



# SCRIPTURAL STATIONS OF THE CROSS

FOR  
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

“The following stations of the cross are based on those celebrated by Pope John Paul II on Good Friday 1991. They are presented here as an alternative to the traditional stations and as a way of reflecting more deeply on the Scriptural accounts of Christ's passion.”

- Download a PDF of Pope JP II's original version at  
**<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/scriptural-stations-cross>**

The **15<sup>th</sup> Station: Jesus is Risen** is added as a reminder that the Resurrection completes the Passion story, that “You turned my mourning into dancing.” –Ps30.

**Note on the images:** The historical Jesus Christ is not depicted in any of the following images as he was portrayed traditionally. He is shown as Mother Earth and everything on it and in it. Jesus said, ‘*as I Am in the Father, You are in Me, and I Am in you*’ – and ‘*whatever you do to the least of these, you do to Me*’ – so the Savior, who lives and reigns with the Creator, in union with the Sanctifier, is in every atom and the spaces in between of Creation.

And whatever we do to Creation we do to our Redeemer.

The Passion and Resurrection story repeats in our present-day life to remind us of the Presence of the One who conquered death – “I Am always with you.”

#### **Before each station:**

*Leader:*

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

*All:*

Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

#### **After each station:**

*All:*

Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

#### **Opening Prayer:**

*Leader:*

God of power and mercy,  
in love you sent your Son  
that we might be cleansed of sin  
and live with you forever.  
Bless us as we gather to reflect  
on his suffering and death  
that we may learn from his example  
the way we should go.  
We ask this through that same Christ, our Lord.

*All:*

Amen.

## **Suggestions for praying with this version of the Stations of the Cross:**

For the text, a version of **Lectio Divina** :

Spend a few minutes with the scripture passage, breathing in God's Presence in it, listening with the ears of your heart, feeling it come alive in your whole being, then ask yourself:

- **What does this passage say to me?**
- **Are there any words, images, metaphors in the passage touching what's in my mind, heart, body, and soul today?**
- **What prayer springs up from my being now?**
- **What's the Spirit's invitation for me now?**

If there are no answers coming up for you, welcome the Silence, let it be – then bow and say, *Thank you.*

For the image, a version of **Visio Divina** :

Spend a few minutes with the image, breathing in God's Presence in it, looking with the eyes of the heart into it, imagining your whole being in the scene, then ask yourself:

- **What does this image say to me?**
- **Are there any shapes, colors, visual elements in the image touching what's in my mind, heart, body, and soul today?**
- **What prayer springs up from my being now?**
- **What's the Spirit's invitation for me now?**

If there are no answers coming up for you, welcome the Silence, let it be – then bow and say, *Thank you.*

***Or pray the Stations as the Spirit moves you.***

## 1st Station: **Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane** (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.'***

He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, ***'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.'***

And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, ***'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.'***

Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, ***'So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'***

...

**LORD, grant us your wisdom and grace, for us to actively support our brothers and sisters who are working to protect Your Creation from the destructive evil of greed and power.**



*Deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest*

**2nd Station: Jesus is betrayed by Judas and is arrested** (Mk 14: 43-46)

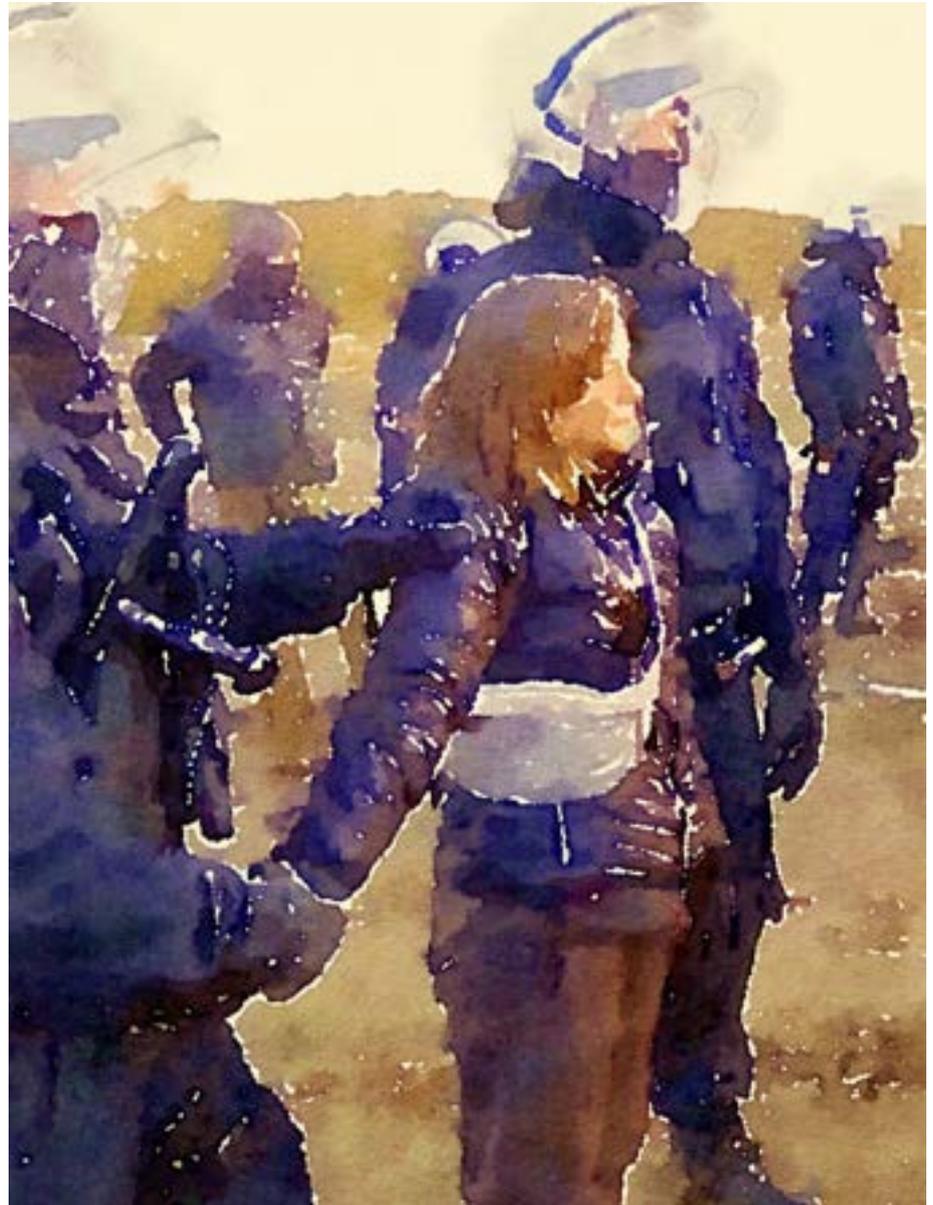
Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.

Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.'

So, when he came, he went up to him at once and said, 'Rabbi!' and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him.

. . .

**LORD, grant us the courage and endurance to spread your Gospel with non-violent speech and action as inspired by Your Spirit.**



*Swedish activist Greta Thunberg arrested during a protest*

### 3rd Station: **Jesus is condemned by the Sanhedrin** (Luke 22: 66-71)

When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered, and they brought him to their council.

They said, 'If you are the Messiah, tell us.'

He replied, ***'If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I question you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.'***

All of them asked, 'Are you, then, the Son of God?'

He said to them, ***'You say that I am.'***

Then they said, 'What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!'

. . .

**LORD, grant us and our elected officials clarity and understanding of climate science facts that we may stop condemning the Christ in Creation.**



*Newly elected lawmakers inducted in the 2023 US Congress*

#### 4th Station: **Jesus is denied by Peter**

(Matthew 26:69-75)

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, 'You also were with Jesus the Galilean.' But he denied it before all of them, saying, 'I do not know what you are talking about.'

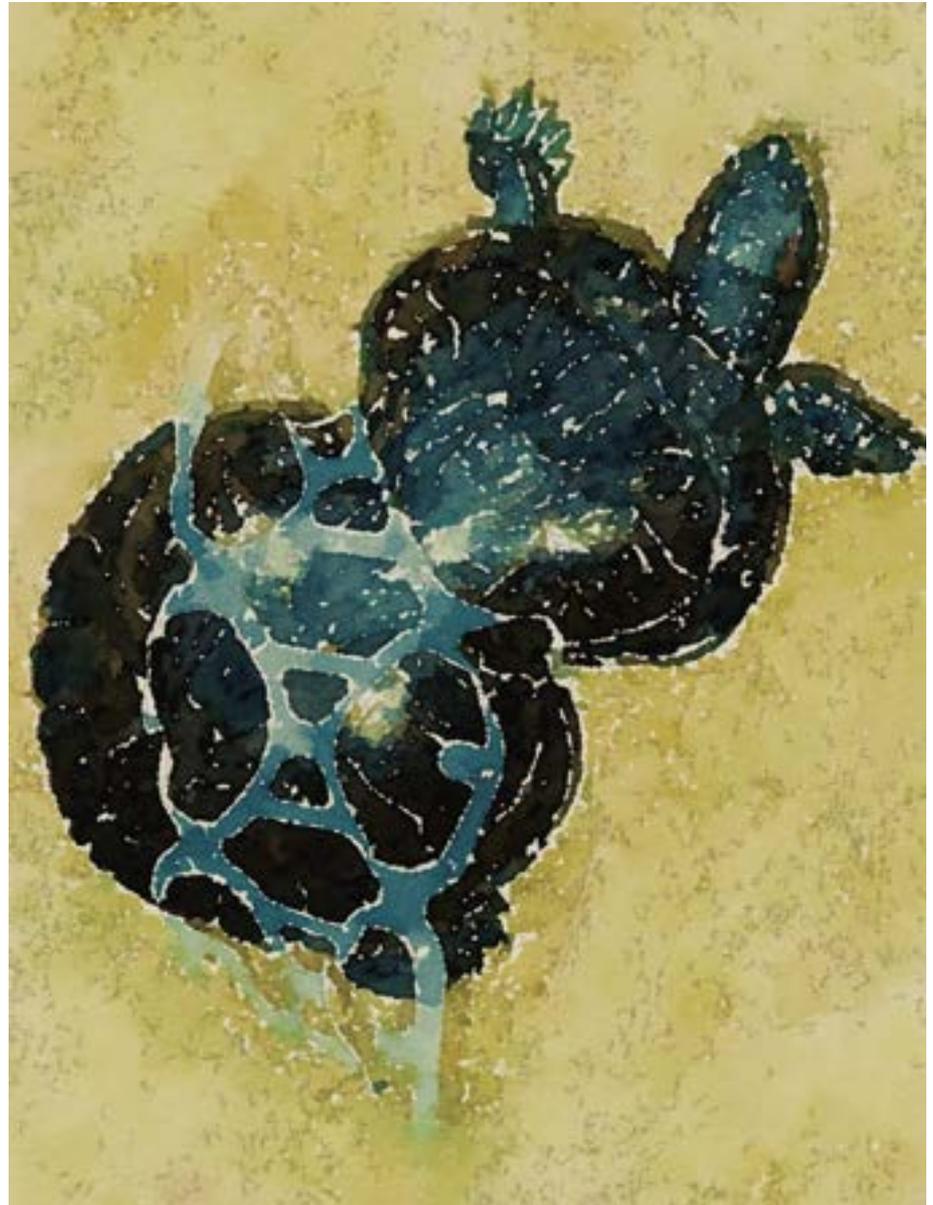
When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, 'This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.' Again, he denied it with an oath, 'I do not know the man.'

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 curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know the man!'

At that moment, the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: **'Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.'** And he went out and wept bitterly.

...

**LORD, help us to stop denying the known and unknown harm done by our use of plastics that we may change our habits by avoiding or reducing our use of disposable and single-use plastic items, reusing items and/or recycling them.**



*A painful consequence of irresponsible disposal of plastic*

**5th Station: Jesus is judged by Pilate** (Mark 15:1-5, 15)

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate asked him, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' He answered him, '**You say so.**'

Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, 'Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you.' But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

So, Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

...

**LORD, inspire our elected officials to help protect the voting rights of all eligible citizens, and guide us to elect leaders who believe that how we treat the Christ in the environment is connected to how we treat the Christ in each other.**



*The satisfied crowd who supported former President Trump*

**6th Station: Jesus is scourged and crowned with thorns** (John 19:1-3)

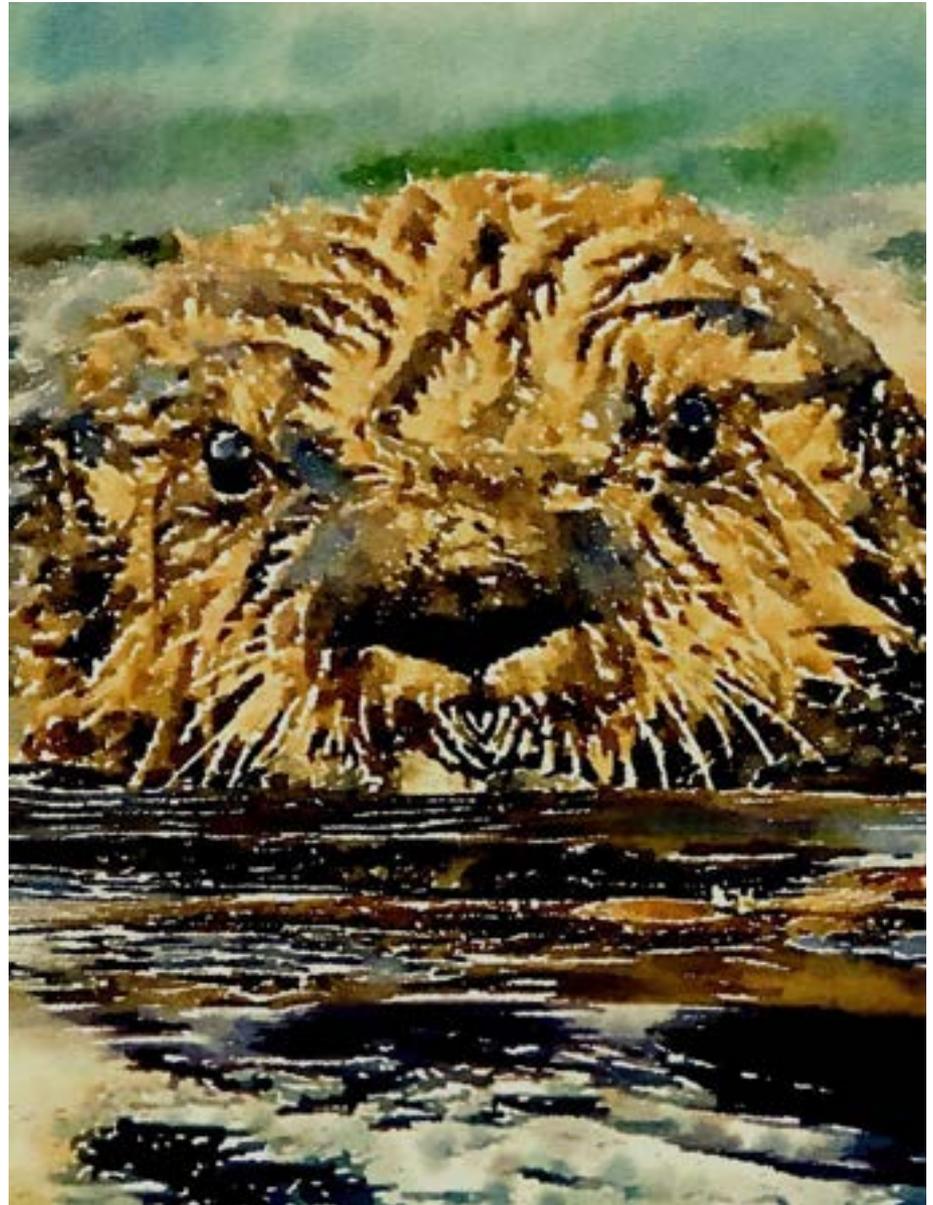
Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged.

And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe.

They kept coming up to him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' and striking him on the face.

...

**LORD, kindle within us the desire to love especially those who put God's Creation and creatures in harm's way. Grant healing and restoration to all those who suffer from the destructive effects of global warming and climate change.**



*A tortured otter soaked in oil courtesy of an oil spill*

## 7th Station: **Jesus bears his cross**

(John 19:6, 15-17)

When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!'

Pilate said to them, 'Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.' They cried out, 'Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!'

Pilate asked them, 'Shall I crucify your King?' The chief priests answered, 'We have no king but the emperor.'

Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

• • •

**LORD, grant us wisdom and compassion to support and to respect the dignity of all creatures in God's Kingdom, like the endangered polar bears living all around the Arctic.**



*Mother and baby polar bear on a floating sea ice looking for food*

**8th Station: Jesus is helped by  
Simon to carry his cross** (Lk 23:26)

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.

. . .

**LORD, strengthen us to find joy and fulfillment in mindful stewardship, constructive and cheerful service, and loving care for Mother Earth, our common home.**



*Park cleanup volunteers carrying trash bags collected at a nature trail*

## 9th Station: **Jesus meets the Women of Jerusalem** (Luke 23:27-31)

A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.

But Jesus turned to them and said, *'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." 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?'*

. . .

LORD, grant us awareness and a supportive heart (and wallets) for all nonviolent and peaceful environmental activists and protesters – for our children's children.



Young environmental justice activists

## 10th Station: **Jesus is crucified.**

(Lk 23:32-34)

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.

(Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.')

And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

...

**LORD, remind us always that using our natural resources in an excessive, careless and mindless way that result in toxic emissions driving climate change, we participate in crucifying the Christ of Creation.**



*An oil well extracting oil or natural gas to the surface.*

**11th Station: Jesus promises his kingdom to the repentant thief.**

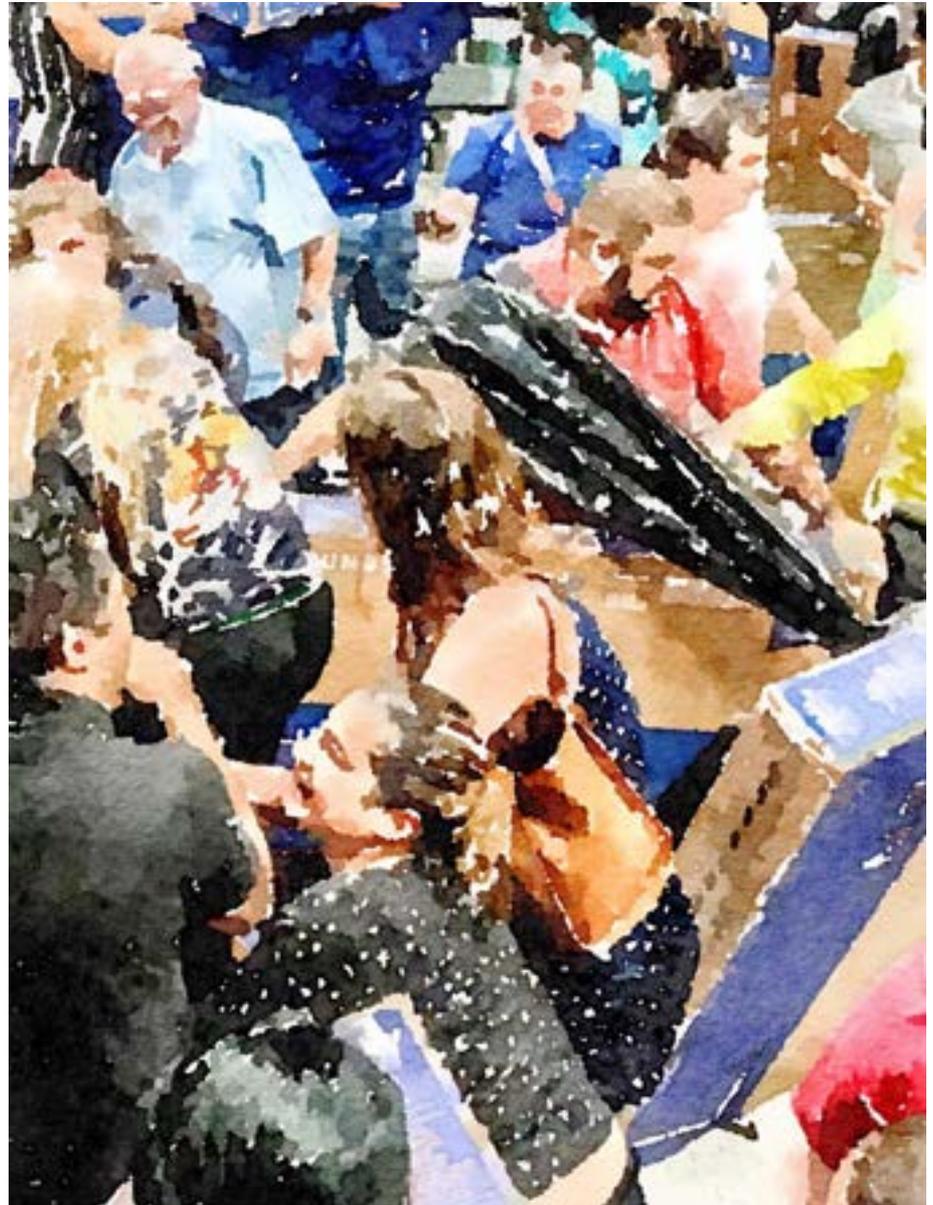
(Luke 23:39-43)

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding Jesus and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? 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 have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.'

He replied, *'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'*

. . .

**LORD, help us to develop new and healthy habits to avoid extremes and excesses, practice prudence, moderation and gratefulness in the way we consume anything in our daily life.**



*A Black Friday feeding frenzy*

## 12th Station: **Jesus entrusts Mary and John to each other**

(John 19:25-27)

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

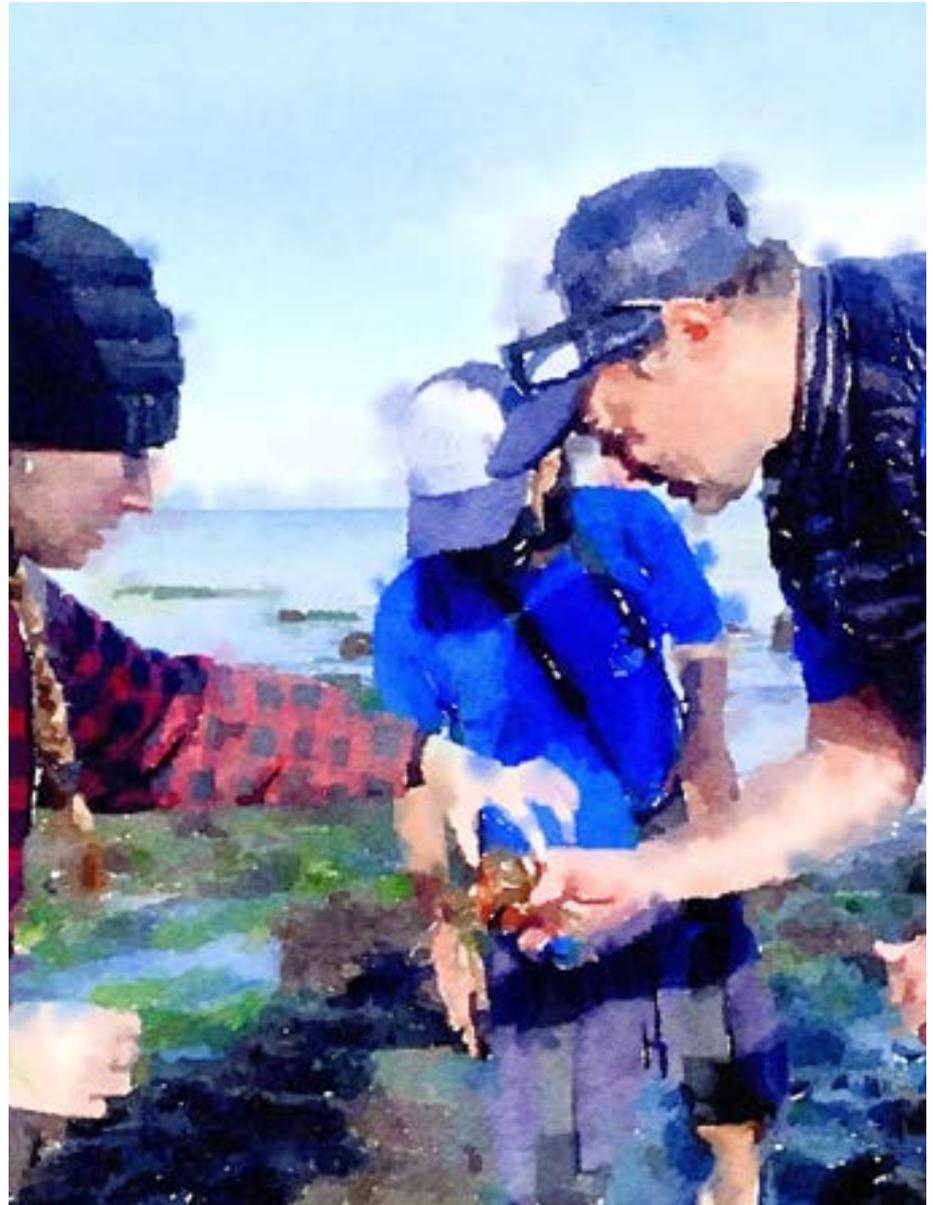
When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, ***'Woman, here is your son.'***

Then he said to the disciple, ***'Here is your mother.'***

And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

...

**LORD, open our hearts to honor and support, protect and equip our sustainability professionals and volunteers, environmental teachers and all earth stewards as they attend to the health and wellbeing of Mother Earth.**



*An environmental educator and his students discussing marine life*

13th Station: **Jesus dies on the cross** (Mark 15:33-37)

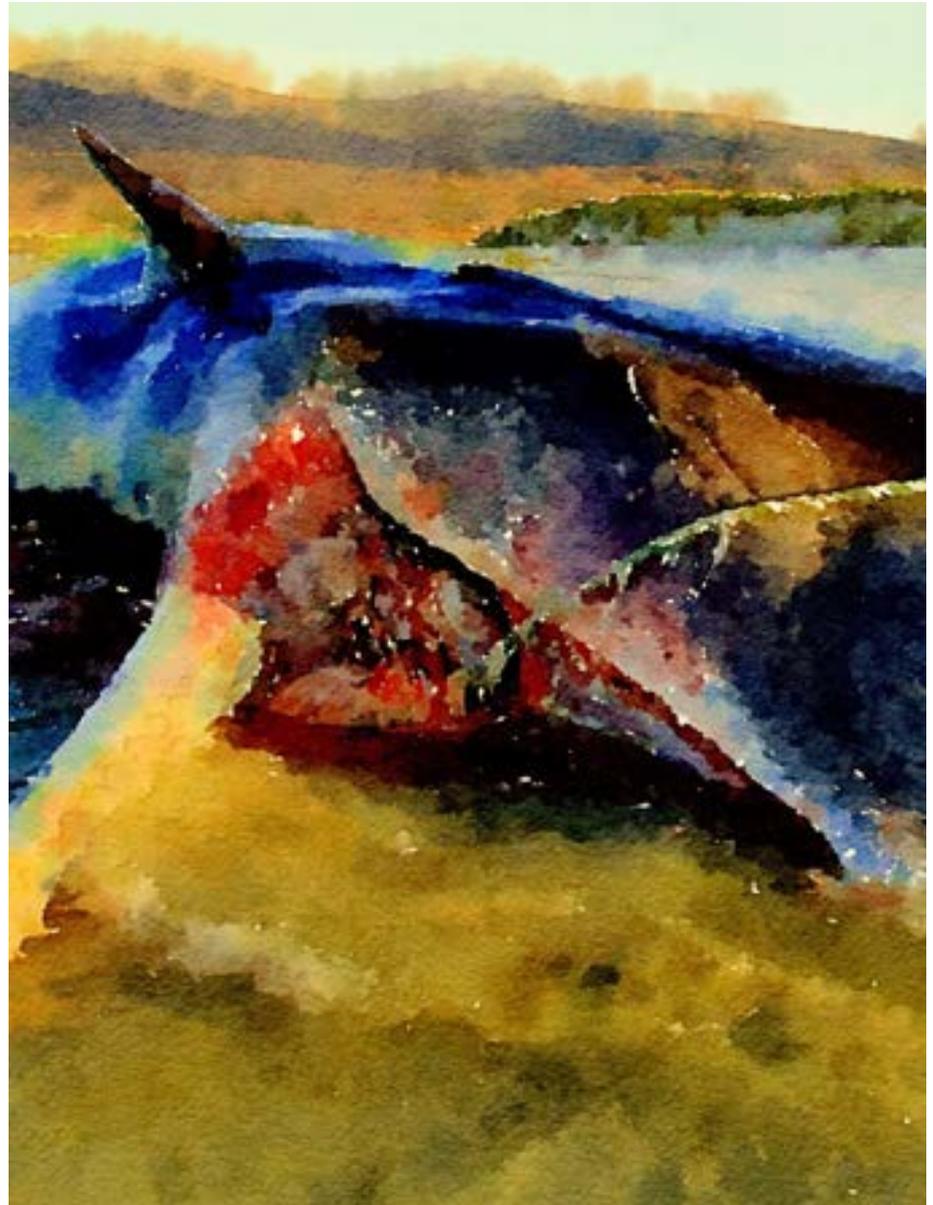
When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, '***Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?***' which means, '***My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?***'

When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, 'Listen, he is calling for Elijah.' And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, 'Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.'

Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

...

**LORD, assist us in preventing injuries and deaths to the Christ in our brothers and sisters on land, sea, and air due to our selfish wasteful ways.**



*A grey whale washed up dead with plastic debris in its stomach.*

**14th Station: Jesus is laid in the tomb** (John 19:38-42)

Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jewish leaders.

With Pilate's permission, he took the body away. He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

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**LORD, help us to comfort and console those who grieve the death of a loved one.**



*An open landfill called Smokey Mountain in Manila, Philippines*

## 15th Station: **Jesus is risen**

(Psalm 15:8-11 quoted in Acts 2:25)

“I saw the Lord always before me,  
for he is at my right hand that I may not be  
shaken;

therefore, my heart was glad, and my tongue  
rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will dwell in hope.

For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades,  
nor let thy Holy One see corruption.

Thou has made known to me the ways of life;  
thou wilt make me full of gladness with thy  
presence’

...

**Let us praise the Risen Christ –**

**Thanks be to God.**



**Closing Prayer:**

*Reader:*

**LORD JESUS CHRIST**, your passion and death is the sacrifice that unites earth and heaven and reconciles all people to you.

May we who have faithfully reflected on these mysteries follow in your steps and so come to share your glory in heaven where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit one God, for ever and ever.

*All:*

Amen.

. . . .

Some of the images were sourced from various news outlets' photos which were manipulated digitally.

