

THE WAY OF THE CROSS: TOGETHER FOR A JUST WORLD



United Way
Trocaire
TOGETHER FOR A JUST WORLD

ABOUT TRÓCAIRE

Trócaire was founded by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference in 1973, rooted in Catholic Social Teaching principles. For over fifty years Trócaire, with support from the public in Ireland and the Irish government's overseas development programme, has helped the most vulnerable communities in different parts of the world to alleviate poverty, to access quality education and attain literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

In Ireland, Trócaire raises awareness about the root causes of poverty and injustice in our world and urges people to take action to address those causes. Overseas, Trócaire works in partnership with local communities and organisations to support people living in poverty and facing injustice daily. Trócaire strives to address the factors

that undermine progress, such as corruption, repression and persecution. Trócaire has long-term programmes of work in several countries around the world and provides funding to support humanitarian aid in a number of other countries. You will see references to some of those countries as we pray the Way of the Cross.

Dr Shikri examining Samia diagnosed with pneumonia at Luuq hospital, Somalia.
Photo credit: Joy Obuya, Trócaire.



PRAYING THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Intention: For ourselves and the work of Trócaire

Introduction for the leader to read beforehand. If appropriate, you can share this information with your group.

The Stations of the Cross is a traditional way of praying throughout the year. We pray this familiar prayer to be with Jesus Christ as he travels his final journey from condemnation to crucifixion along the Via Dolorosa out of love for and commitment to us and all of God's creation. We pray it also because we wish to become close to Jesus, who loves each of us so deeply. We walk this journey to get a glimpse at the heart and mind of Jesus Christ, who is alive today and experiencing the Journey of the Cross wherever our sisters and brothers are suffering throughout the world. We give thanks as we walk this journey. The Way of the Cross has brought hope and the possibility of new life into the dark places of our lives. Journeying with Jesus Christ allows us to become aware of where God is walking with us in our lives, and where we are called to be with others on their journey.

'As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality exist in our world, none of us can truly rest.'

Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa

As you pray, be aware of where you have experienced the different stations in your life. Think also of your loved ones, your friends, your neighbours and your local community as a whole. Include them in your prayer as you recall those who are experiencing something of Jesus Christ's journey at this time. Look beyond your part of the world and be mindful that you share your human journey with people scattered all over the world and with the many thousands of people with whom Trócaire works.

Be mindful of families, parishes and communities who are facing conflict, hunger and fear. Jesus walked the Way of the Cross for all humanity – now we walk in solidarity with all people.

If leading the stations for a group, take a moderate pace, giving time for a pause between the reader and the prayer led by the leader. If appropriate, each station can be divided into different parts for different readers.

Introduction

Leader: We gather as sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ as we begin our prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: We gather here to walk the journey of Jesus to Calvary. We come as individuals, aware of the challenges and struggles in our own lives.



Several years after featuring on the Trócaire box, Josiane Umumarashavu from Rwanda says thank you to the people of Ireland for their support. Trócaire's 2004 Lenten campaign focused on Rwanda and highlighted the situation in the country ten years after the genocide of 1994. Josiane now works on Trócaire's finance team in Rwanda.

Photo credit: Trócaire.



Donald Woods, the South African journalist and anti-apartheid activist and then Trócaire director Brian McKeown attending a Trócaire conference in 1977.

Photo credit: Trócaire.

We come as a community of believers and we come as members of our common humanity. We are mindful of people in our own community, in our country and all over the world who walk the Way of the Cross daily.

We walk in love as we come to share the ongoing pain and suffering of people who are living with conflict and whose lives are in danger. We pray for peace all over the world. We also pray for peace in our own lives, families and communities.

We walk the journey of Jesus in solidarity with communities in Ireland and all over the world. We walk with families who are experiencing the Way of the Cross in their lives today.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

First Station

Leader: *Pilate condemns Jesus to die.*

Condemnation kills hope. Sometimes in what we say or do, we leave other people devastated. We crush their hope. We remember and pray for those in our family or parish who have been hurt by others and who are not feeling included. We pray that we will all have the courage to reach out for help when we need it, and that we will reach out a hand to others who are in need.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

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or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Second Station

Leader: *Jesus accepts his cross.*

Jesus accepts what he cannot change. People in many parts of the world are forced to accept poor living conditions, hunger and violence, things that they often feel they cannot change. The effects of climate change have brought severe flooding to South Sudan. Trócaire's partners, who work locally in communities in South Sudan, provide humanitarian assistance to thousands of displaced people as well as providing immediate humanitarian aid, and promoting peacebuilding and reconciliation. The generosity of people in Ireland is building a better future for families in these areas.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
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Third Station

Leader: *Jesus falls for the first time.*

The weight of the cross causes Jesus to fall. Many people around us in our communities are falling under the heavy weight of bills they cannot pay or homes they cannot keep. We pray for all affected by our housing crisis in Ireland and the people who very sadly find themselves homeless.

People around the world are carrying the weight of uncertainty over their homes, their livelihoods, their land and their future.

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Fourth Station

Leader: *Jesus meets his mother, Mary.*

How did Mary feel when she met Jesus? He is weighed down and surrounded by guards. She cannot lift the burden from him. However, she is there; her presence alone must have given him strength. Very often women and girls have limited access to resources and little decision-making power in communities and households.

Working with the local community leaders, Trócaire opened its first maternity health facility in the Gedo region of Somalia in 1992 and since then it has established four more hospitals and more than twenty outreach health centres. Trócaire is known as the Mother of Health in this region. It also runs preventative health and nutrition programmes at community level throughout the region, which is bigger than Ireland.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

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Fifth Station

Leader: *Simon of Cyrene helps carry the cross.*

By working alongside struggling parish communities, Trócaire's local partners help people to carry their cross and to maintain their dignity and their hope. In our parishes we often need help with the difficulties of life each day. Grant us the courage to reach out for help and to offer help also.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free



Lene Nanthabwe's community in Machinga, Malawi, have been provided with ten treadle pumps, which are irrigating five hectares of land for forty-four households.

Photo credit: Alan Whelan, Trócaire.

or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Sixth Station

Leader: *Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.*

Compassion and kindness are at the heart of Veronica's action. Compassion for others and helping others are at the heart of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Trócaire means 'mercy' and our local partners show that mercy by providing practical and psychosocial support to communities who are dealing with displacement and trauma because of conflict.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine, Trócaire with funding from the Irish government's overseas development programme has been providing humanitarian assistance through local Caritas agencies (Catholic relief agencies) to millions of people impacted by the violence and unrest.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

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Seventh Station

Leader: *Jesus falls for the second time.*

To get up after falling is hard. Getting up a second time is harder still. Many people are beaten down when they try to rise.

Jesus, our brother, give us hope when we fall down. Help us to notice others who have been knocked back and give us courage to stretch out a hand of friendship and solidarity.

Trócaire and its local partner organisations, are building resilient communities in Malawi: providing emergency support during natural disasters; tackling hunger and violence against women; supporting environmentally friendly farming; and empowering women to live a life of hope, to challenge inequality and to live free from violence.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Eighth Station

Reader: *Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.*

Women around the world show great resilience and strength in the face of injustice. Jesus recognises their plight and feels for them. Thanks to your support, Trócaire's local partners are supporting communities in Honduras to protect their land in the face of corporate greed. Our work helps women to live in safety and to take on roles as leaders in society. We are also helping communities to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. May their courage and strength inspire all of us on our daily journeys through life. Our prayer joins us in solidarity with all women.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Ninth Station

Reader: *Jesus falls for the third time.*

Many people get knocked down time and again through no fault of their own. Unjust governments, natural disasters, conflict, hunger and climate



Thandekile, 31, is one of seven million people living in poverty in drought-prone southern Zimbabwe. Trócaire is supporting Thandekile and other families in her community through our partner Caritas Bulawayo.

Photo credit: Barnaby Jaco Skinner, Trócaire.

change can all prevent people from getting back up again. Jesus teaches us in this moment to get up and keep going. As we welcome refugees from different countries to Ireland, may our compassion help them to get up again and live their lives to their best potential.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Tenth Station

Reader: *Jesus is stripped of his clothes.*

Many families and communities with whom Trócaire and its local partners work have been stripped of their homes or their lands as a result of conflict. Conflict and climate change can leave people destitute. Even though these families live far away from us, they share the common experience of families fighting to protect the future for their children and grandchildren.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Eleventh Station

Leader: *Jesus is nailed to the cross.*

'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"' (Luke 23:33-34). We pray for the grace to forgive those people in our lives against whom we may hold a grudge and for all peoples who are seeking freedom from injustices committed against them.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Twelfth Station

Leader: *Jesus dies on the cross.*

Jesus dies because of the way he lived – his stand for justice and truth, his belief that God loves all people equally with a special concern for those who are suffering in any way/with no voice/vulnerable/those on the fringes of society. His death is reconciliation in totality. Martin Luther King said:

'True peace is not merely the absence of tension, it is the presence of justice.'

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Thirteenth Station

Leader: *Jesus is taken down from the cross after his death.*

Jesus' body is removed from the cross and taken by his friends. The friends of Jesus help him in his darkest hour.

The friends and supporters of Trócaire, through their generosity, empower local communities such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which is the second largest country in Africa. DRC has been ravaged by conflict for decades. It is a country rich in natural resources yet is one of the ten poorest countries in the world. Trócaire and its local partners are providing life-saving support, such as food, water and shelter, through the kindness of our supporters.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Fourteenth Station

Leader: *Jesus is placed in the tomb.*

Jesus being placed in the tomb seemed like the end. His disciples may have felt as if all hope was lost. In many parts of the world, people are fighting to hold onto hope due to the challenges of conflict, hunger, climate change and life-changing global events.

Trócaire and its local partners give hope to people by providing training for local leaders and community members, both male and female, on the rights of women and girls. These courageous people are challenging the marginalisation of women and girls in their communities.

Leader: Jesus, have mercy on and compassion for each one of us along our journeys in life, as we pray together for a just world.

All: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free
or We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you because, by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Closing Reflection

Leader: We have walked this journey of Jesus to the cross with each other. It appears to end in darkness and despair with the death of Jesus. However, our faith teaches us that this is not the end. We trust in the hope that Jesus rose from the dead and, in this way, God has transformed our lives too.

For over fifty years, Trócaire has been working with supporters, partners and communities to tackle the underlying causes of poverty and injustice and respond to the crises they create. Together we bring about positive and lasting change for a just world

Darkness, fear and injustice will not prevail. Jesus Christ, our brother and saviour, hold us close to you in our struggles. Remind us always of the difficulties faced by those most vulnerable and in need in our world. Give us the courage to speak out as you did and to act for justice. We make this prayer in your name, through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: Pope Francis tells us in *Fratelli Tutti* that we are all one family in spite of distances between us, so let us go from here as people of the Resurrection, sharing our hope with all who despair. Let us share our voice and generosity with the thousands of families who are living in fear of losing their lives, homes and their possessions because of drought, floods, hunger, conflict and war. We share our support with all who walk the Way of the Cross daily.

Leader invokes God's blessing and crosses herself/himself.

Leader: May the almighty and merciful God bless and protect us, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.





Women farmers using an app that allows farmers to track market prices on the mobile phones donated by the EU CSO-LA programme in the Kambia district of Sierra Leone.

Photo credit: Edward Kamara, Trócaire.

Author: Colm Hogan.

More resources, photos and videos are available at:
trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes

Cover photo: The Kambia District Development and Rehabilitation Organisation in Sierra Leone.

Photo credit: Alan Whelan, Trócaire.

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