-3)**

Then Pilate took Jesus and scourged him. And the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and arrayed him in a purple robe; they came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: Ridiculed and beaten by soldiers, helpless in the eyes of his oppressors, and treated like a fool. Jesus will save them too. Like Jesus, we live in broken bodies in a world where the pain is all too evident, uncured, and ungrieved. Jesus is demeaned by his torturers. Abuse and death as a result of rage and impatience, all are created out of the same callousness of the torturer.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as my rock, my creator, let me take refuge with you, my pain is nothing when compared to that which was suffered by you for us, my pain is outweighed by your love for me, I give thanks that you are there in my hour of need. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Seventh Station - Jesus Bears the Cross

Location: Overlooking Birling Gap

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: **A reading from the Gospel of John (19:6,15-17)**

When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no crime in him." They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So, they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: We are called to take up our cross every day. God will send every one of us his cross, not as a burden but out of his love for us. We all experience suffering and that burden can at times be painful. However, with God's grace that suffering is transformed into something beautiful in a sinful world. Rather than being lost we find meaning in this world and the next.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, that you took up your cross so we may be saved, help us to gain strength from your teachings so we can pick up our cross daily. As you began your journey with the cross, as you bore your cross, help us to bear ours. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Eighth Station - Simon the Cyrenian helps Jesus to carry the Cross

Location: *Birling Gap Staircase*

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Mark (15:20-21)

And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him. And they compelled a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: We remember Simon of Cyrene as an ordinary person, like all of us, and for what he did for Jesus. Simon was drafted to hasten Jesus' crucifixion. We all need help and in his moment of suffering the need of Jesus reminds us of the humility of God. We accept God's plan for us all and at that time the soldiers were directed to choose Simon of Cyrene, the first to take up his cross and follow.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, when my strength fails, and my path is difficult, give me the spirit to overcome my suffering, and let my heart be pierced by the agony of Jesus as he carried his cross. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Ninth Station: Jesus speaks to the daughters of Jerusalem.

Location: *Beach Head Road*

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: **A reading from the Gospel of Luke (23:27-31)**

And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of 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. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never gave suck!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

Sit/Kneel

Leader: Citizens of Jerusalem these devout and strong-minded women, had rejected the norms of Jerusalem. Shifting the emphasis of their mourning from Jesus back onto them, He reminds them of the sorrow that is to come for those who reject Him. In speaking to them, Jesus foresees the suffering the Romans would bring down on the city. Likely these mothers' sons and daughters' same sentence as Jesus.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, your love is a great thing, as we bemoan our suffering help us to think of others and turn our works toward them, ultimately bringing us closer to you. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Tenth Station: Jesus is Crucified

Location: The Foot of Belle Tout

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: **A reading from the Gospel of Luke (23:33-34)**

And when they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left.

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: Jesus gave himself for us perfectly atoning for our sins. His love lacked nothing. By having complete faith in him we can be completely forgiven for all our transgressions. His crime was political, arranged to perpetuate the power of his accusers. Despite Jesus' apparent powerlessness, he is the one who will forgive and prevail.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, grant us a heart that is open, fully open to your love so we may never feel abandoned, and let us receive the Holy Spirit so we will have a place of refuge in your house. **Amen**

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Eleventh Station: Jesus Promises His Kingdom to the Good Thief

Location: Beach Head West Car Park

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Luke (23:39-43)

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Sit/Kneel

Leader: Described by some as the thief who stole paradise honored as a saint the good thief accepts his fate, as he turns away from sin, he sees Jesus as the eternal source of life. Saint Dismas is remembered and held up as hope for change for us all, no matter what we've done. Let us abandon our misery for the freedom found in the love and mercy of Christ. Having judged themselves in the face of God, the one who asked to be freed would fall the other in acceptance would rise.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, should I be so blessed as the good thief, let my sins not keep me from you, let me receive the gift of your salvation with open arms. My trust is in you. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Speaks to His Mother and the Disciple John

Location: Beach Head Chaplaincy HQ

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: **A reading from the Gospel of John (19:25-27)**

So, the soldiers did this. But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 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 from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: Jesus, in His dying moment, puts the needs of His followers before His own, committing the care of His mother Mary to his beloved disciple, John. At that moment we are brought into the family of God. As Mary was placed in the care of his disciple, our family bonds will be strengthened in Christ, and may we learn from Jesus in times of great hardship we will need to put aside our pain for the needs of others. As John accepted his role, we too need to recognise ours.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as we stand at the foot of your cross, we stand in your presence asking your forgiveness, gratitude, and grace. Let us take Mother Mary into our home and grant us pardon and salvation in our time of need. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Thirteenth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross.

Location: Heath Brow

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Luke (23:44-46)

It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus crying with a loud voice said, "Father into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: As we listen in this time of silence, it is now our time to hear the truth of the word. Jesus' death was his last act of unconditional love here on earth. This deepest of love, a willingness to give his human existence for us. This crowning event, an eternal turning point in history, opened the way for the reconciliation of man and God and the forgiveness of sins.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as you begin your journey to triumph over evil, let me give praise to your glorious victory which was accomplished for us. We acknowledge that there was none but you who was good enough to pay for our sins. We will never forget your sacrifice. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb

Location: Western Lawns

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of Matthew (27:57-60)

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 and departed.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: As we place ourselves in silence at the tomb of Jesus A silence that seeps into our very bones. For a time, the world seems to have stopped, Death has had its final say. Earlier Jesus had assured his disciples, "Unless the grain of wheat falls to the Earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces much fruit." (Jn 12:23-24) Jesus has become that seed from which we will be renewed.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father, as you surrender your human form it is time to rest before your great works continue, your new covenant is upon us. Help us to let go of our dependence on earthly wants, let us trust in you and what you have created for us. Amen.

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

The Fifteenth Station: Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

Location: Our lady of Ransom

Leader: We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You.

Genuflect

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

Rise

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of John 20:11-18

Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

Sit/Kneel

Leader: The extraordinary happened after Jesus was wrapped in his linen shroud and sealed in a tomb. The tomb is empty. There is no physical body! As we ponder and probe this mystery of emptiness, we prepare to meet our risen Lord, the one who is waiting for us to catch up with him, he who is walking our road. Jesus' passion and death is the sacrifice that unites us.

Let us pray, Heavenly Father you died for us on the cross and rose again from the dead so you will always be by our side. May you always be our defender. Help us to walk with your grace and celebrate with you in the plan you have for us. **Amen**

All Stand

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Additional Prayers

Come, Holy Spirit

V. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

R. And kindle in them the fire of your love.

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And you will renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of your faithful, grant that by that same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise, and ever rejoice in your consolation,

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hail, Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou amongst women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us, sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Amen.

Angel of God

Angel of God,
my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.

Amen.

Salve Regina

Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiæ,
vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve
Ad te clamamus exsules filii Hevæ
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia, ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos
misericordes oculos ad nos converte;
Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exilium ostende.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

Prayer for Peacemakers

Lord, make me an instrument of your
peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is discord, unity;
where there is doubt, faith,
where there is error, truth
where there is despair, hope;
where there is sadness, joy;
where there is darkness and light.

Divine Master, grant that I may not so
much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is dying that we are born to eternal
life. **Amen**