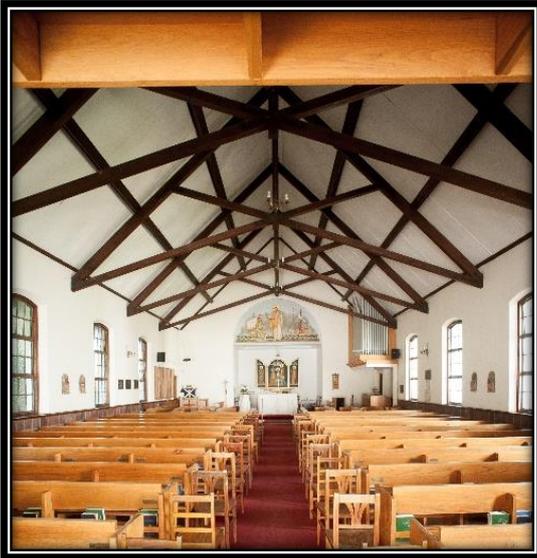


The Stations of the Cross

St Andrew's School for Girls



Our chapel is lined with 14 sculptures depicting The Stations of the Cross. Each station marks an event in the Passion of Christ, from being condemned to death, through the crucifixion and ending with His body being placed in the tomb. The sculptures were a donation from the Matric Class of 1978. They were restored in 2019. You can read about their history and restoration in an article 'Historic Sculptures at St Andrew's School for Girls Restored,' on theheritageportal.co.za. Prayerful meditation using the Stations of the Cross during Lent is traditional in many Christian churches. In recent years, the senior school has

walked in silence to different parts of the school grounds to create the sense of a pilgrimage while praying through the Stations of the Cross. The chapel, with its 14 sculptures, is the focal point where candles are lit in silent contemplation. This guide is designed to help you experience our Stations of the Cross from home.

Today we take the **Way of Sorrow** with Jesus, symbolically following his last steps on earth before his crucifixion, finding a way to share in his suffering and sacrifice, and to give and receive his compassion.

Wherever you are, you may wish to mark a path for yourself to follow physically as you move between stations, or find a comfortable place, preferably outside, where you won't be disturbed. Light a candle to be your companion on this inward journey.

The entire experience is a prayer. Some words are suggested for you to repeat in your mind between stations, or you may pray your own responses.

You may divide this meditation over several days.

Much of the focus of Easter is on the resurrection on Easter Sunday, but it makes no sense if we don't also focus on Good Friday and the events leading up to Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We pray that we will be open to everything that Jesus wants us to see, hear and understand.

Begin by standing.

The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Die.

The elders and the scribes took Jesus to Pontius Pilate, saying 'He deserves to die.' Jesus was condemned unjustly by those who did not understand him and by those who were frightened of what he did and said. Perhaps they sensed that this man could make a difference, that he could turn their world upside down. Pilate allowed the prejudice of others to skew his judgement and he sentenced an innocent man to death.

Prayer: *We judge others who are different from us. We disregard people based on assumptions, without bothering to find the truth. Change our hearts that we may see with new eyes those we might condemn. Amen.*

Repeat: *'Let the one who is without sin, cast the first stone.'*



The Second Station: Jesus Takes up his Cross

Collect a stone. Hold it tightly and take time to think about blame, shame and forgiveness.

Prayer: *May we be more aware of the crosses that others bear and make time to lift their burden. Amen*

Release the stone. As you watch it fall, let go of blame.

Listen: The Servant King <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBd3ThCResI>

From heav'n You came, helpless Babe,
Entered our world, Your glory veiled;
Not to be served but to serve,
And give Your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
He calls us now to follow Him,
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King*

There in the garden of tears,
My heavy load He chose to bear;
His heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but Yours,' He said

This is our God, the Servant King...

Come see His hands and His feet,
The scars that speak of sacrifice;
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered.

This is our God, the Servant King,

So let us learn how to serve,
And in our lives enthrone Him;
Each other's needs to prefer,
For it is Christ we're serving.

The Third Station: Jesus falls the first time.

Lie back and look up at the clouds.

The God who made the universe and holds it in existence by His will alone becomes a man too weak to bear a piece of timber's weight.

Carrying his own cross, he went out to the Place of the Skull, which is called Golgotha. He courageously faced his own disciples' lack of understanding.



When he falls, we see his humanity. When we stumble under the weight of our own burdens, or our failures, we know that we can get up and try again.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I cannot rise to the heights until I have felt the ground. Just as we see You fall in front of the crowd, help me to see that my darkness and my weakness are part of the story too. Amen*

Repeat: "Help me to face my weakness with honesty and compassion."

The Fourth Station: Jesus meets his Mother.

Be seated.

Now we think about family. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Prayer: *Jesus, give us the courage to bring your love into the deepest places of our belonging: to our homes, to our family and to our most important relationships.*

Is there a relationship that needs repair?



The Fifth Station: Simon helps Jesus Carry the Cross.

As Jesus walks towards Golgotha, Simon, a stranger, carries his cross for him. He offers his strength to one who has nothing left.

Prayer: *Pray for all people in need and for our country. Pray for our continent. Pray for justice and peace. What role is God calling you to play?*

Listen: Thula Sizwe <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKn2yHTyObo>

Thula Sizwe, ungabokhala
uJahova wakho uzokunqobela

(Hush Nation, do not cry
Your God will triumph.)

The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus.



Veronica was so moved by the sight of Jesus' suffering that she courageously moved out from the crowd to wipe the blood and sweat from his face with a towel. Look at Jesus who lies hidden and unknown within every person in need. Across our world we see human suffering in the faces of strangers, in the faces of war and turmoil, in the faces of those dealing with illness and loss.

Prayer: *Lord remind me that each time I reach out, I am like Veronica. The kindness I extend to others, I really give to You. Lord, live in me, and act in me, and love through me so that we may reveal Your glorious face on earth. Amen*

Repeat: *Live in me, and act in me, and love through me.*

The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls a Second Time.

Kneel down, face to the ground.

The people stood by watching; but the leaders scoffed at him saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one.'

All around us people are overburdened by the crosses they carry; they struggle and sometimes fall. There are those who have lost their jobs, those who live with the prospect of unemployment, and those who struggle to keep others in work. Some are suffering because of failures in our financial, health, education and political systems. We pray that in our need, Jesus will find us and lift us up.



Prayer: *Jesus, from deep within yourself, you found the courage and strength to get up once again and continue the journey. Give us your strength to keep going even when hope is dim. Amen*

The Eighth Station: Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem.



A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children.'

Sing Phind' ukhulume or listen for 1-2 minutes:

Phindukhulume moya oyingcwele

Phindukhulume Nkosi yam' (x2)

(Speak again, Holy Spirit; Speak again my Lord)

Ngoba zonk'izono ebengizenza
Namhla zisobala ebusweni bakho

*(For all the sins I have committed
Are removed from your sight today)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yMLC4uTXfw&t=36s>

The Ninth and Tenth Stations: Jesus falls a third time and Jesus is stripped of his

Be seated.

When the soldiers crucified Jesus they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. 'Let's not tear it', they said to one another. 'Let's decide by lot who gets it.' As the clothes are ripped from Jesus, he is stripped of his dignity in front of an irreverent mob. Jesus sacrifices everything. He holds nothing of himself back.

Prayer: Forgive us Lord for our greed for gossip. May we respect the dignity of others and leave judgement to God. Let us see the good in those around us. Amen.

Repeat: 'Within our darkest night, you kindle a fire that never dies away.'

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross.

He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Prayer: *Jesus, we pray on behalf of those who cannot reach out to you at this moment. We pray for all victims of violence; those who suffer it and those who inflict it. We pray especially for children, for the elderly and those too vulnerable to defend themselves. Amen.*

Repeat: *We adore you O Christ, and we praise you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.*

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross.

As Jesus dies on Calvary, he challenges us to love our enemies, to let go of hurt, to ask for forgiveness and when we cannot find it in our hearts to forgive, to ask God to do it for us.

Repeat: *'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do'.*

Sing the Taizé chant: Jesus, remember me or listen:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RGB2E0NzO2A>

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.



The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross.



Now Mary takes the broken body of her Son in her arms. In her grief, she remembers the words of her son, over the bread, 'This is my body, broken, for you,' and over the wine, 'This is my blood poured out for you.'

As Mary cradles the lifeless body of her son and offers him back to the Father, she stands with all who mourn the death of a beloved. Mary grieves with you.

Light a memorial candle in memory of those whose light shines on although they are gone.

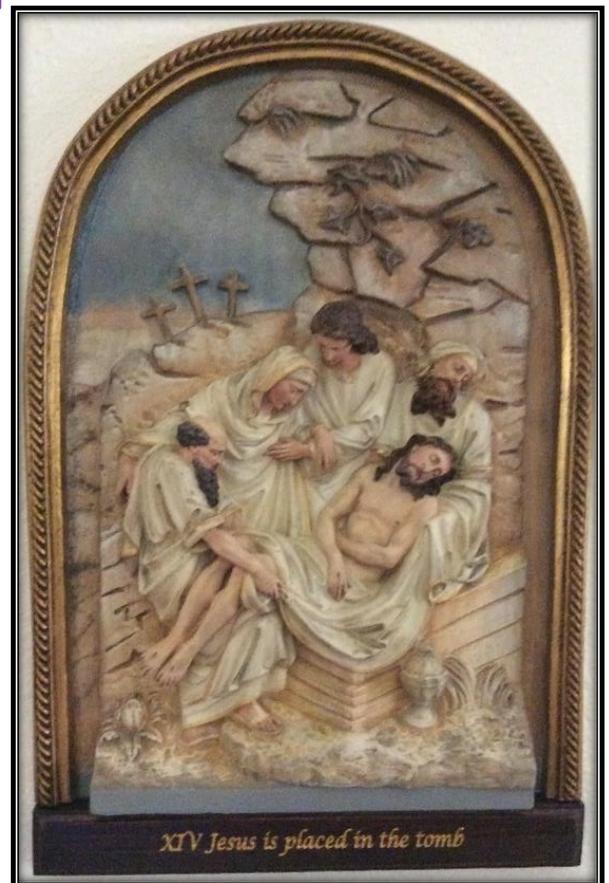
Prayer: *Faced with the silence of death, let us not despair but find hope. Help us to trust in you, the Lord of the living and the dead. Amen*

Repeat: *By His wounds we are healed.*

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb.

That night his body lay in the dark earth of the world, a seed dying. All those who had loved him felt emptied and exhausted. There are times when we are overcome by the darkness of the tomb, by the suffering that we experience each day. The answer to all our grieving and despair lies in this place. The grain of wheat sown in darkness and in death will yield a rich harvest.

Prayer: *Thank you that by your grace, you have taken our sins and upon yourself and reconciled us to you. Faced with the silence of death, let us not despair but find hope. Help us to trust you, Lord of the living and the dead.*





*The suffering You could not bear,
the works of love You could not do
in Your short time on earth,
let me bear, and do through You.
In your mercy Lord, turn our grief to joy,
turn our despair to hope
and turn our fear to love.
Amen.*

Sing or listen to the Taizé chant:

Within our Darkest Night, you Kindle a Fire that Never Dies Away

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqQsZK57OX8>

Make a sacred gesture e.g. bow/ the sign of the cross. Thank God for this inward journey. May you leave this space changed, prepared to encounter in a new way Jesus of the Resurrection who is your companion and friend.