

The Way of Light

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Opening Prayer

God of Love, we gather together today to remember the Resurrection of Your Son, Jesus. As we reflect on the ways You encountered your disciples and friends after you rose from the dead, we ask that you draw near to us, walk with us on our own paths, and shine your light through every darkness in our lives and in the world.

Personal Reflection by Survivor Mary O'Day

Imagine it is Saturday in Jerusalem...the day after horrific abuse drained the life of our innocent Savior. All seems dark and hopeless. Confusion, fear and grief are overwhelming. No one can imagine life will ever get better. The life they had previously is over, and the future looks bleak. Then Sunday comes, and Mary goes to the tomb. Finding it empty creates more confusion and fear, until Jesus calls her by name.

For most of my life, people kept telling me Jesus understood all my pain, and all my suffering, yet I could not believe it. How could He possibly know how it felt to be sexually abused by those who claimed to be the representation of God on earth. Then a few years ago, as I was contemplating Christ's death, I realized He was abused by Holy men, verbally, physically, and sexually. Jesus experienced the deepest betrayal, not only from religious leaders, but also from close friends. He was objectified, tortured, and shamed. When I came to understand all this, I could finally allow myself to feel His comfort and His Love, knowing He truly did understand.

While Jesus was on the cross, and during the abuses we have endured, the miracle of life was defiled; beauty and innocence were defiled; and God's love was defiled...by wolves in sheep's clothing. After the abuse, I often found myself doubting, like Thomas, that even the risen Christ could heal my wounds. I was stuck in Saturday. I know many of you find yourselves in that same dark confusion of Saturday now. I believe Christ crucified, and Risen from the dead, is proof, nothing is so broken that our God cannot resurrect it.

May I be a testament to Sunday, to the rising from the spiritual death of trauma caused by religious leaders, to victory over PTSD, to conquering the painful shadows cast on our lives by holy men and women. May Jesus roll away the stone of your protective wall. May you hear Him call your name and feel Him gently reach His healing Spirit into your darkness. May you experience the inner peace Christ passes to His all of His followers. And May you believe and feel true joy in the Light of His Love and Care.

The First Station - Jesus Rises from the Dead

"The angel of the Lord said to the women: 'Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for He has been raised just as He said.'" (Matthew 28: 5b-6a).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
O sons and daughters, let us sing!
The King of heaven the glorious King,
Over death today rose triumphing, Alleluia!

Alleluia!

The Second Station - The Disciples Discover the Empty Tomb

"Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed" (John 20: 8).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
That Easter morn, at break of day,
The faithful women went their way
To seek the tomb where Jesus lay

Alleluia!

The Third Station - Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalen, Apostle to the Apostles

"She turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?' She thought He was the gardener and said to Him, 'Sir, if you carried Him away, tell me where you laid Him, and I will take Him.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni,' which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, 'Stop holding on to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to My brothers and tell them, 'I am going to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.' Mary of Magdala went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord,'" (John 20: 14b-18).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
Not Magdalen, not Salome,
Nor James' own mother then delay
Embalming Jesus' corpse that day.

Alleluia!

The Fourth Station - Jesus Appears on the Road to Emmaus

"...It happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus Himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.... And He said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into His glory?' Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them what referred to Him in all the scriptures" (Luke 24: 15, 25-27).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

That night the apostles met in fear;
Amidst them came the Lord most dear,
And said My peace be on all here.

Alleluia!

The Fifth Station - Jesus is Recognized in the Breaking of the Bread

"They urged Him, 'Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.' So He went in to stay with them. And it happened that while He was with them at table, He took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that, their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while He spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us'" (Luke 24: 29-32).

alleluia alleluia, alleluia.

When Thomas, first the tidings heard,
How they had seen the Risen Lord,
He doubted the disciples' word.

Alleluia!

The Sixth Station - Jesus Appears to the Community of Disciples

"'Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Touch Me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have,' And as He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet" (Luke 24: 38-40).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

My wounded side, O Thomas see;
Behold My hands, My feet, said He
Not faithless, but believing be.

Alleluia!

The Seventh Station - Jesus Breathes Peace and Gives the Power to Forgive

"Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be with you'... The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, so I send you.' And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained'" (John 20: 19b, 20b-23).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

No longer Thomas then denied,
He saw the feet, the hands, the side;
You are my Lord and God, he cried

Alleluia!

The Eight Station - Jesus Strengthens the Faith of Thomas

"Thomas... was not with them when Jesus came... Thomas said, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into His side, I will not believe'... Jesus came... and stood in their midst and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then He said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see My hands, and bring your hand and put it into My side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe'... Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe." (John 20: 24-29).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

How blest are they who have not seen,
And yet whose faith has constant been
For they eternal life shall win.

Alleluia!

The Ninth Station - Jesus Eats with the Disciples on the Shore of Tiberias

"Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish you just caught.' So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fifty-three large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, 'Come, have breakfast.' And none of His disciples dared to ask Him, 'Who are You?' because they realized it was the Lord" (John 21: 10-12).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

On Sunday morn at break of day
The sad disciples went their way
To see the tomb where Jesus lay.

Alleluia!

The Tenth Station - Jesus Forgives Peter and Entrusts Him to Feed His Sheep

"When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?'... Peter was distressed that Jesus had said to him a third time, 'Do you love Me?' and he said to Him, 'Lord, You know everything, You know that I love You.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.... Follow Me' " (John 21: 15, 17b, 19b).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

An angel clad in white they see,
Who sat and spoke unto the three,
Your Lord has gone to Galilee,

Alleluia!

The Eleventh Station - Jesus Sends the Disciples into the World

"Jesus approached and said to them... 'Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age'" (Matthew 28: 19-20).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

And we with Holy Church unite,
As evermore is just and right,
in glory to the King of light.

Alleluia!

The Twelfth Station - Jesus Ascends into Heaven

"So then the Lord Jesus, after He spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took His seat at the right hand of God. But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs" (Mark 16: 19-20).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Our humble thanks to God let's show
And fitting praise on Him bestow
For Paschal blessings here below.

Alleluia!

The Thirteenth Station - Mary and the Disciples Keep Vigil in the Upper Room for the Spirit's Advent

"When they entered the city, they went to the upper room where they were staying.... All [the apostles] devoted themselves with one accord to prayer." (Acts 1: 13a, 14).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
On this most holy day of days,
To God your hearts and voices raise,
In laud and jubilee and praise.

Alleluia!

The Fourteenth Station - Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit

"... Suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim" (Acts 2: 2-4).

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
O sons and daughters of the Lord,
The King of glory, King adored,
From death to life has been restored.

Alleluia!

Closing Prayer

God of love, in your light we see light itself. Grant all those gathered here tonight the light of faith, the rays of hope, and the flame of love. Help the Awake community feel your presence and peace through the Way of Light we have walked tonight. Help each of us personally know the warmth of your love in our lives. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.