TOGETHER FOR PEACE

This Way of the Cross invites us to follow Jesus as he walks towards his crucifixion. Death cannot hold him; he rises again.

Peacemakers must also rise against repeated obstacles as they work for peace and reconciliation through dialogue.

Whether working for peace at the community, national or international level; whether addressing family, intercultural or land issues; they are a sign of hope in a world of conflict.

Development and Peace – Caritas Canada invites you to walk this Way of the Cross in solidarity with those working for peace through dialogue.
1st Station

Jesus is condemned to death

Celebrant

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

All

Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

“For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.” (John 18:37)

Meditation

Jesus came into the world to bear witness to the truth and show the way to build the Kingdom of God on Earth. Jesus spoke the truth before those who condemned and exercised power over him. In our world, violence, aggression and exclusion are common responses to the unknown or misunderstood. It takes great courage to stand for truth, to engage in dialogue with those who think differently from us, and to challenge each other to find the path to peace.

Quote

“...Peace will be lasting in the measure that we arm our children with the weapons of dialogue, that we teach them to fight the good fight of encounter and negotiation. In this way, we will bequeath to them a culture capable of devising strategies of life, not death, and of inclusion, not exclusion.” (Pope Francis, Address upon receiving the Charlemagne Prize, May 6, 2016)

Prayer

Celebrant

Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together

Lord, help us to speak the truth about peace, in solidarity with those who act and speak courageously for peace and justice every day, so that we can help to build your Kingdom here on Earth.

2nd Station

Jesus carries his cross

Celebrant

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

All

Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

“So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull.” (John 19:16-17)

Meditation

Jesus falters three times on the way to his destiny, each time finding it more difficult to get up. Working for peace requires a personal commitment to humility and to respectfully hearing what another says even when it is difficult. Each person needs the courage to speak their truth. This practice is not easy. In Afghanistan, women trainers use these skills as they engage with resistance and the denial of women’s rights in workshops for men and young people. The result is a growing number of allies working on the elimination of violence against women, which is key to building a peaceful society.

Quote

“Pride and arrogance must be uprooted, because pride and arrogance always end badly […] In other words, I would answer the question, ‘how to build a better world,’ by following that path. Our world needs to lower the level of aggression. It needs tenderness. It needs gentleness, it needs to listen, it needs to walk together.” (Pope Francis, address to participants of Scholas Occurrentes, May 29, 2016)

3rd Station

Jesus falls for the first time

Celebrant

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

All

Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture

“It had never been done before. There was no guidebook for how to proceed. They had to find their way as they went. But they succeeded in restoring nearly one hundred children to their families. And their work continues... These grandmothers, unlike the dictatorship, had no guns and ammunition – only a burning passion for truth and justice.” (Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary-General, remarks at the opening of the ‘Abuelas of the Plaza de Mayo’ exhibition, 2008)

Meditation

Jesus was condemned to death by a powerful ruler. Like Jesus, people the world over have been condemned to death without trial by military dictatorships abusing their power. For more than 40 years a movement of Argentinian women has courageously brought the world’s attention to the abductions of their sons and daughters at the hands of an oppressive military dictatorship.

Quote

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Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord of life, lying in the dust you maintained your dignity. Empower us to stand for peace with dignity.

4th Station
Jesus meets his mother

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple standing beside her, he said, “Here is your mother.” (John 19:27)

Meditation
Mary, Queen of Peace, is a light for us all. Women play a key role in preventing and resolving conflicts around the world, just like the women in Lebanon who participate in peace-building workshops. They apply what they have learned to relationships with women of different backgrounds in their community. The person once feared becomes a friend; they both make a contribution to social peace in their land.

Quote
“Before their participation in the workshop, a number of Syrian women did not believe that it was possible to develop good relationships with Lebanese women. Similarly, a good many Lebanese participants realized that their prejudices against Syrian women were unfounded. This is how fear and hatred gradually disappear. When the workshops come to an end, participants often keep in touch, visit each other and do activities together.” (Rabia Kadiry, co-trainer for House of Peace (HOPe))

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, give us the strength to work together for women to occupy their rightful place in peacebuilding in every country and at every level of society.

5th Station
Simon helps Jesus carry the cross

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“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.” (Luke 23:26)

Meditation
Simon helps Jesus in his trial. Who carries the cross today in this age of conflict? It is, amongst others, it is rural and Indigenous peoples in Colombia who are vulnerable to the violence of those who take their agricultural lands for their own profit. Too often harassed by hired mercenaries, many lose land, livelihoods and even their lives.

Quote
“For me, peace is a dream because I have always lived in conflict zones. To me, peace means that women’s voices are being heard and that we decide how we wish to live and what we want to grow. Peace is also being able to recover our land without fear. It is the right to clean air and water. Peace is the right to live a dignified life.” (Luz Estella Cifuentes, Coordinator of the CNA’s Women’s Secretariat and School for Political Training for peasant, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, let us open our hearts to the sufferings of all those who are harassed into losing their traditional lands and livelihoods for the profit of a few.

6th Station
Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.
Scripture
“Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him.” (Matthew 27:55)

Meditation
With compassion and courage, Veronica steps forward to wipe the face of Jesus. Conscious of the danger to which she is exposed, she thinks only of how to relieve another’s suffering. Today, Indigenous people in the Global South speak out tirelessly for the human rights of their sisters and brothers, fostering peace through their relentless quest for justice.

Quote
“If the Indigenous civilization and the European civilizations could have made exchanges in a peaceful and harmonious manner, without destruction, exploitation, discrimination and poverty, they could, no doubt, have achieved greater and more valuable conquests for Humanity.” (Rigoberta Menchu, Guatemalan Quiche Nobel Peace Prize winner)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, give us the wisdom to support Indigenous peoples in their struggles.

Jesus falls for the second time

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.” (1 Peter 2:21)

Meditation
Jesus falls for the second time on his journey. When he rises, he shows us the strength of his determination. In the Democratic Republic of Congo sexual assault has been used as a weapon of war. Through dialogue and mediation, those who have suffered can tell their aggressor about the impact of this violence. Aggressors have the opportunity to understand, acknowledge and apologize for the pain they have caused. Those who have suffered, can, if they wish, forgive. This can build community peace.

Quote
“All of us want peace. Many people build it day by day through small gestures and acts; many of them are suffering, yet patiently persevere in their efforts to be peacemakers. All of us … have the duty to become instruments and artisans of peace.” (Pope Francis, Regina Caeli, Bethlehem, May, 25, 2014)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, give us the wisdom to forgive those who have caused us pain and the strength to acknowledge the pain we have caused others.
8th Station
Jesus encounters the women of Jerusalem

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“Jesus turned to them and said: ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.’” (Luke 23:28)

Meditation
This scene of the Passion of Jesus is one of great mutual empathy. Women suffer with Jesus. They feel and share his pain, and he welcomes their compassion. He invites them to cry about their fate and the fate of their children rather than his own. In 1976 two women in Northern Ireland - one Catholic, one Protestant - joined hands to stop the violence between their communities. With their neighbours they created a movement that pressured their elected representatives to negotiate peace.

Quote
“We all know that a simple handshake... can break down enmity between two people ... A handshake or an embrace is not enough: Jesus Christ was betrayed by a kiss. The initial acts of friendship must be followed, day in and day out, by cooperation in everything that improves life and prevents violence.” (Betty Williams, acceptance speech, Nobel Prize 1976)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, encourage us to engage in dialogue and to create peaceful solutions for all.

9th Station
Jesus falls for the third time

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.” (Mark 15:24)

Meditation
Jesus suffered humiliation when stripped of his clothing. In war and conflict people are stripped of their belongings, their homes, their citizenship and their dignity. Today, more than 22 million people seek refuge in other countries, among them Syrians, Iraqis, Yazidis, Rohingyas and Eritreans.

Quote
“The Lord entrusts to the Church’s motherly love every person forced to leave their homeland in search of a better future. This solidarity must be concretely expressed at every stage of the migratory experience – from departure through journey to arrival and return.” (Pope Francis’ message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, August 15, 2017)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, help us to be generous and welcoming to those seeking refuge.
11th Station
Jesus is nailed to the cross

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“...Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34)

Meditation
Exhausted and in pain, Jesus feels abandoned by his Father. Indigenous peoples living in what we now call Canada must also have felt abandoned during the long and unjust process of colonization in this country. Today, we have the opportunity to enter into dialogue through the process of reconciliation. This requires humility and an open heart from each of us.

Quote
“Reconciliation must become a way of life. ... Reconciliation not only requires apologies, reparations, the relearning of Canada’s national history, and public commemoration, but also needs real social, political, and economic change. ... Reconciliation begins with each and every one of us.” (Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada – Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

12th Station
Jesus dies on the cross

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“He said, ‘It is finished.’ Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” (John 19:30)

Meditation
Jesus freely gives his life for the salvation of his sisters and brothers, and the glory of the Father. In what ways today do we give of ourselves in creating peace on Earth for our sisters and brothers around the world?

Quote
“Peacemaking calls ... for the courage to say yes to encounter and no to conflict: yes to dialogue and no to violence; yes to negotiations and no to hostilities; yes to respect for agreements and no to acts of provocation; yes to sincerity and no to duplicity. All of this takes courage, it takes strength and tenacity.” (Pope Francis, Invocation for peace, June 8, 2014)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord Jesus, we ask you to nurture us with your Spirit so we can achieve reconciliation with the First Nations of this land, through Christ our Lord.
13th Station
The body of Jesus is taken down

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
"Many women were there... who had followed Jesus from Galilee and looked after him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee." (Matthew 27:55-56)

Meditation
A sword of pain must have passed through Mary’s heart seeing her son dead. So it is with women in Latin America who have suffered and, too often, have seen family members die to protect their lands from the intrusions of mining industries and the construction of giant dams.

Quote
“If we have no peace it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” (St. Theresa of Calcutta)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, help us to address the roots of conflict, both greed and fear, in ourselves and in our communities.

14th Station
The body of Jesus is laid in the tomb

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.” (Mark 15:46)

Meditation
Jesus’ death seems final. So too were the deaths of the 29,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. They lost their lives when nuclear weapons were dropped on their cities. An international movement to ban nuclear weapons arose, and today this possibility is closer than ever. A true and lasting peace cannot be the result of weapons of mass destruction, but rather rests on justice and human development. At its root is dialogue and solidarity.

Quote
“Peace must be built on justice, on integral human development, on respect for fundamental human rights, on the protection of creation, on the participation of all in public life, on trust between peoples, on the support of peaceful institutions, on access to education and health, on dialogue and solidarity. From this perspective, we need to go beyond nuclear deterrence... the elimination of nuclear weapons becomes both a challenge and a moral and humanitarian imperative.” (Pope Francis, Message to the United Nations, March 23, 2017)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Father of love and of truth, let us live daily in solidarity with those who have lost their families, children, parents and loved ones in war.

15th Station
The Resurrection of Jesus, the Christ

Celebrant
We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you.

All
Because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

Scripture
“Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”” (John 20:21)

Meditation
As the disciples were sent into the world to carry on the work of Jesus, those who practise negotiation, dialogue and reconciliation are sent into the world to build peace. Their work is priceless. Whether working for peace at the community, national or international level; whether addressing family, intercultural or land issues; they are a sign of hope in a world of conflict.

Quote
“...Humanity has the ability to work together in building up our common home; we have the freedom, intelligence and capacity to lead and direct technology, to place limits on our power, and to put all this at the service of another type of progress: one that is more human, social and integral.” (Pope Francis, Message to the United Nations, March 23, 2017)

Prayer
Celebrant
Let us pray in silence for a few moments.

Let us pray together
Lord, help us find the light of life, of dialogue, of reconciliation, of solidarity. We pray for this, Lord. Amen.
THE GIFT OF PEACE

May God give wisdom and courage
to those who work for peace.
We pray that their efforts may be blessed,
that they may bring an end to violence
and solace and stability to suffering peoples.

May the gift of peace permeate all troubled souls,
convert all who live by violence
and comfort all children who live in menacing situations,
that the freedom to enjoy life and grow in safety may be theirs.

And may each one of us know
peace of mind and heart,
peace of body and spirit,
peace of community and world.

Holy Spirit of Peace, grant our prayer.
Amen.

— Sister Bridgetta Rooney, CAFOD