

Way of the Cross

The following pen and ink drawings and descriptions were prepared by Erica Grimm-Vance in Lent 1993. (These can also be found on the parish's website www.holychild2019.ca on the homepage under **Stations of the Cross.**)

The First Station - Jesus is condemned to death



Hollow Men

The symbolic action of Pilate washing his hands speaks of his attempt to wash himself of the responsibility for Jesus' fate. Not accepting his responsibility, not acting on what he knew to be right and just, was in fact the decision which put into motion the Passion Journey.

Equally true is that fault lies not only with Pilate. The crowd was forcing his hand. They too made the decision — as do we — each time we turn from the Lord in either our action or inaction.

The Second Station - Christ takes up His Cross



Under the Mercy

"Under the Mercy" is a phrase coined by C. S. Lewis. Even on this seemingly desolate journey Jesus was in every step "under the mercy" of His Father. How vivid a contrast between the wisdom of God and the foolishness of men in this society where pain is avoided at all cost and we hear "if God is a God of mercy and love — why?..."

In our lives each has a cross to take up. If I was to take up a literal cross it would be approximately five feet, my physical height. Thus each piece is five feet — my size.

The Third Station - Christ falls the first time



Falling Walls

How often we experience our "walls" caving in on us. Personally I know, often God has to let me fall before I am open to Him teaching me. In a sense I have to learn to fall willingly in order to die to myself.

The Fourth Station - Jesus meets His Mother



Theotokos (God- Bearer)

"This child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that is spoken, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." (Luke 2:34-35)

As Mary, the Theotokos or God-Bearer, watches the flesh of her flesh fall, unable to alleviate that suffering, indeed as Simeon prophesied, a sword must have pierced her own soul.

The Fifth Station - The cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene



Edged with Mercy

Simon is called on to help our Lord with the cross. He had to take up the heavy and sharp edge to ease the burden. Similarly in some mysterious and unimaginable way we too are called to share in the sufferings of our Lord.

The Sixth Station - Veronica wipes the face of Jesus



Vera Icon (True Image)

A hand of compassion reaches out and wipes the tears and blood revealing Christ's face.

"Lord, where are your children who will wipe the tears from a very wounded humanity to reveal your face?"

The Seventh Station - Jesus falls the second time



Journey of Kingship

The weight of the cross would have undoubtedly been unbearable by now. It is easy to spiritualize other gifts — especially the gift of leadership and not see the weight of the journey — the pain and service which accompanies it. Christ's journey hurt no less because He was God. Rather it must have been made heavier by the fact that He had the choice of stopping at any point. He was not trapped, He chose to carry His cross.

The Eighth Station - Jesus speaks to the daughters of Jerusalem



The Days of Dry Wood

"But Jesus turned to them and said: 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For the days will surely come when people will say, "Happy are those who are barren, the wombs who have never borne, the breasts that have never suckled!" Then they will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" to the hills, "Cover us!". For if men use the green wood like this, what will happen when it is dry?' " (Luke 23:28-31) .

We are in the days of dry wood and we each must in imitation of Christ pick up our own cross.

The Ninth Station - Jesus falls the third time



Stainless Steel Throne

If Christ was crucified today it probably would not be on rough-hewn wood but on inhuman hard-edged stainless steel.

The Tenth Station - Jesus is stripped of His garments



The Fineness of the Slash

. . . you can only praise the razor for the fineness of the slash." Words from a song by Bruce Cockburn which seem to contain within them the terrible searing, white hot pain of the robes — encrusted with blood, being ripped off the back of Jesus.

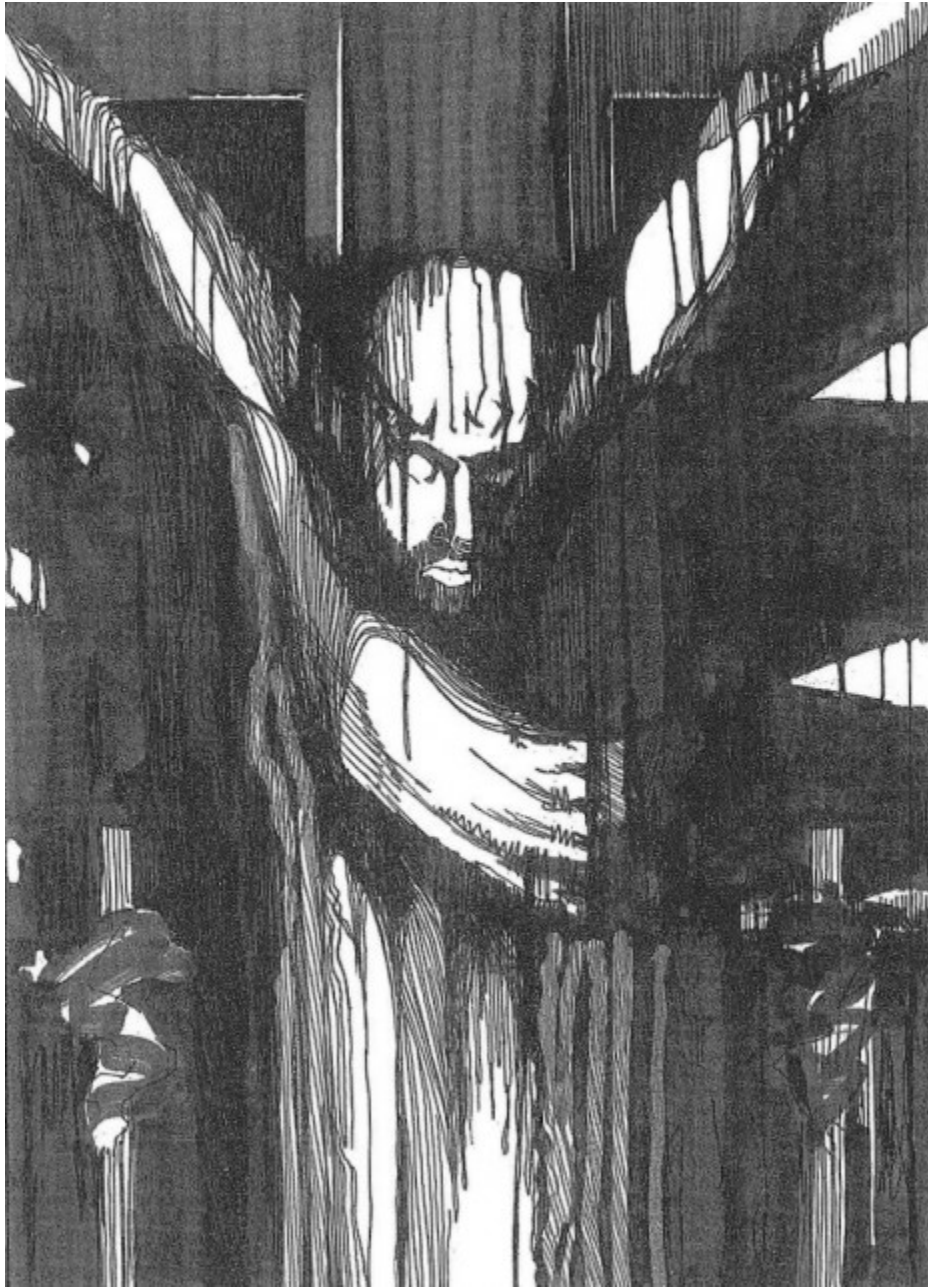
The Eleventh Station - Jesus is nailed to the Cross



Pinned Fast to His Kingship

. . . and the hammer fell . . . and fastened Jesus to the cross — the symbol of His Kingship. To His friends the terrible irony of the cross was a symbol of despair —until the resurrection when it would be seen as the symbol of all hope.

The Twelfth Station - Jesus dies on the Cross



Witness to Weakness

Throughout the Gospels, especially Mark's, the apostles are continually not understanding and even at the crisis point denying association with Him. Consider however that the whole people's expectation was geared to receive a mighty warrior king who would restore them to the glory they experienced in the Golden Age of David's rule. Instead they were given a criminal who was condemned to a degrading death on a cross — a witness of weakness.

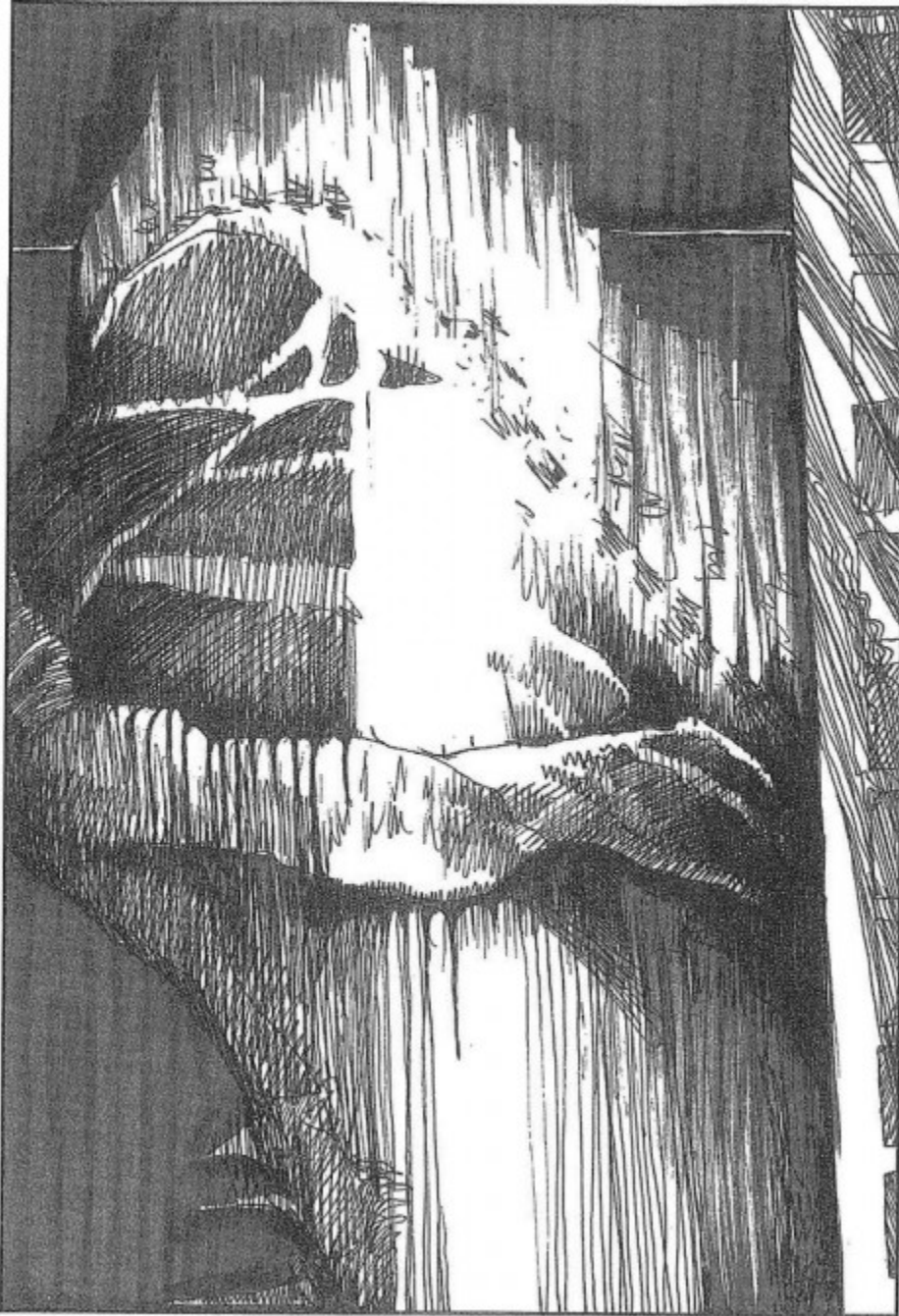
The Thirteenth Station - Jesus is taken down from the Cross



The Wounded Healer

"And yet ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried. But we, we thought of him as someone punished, Struck by God, and brought low. Yet he was pierced through for our faults, crushed for our sins. On him lies a punishment that brings us peace, and through his wounds we are healed." (Isaiah 55:4-5)

The Fourteenth Station - Jesus is placed in the Sepulcher



Power in Weakness

Even in the despair of the cold hard tomb it was not totally "black". A candle of hope still burned. It was in the darkness of the tomb that we see the beginning of the resurrection.

The Fifteenth Station - Jesus rises from the Dead



The Resurrection

As an artistic statement the stations are incomplete without the final action — the fulfillment — the victory of all the previous meditations. The Passion and Resurrection are one action, one event; so we see the power of the Resurrection breaking through the confines of the tomb.

This station is larger than the rest; it couldn't be done on the same size canvas. The tomb image is the same size as the rest of the stations but the Resurrection breaks forth into a larger reality we all one day will see.