



Archdiocese of Vancouver  
SERVICE AND JUSTICE OFFICE

**Migrant Workers**  
Journey  
with the  
**Lord**  
STATIONS OF THE CROSS



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S T A T I O N 1

# Exodus



## I. STATION:

### MARY AND JOSEPH FLEE TO EGYPT WITH THE CHILD JESUS

#### **BIBLICAL READING: Mt. 2, 13-15**

*When they had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him." Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son."*

#### **REFLECTION:**

The flight to Egypt of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, reminds us of the day we left our homes to go to Canada hoping to provide a brighter future for our families. We remember the faces of our loved ones, the sadness of being separated from each other, not knowing when we shall see each other again.

Our parents, siblings, spouse and children embraced us tightly not wanting us to let go. We tried to overcome the sadness with the bright HOPE that this will allow us to provide a better future for them.

Many of us leave our homelands not as tourists but as domestic helpers, caregivers, workers for McDonalds, Tim Hortons, and agricultural workers. Some of us flee our countries due to war, poverty, lack of social, economic opportunities, political instability, corruption and uncertainties. As we look back to that day, we see many migrant workers who are now in the same situation we were years ago.

Now as Christians let us work together to help our Migrant Brothers and Sisters find the love, joy and support in their new home in Canada.

**PRAYER:**

*Dear child Jesus, who in the company of Mary your blessed Mother and of Saint Joseph knew the trials of migration during your exile in Egypt. We pray for the countless migrant, refugee and displaced children who are so like you. May they find work, food and accommodation. May they be received everywhere with love and work in safe and healthy conditions. Lord Jesus, protect them from all danger and harm.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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STATION 2

# Temptations



## II. STATION:

### JESUS IS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL IN THE DESERT

#### BIBLICAL READING: Mt. 4, 1-11

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. The tempter approached and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." He said in reply, "It is written: 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.'"*

*Then the devil took him to the holy city, and made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you and 'with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.'"*

*Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their magnificence, and he said to him, "All these I shall give to you, if you will prostrate yourself and worship me." At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him and, behold, angels came and ministered to him.*

#### REFLECTION:

Jesus like you, our Migrant brothers and sisters face temptations: pride, power, riches, injustice, lies. There are many problems and risks that they face: racial discrimination, human rights violations,

false promises, violation of contract agreements, isolation, precarious working conditions, exploitation, harsh weather, lack of support from communities and the inability to exercise social and democratic participation.

In these conditions, it is easy to succumb to frustrations, abuse, desperation, depression, all of which may lead to substance abuse, mental and physical ailments and vices. Another temptation to which migrants fall prey is the obsessive lure of wealth and social acceptance, which makes them forget their families, their origins and their cultural values.

Jesus teaches us that there is only one way to overcome these temptations: when we are focused on Him, He becomes our strength and comfort as we face these trials. Let us bring the love of Jesus to our Migrants by gathering them, making them feel loved, and be their “support and family” in this country.

**PRAYER:**

*Holy Father, grant to all the gift of strength to overcome those passing temptations of wealth and success, of the bitterness of despair, which prevent us from continuing our journey towards your Kingdom.*

*Guide us, especially the migrant and the refugee, by ways of hope and true human values.*

*We ask this, though Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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S T A T I O N 3

# Discrimination



### III. STATION:

## JESUS GOES TO LIVE IN GALILEE

#### **BIBLICAL READING: Mt. 4, 12-16**

*When he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen."*

#### **REFLECTION:**

Galilee was not only a region on the margins of Israel, but was also considered to be a land of pagans because its residents were the offspring of both Jewish and Gentile parents. Now we understand the prophetic option of Jesus to live among those who supposedly have no identity, for those who because of their mixed blood live as despised people, considered to be inferior by others.

The Galileans' condition is very similar to that of many migrants. Many migrants who eventually bring their families to their new homeland, fail to preserve their faith and cultural values. They spend more time at work often leaving their children secularized by media and society's influences. These lead to the migrant no longer feeling at home in their native country and at the same time not totally accepted in their new homeland.

Let us make effort in reaching out to our migrants and make them feel we are here to help and serve them.

**PRAYER:**

*Father of all peoples who through Jesus made yourself marginalized with the marginalized and migrant with the migrants, help us to identify with those who suffer, those who are discriminated against and rejected by society, those who speak a “different” language, and those whose skin and color and features are “different”. Help us to build a new world in which all of us are treated equally as brothers and sisters, members of the human family you have created.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 4

# Betrayal



## IV. STATION:

### JESUS IS BETRAYED BY JUDAS:

#### **BIBLICAL READING Mt. 26, 14-16**

*Then one of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you? They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on he looked for an opportunity to hand him over.*

#### **REFLECTION**

The experience of Jesus at this moment is particularly tragic. It is not the betrayal itself that hurts Him most, but the fact that He is betrayed by one of His closest followers, one of the Twelve.

This is what migrants experience – the same sadness, pain, deception given them by their employers, the very persons who were supposed to protect them. Their wage agreements are violated, work offered is inferior to that which is promised.

They are likewise deceived by their families who sponsor them by passing fees to the migrant by reducing pay and denial of rest days. This is what the migrants experience when their passports and work permits are confiscated by their sponsors. They have them arrested and deported when they feel threatened by the migrants' courage to stand for their rights.

It now becomes our duty to inform our migrants of their rights and options in these difficult situations.

**PRAYER:**

*Lord Jesus, who felt firsthand the pain of betrayal by one of your own, guide the betrayed on the path of forgiveness and accompany all those who betray others on the path of conversion and truth. Transform our hearts so that it can be filled by your compassion and solidarity.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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S T A T I O N 5

# Abandonment



**V. STATION:**  
**JESUS PRAYS IN THE GARDEN OF  
GETHSEMANE.**

**BIBLICAL READING: Mt. 26, 36-39**

*Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will."*

**REFLECTION:**

For the first time Jesus becomes aware that His death is very close and even though His disciples are nearby He knows that at this hour He is going to be alone. Loneliness, the feeling of abandonment before His enemies, the anguish and sadness of death overwhelm Him. But even in the moment of deepest desolation Jesus shows that His trust in God is still deeper than His anguish.

Often migrants feel like Jesus did in the garden: alone, abandoned, betrayed, frustrated. They do not know anyone, and their families are not with them. They know what they have left behind and are willing to pay the price but do not know what the future holds ahead of them. They feel the need for acceptance, comfort, consolation, justice, a listening ear. Many times they do not find them in the local people who are distant, discriminating, care less. They yearn to seek solace in their faith churches and heritage communities.

Like Jesus, migrants find in prayer the strength, comfort and courage to move forward in the midst of many difficulties. They realize that only in God can they find the will to continue living and hoping.

**PRAYER:**

*Bountiful God, we thank you for the tremendous faith of your Son Jesus. This faith is reflected in the migrants who never give up in spite of all obstacles they face. Help us to imitate His example so that we may never stop struggling to overcome the problems we face in our lives and that our goal in every moment may be to do your will here on earth.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 6

# Humiliation



## VI. STATION: JESUS IS ARRESTED

### **BIBLICAL READING: Mt. 26, 47-50**

*While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a large crowd, with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests and the elders of the people. His betrayer had arranged a sign with them, saying, "The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him." Immediately he went over to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and he kissed him. Jesus answered him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then stepping forward they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.*

### **REFLECTION**

Jesus is a man of peace, a man who was preaching with words and in deeds the love of God for all people. He is arrested as if He were a thug or a criminal. In other words he is detained and accused unjustly. The authorities present Him as one who profanes the name of God and manipulates the people, whereas what He was doing, in fact, was simply helping the people to understand the goodness and infinite mercy of God as presented in the Kingdom of justice, peace, freedom and harmony.

Migrants frequently live this same situation of abuse. The migrant is given permission to work for a single employer which makes it impossible to leave an inferior work situation. The fear of reporting poor treatment and abuse causes the migrant much humiliation, lack of self-worth and low self-esteem. How many migrants are falsely accused and fear deportation? How many are treated like criminals without understanding why? How many are treated as slaves and low class citizens?

**PRAYER:**

*God, Father of freedom, we pray for all migrants and refugees who are unjustly detained as if they were criminals and for all who live in fear of being detained. Fill them with the strength and consolation of Your Spirit. Comfort their families who live the anguish of knowing that one of their loved ones is in prison and give us the courage to speak out for those people who have no voice of their own in society because they are considered “illegal”.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 7

# Injustice



## VII. STATION:

### JESUS IS INTERROGATED BY THE CHIEF PRIESTS

#### **BIBLICAL READING: Mt. 26, 59-63a**

*The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward who stated, “This man said, ‘I can destroy the temple of God and within three days rebuild it.’” The high priest rose and addressed him, “Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?” But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, “I order you to tell us under oath before the living God whether you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”*

#### **REFLECTION:**

Jesus is standing before the tribunal of Jewish authorities listening to the false accusations raised against Him. To the lies of false witnesses, He responds with silence, because He does not have any more words to denounce this injustice and corruption. Words have lost their meaning since their purpose is no longer truth, but deceit.

Just like Jesus, migrants are subject of false accusations, illegal detention and undue harassment by employers who turn them over to police authorities without due process. They are not informed of their rights upon arrival and are denied their right to unionize and bargain. There is no body to hear allegations and defend them. They are treated as “disposable” items which can be discarded when there is no more use for them. Oftentimes the only way migrants can protest is through silence, because they are already worn out and feel that others cannot understand or do not care of their difficult situation.

**PRAYER:**

*Good Father, free us from the temptation to make migrants and refugees the scapegoats of our communities, the objects of our accusations, of our political and social campaigns. Give us the Spirit of compassion that we may understand the suffering of these people who have left their lands and families in search of a better future.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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S T A T I O N 8

# Condemned



## VIII. STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

### **BIBLICAL READING: Mk. 15, 6-15**

*Now on the occasion of the feast he used to release to them one prisoner whom they requested. A man called Barabbas was then in prison along with the rebels who had committed murder in a rebellion. The crowd came forward and began to ask him to do for them as he was accustomed.*

*Pilate answered, "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" For he knew that it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.*

*Pilate again said to them in reply, "Then what (do you want) me to do with (the man you call) the king of the Jews?" They shouted again, "Crucify him." Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" They only shouted the louder, "Crucify him."*

### **REFLECTION:**

The sentence Jesus receives is no surprise. Jesus already knew how this process will end- death penalty. This innocent man is brought to death by a corrupt social and religious system that is unable to comprehend the basic needs of the people.

This death sentence is repeated nowadays when the political leaders ignore the realities facing the plight of the migrant workers – the abuse, precarious working conditions, breach of wage contracts, the passing of fees to the migrant, the denial of social and labor mobility, to name a few. Some are left to die of hunger, cold,

exhaustion and dehydration when they are assigned to work in deserted isolated places.

The migrant becomes “out of sight, out of mind”, bound to their employer, not enjoying the same legal status as residents. This death sentence is repeated when hordes of workers and their families find themselves excluded from the possibility of living a dignified and truly human life in their own land.

Paradoxically, this death sentence goes against God’s will, which says that all men might have life in abundance (John 10:10).

**PRAYER:**

*God, Father of justice, we pray for those who govern the societies in which we live, for those who have the power to make decisions and dictate the laws which rule our communities. Enkindle in them a Spirit of justice so that our laws may allow all to enjoy the rights and dignity due to all people. May our country protect above all the lives of the poor and the insignificant.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 9

# Oppression



**IX. STATION:**  
**JESUS FALLS UNDER THE WEIGHT**  
**OF THE CROSS**

**BIBLICAL READING: Lk. 23, 27-28, 32**

*A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children. Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed.*

**REFLECTION:**

Unjustly condemned, Jesus must carry His heavy cross by Himself, the very cross that will be the instrument of His death. To the weight of the cross as even heavier burden is added: the cruel beatings, the lies and betrayal, the abandonment and cowardliness of His own disciples, and the cruel humiliations. The walk to Calvary is long and painful, and Jesus falls under this unbearable pain.

How often have the migrants fallen in their journeys? How many sacrifices have they had to make, giving up their relationships with family for the sake of a bright future? How often have they put their own lives at risk with extreme weather condition, culture shock, employer demands, lack of community and legal assistance, language barriers and extreme loneliness? Often the journey to the land of milk and honey becomes the journey of the cross, replete with danger and obstacles.

Only our faith in God gives us the strength to stand up for every fall in our journey and continue to trust and hope God's goodness will prevail in all these tribulations.

**PRAYER:**

*God of life, we ask You to protect your migrants in this journey that is full of risks and dangers. Help them to overcome the obstacles they face and find a dignified job that pays a just wage. Do not allow them from being separated from their families and getting lost. Lord, lift them up after all their falls so that they can achieve their goals and realize their dreams.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 1 0

# Works of Mercy



**X. STATION:**  
**SIMON OF CYRENE HELPS JESUS**  
**TO CARRY HIS CROSS**

**BIBLICAL READING: Lk. 23, 26**

*As they led him away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus.*

**REFLECTION:**

Jesus is so weak and so weary after enduring His trial and crowning with thorns that He cannot continue carrying the cross by Himself. Afraid He will die before reaching Calvary, they got Simon of Cyrene to help Him. He does not make eloquent speeches or perform extraordinary actions; rather he quietly helps Jesus continue to walk to Calvary.

This simple and silent act reminds us of the many people who live their faith by serving others. The migrants who rely on faith and trust in God to help them become good servants, caregivers and workers in a foreign land.

They get their hands dirty toiling soil in fields at the same time giving hope to others who have weakened. They love to serve for the sake of the beloved, the families they support. Following the example of Simon of Cyrene, we are called to be the Cyrenians of the Third Millennium, people with open and compassionate hearts.

**PRAYER:**

*God, Father of Mercy, do not allow us to let the migrants be alone, abandoned or in despair. Teach us to act in solidarity, compassion, and a spirit of welcome. Show us how to overcome our selfishness so that we might accompany our migrant brothers and sisters who walk with us in this world.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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S T A T I O N 1 1

# Violence



## XI. STATION:

### JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

#### **BIBLICAL READING: John 19:23-24**

*When the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they took His clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took His tunic, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, "Let's not tear it but cast lots for it to see whose it will be, " in order that the passage of scripture might be fulfilled, "They divided my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots." This is what the soldiers did.*

#### **REFLECTION:**

Jesus has arrived at Calvary, the place of execution, but even here the process of humiliation and degradation of the condemned man continues. They take from Jesus the last thing remaining to Him, His very clothing. This final act of the death sentence says much more than it seems to say. To strip the condemned man of His clothing is not just about removing His last few possessions but rather about taking from Him, in front of everyone His dignity, honour and rights.

The image of Jesus stripped of his garments is the image of all migrants who are stripped of the passports and documents to guarantee payment of service through hard labor. They are extorted fees in order to pay for the recruiters. In their journeys, the migrants are subjected to violence often by authorities who are supposed to protect their lives and defend their rights. It is the image of countless women who have been raped, robbed and forced to live in isolation and absolute silence. Many times it is

we ourselves who legally strip migrants of their dignity through our lukewarmness and contempt and discriminating remarks that society tolerates. We forget that it is Jesus in the migrant whom we despise.

**PRAYER:**

*God, compassionate Father, we place in your hands the lives of our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters, especially those who most suffer the consequences and cost of migration, those who have been stripped of everything on the road. You know well the exploitation, the humiliation, and the abuses they have suffered. You know the sadness of their hearts because it is the same sadness and bitterness your Son suffered when He was stripped of His clothes and His dignity. Heal their wounds by the power of your love. Transform our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh that we may break the silence which allows the legal and public stripping of the most vulnerable migrants and refugees.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 1 2

# Dishonoured



**XII. STATION:  
JESUS IS CRUCIFIED  
BETWEEN THE THIEVES**

**BIBLICAL READING: Mk. 15: 25-27**

*It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified Him. The inscription of the charge against Him read, "The King of Jews." With Him they crucified two criminals, one on His right and one on His left.*

**REFLECTION:**

We are so accustomed to seeing crosses in our churches, in our houses, around our necks that we often forget the original meaning of this object which is so common for us that it can easily become a sign without meaning. The Cross was the most powerful sign of dishonour and public shame because crucifixion was the means of death for criminals and slaves. Jesus is treated, right up to the end as a common criminal and to underline even more His illegal state His enemies have Him crucified between two thieves.

What happens to Jesus at Calvary happens today to migrants. The terms we use are derogatory that make it seem like they are not human beings. Migrants are called "under the table" "illegal" as if they have robbed the locals of their employment and is responsible for causing illegal recruiters to flourish. They are called "disposable migrants" because the law disallows them to stay longer after their work contract expires thereby promoting detachment from society and alienation. They are denied decent housing, health and safety. Let us ask forgiveness for all those times that we have dehumanized our

migrant brothers and sisters with our selfish and indifferent attitudes.

**PRAYER:**

*God, Father of all truth, grant us new eyes and new words so that we may not look at our migrant brothers and sisters like criminals and so that we no longer call them illegal. In Your eyes, Father, only selfishness, violence, injustice and exploitation are illegal. Grant us the necessary courage to overcome our own selfishness.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

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S T A T I O N 1 3

# Separation



### **XIII. STATION:**

## **THE WOMEN AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS**

### **BIBLICAL READING: Jn. 19: 25-27**

*Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.*

### **REFLECTION:**

Jesus is dying on the cross, abandoned by His followers, except a few people who have the courage to stay with Him until the end. There at the foot of the cross we find a Mother looking at her beloved Son as He slowly dies on the cross despised by His people and abandoned by His friends.

Mary does not understand why Her Son must die in this way, in the prime of life, without reason, or motive. Her pain and affliction are so strong that she is speechless, but Her motherly love, tender but invincible gives her the strength to stay at her Son's side until death.

In this station we are reminded of all women who are enduring with great courage and faith the consequences of migration: wives and husbands who have to leave their spouse and children facing the risk of severed relationships, mothers and fathers who watch their sons and daughters leave so that they can earn enough to send siblings to school, grandparents who stay behind to take care of the young ones while parents are away.

Broken family values caused by separation, resulting in excessive materialism and distorted ambitions to heal the absence of the migrant from immediate family.

A migrant who later gets reunited with their families win victory and restores the brokenness and everlasting joy.

**PRAYER:**

*Our Lady of Guadalupe, with your maternal love protect and accompany these women and children who are trying to reunite with their husbands, as well as those women who stay behind struggling to raise their families. Do not allow family unity and values to be destroyed because of migration, distance or separation. May Your motherly love and compassion be the unbreakable link that unifies all migrants and refugees and their families.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 1 4

# Death



## **XIV. STATION:**

### **JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS**

#### **BIBLICAL READING: Mt. 27: 45-50**

*But the rest said, "Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him." But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit.*

#### **REFLECTION:**

Jesus dies in indifference and total unconcern while His enemies make fun of Him. They mock Him because He healed other people but now He cannot save Himself. Jesus dies, crying out in anguish, completely abandoned by His own people who are indifferent to His innocent suffering. His cry is the cry of all crucified peoples, who suffer as a result of poverty, misery, oppression, exploitation which allows a few to grow rich at the expense of the many and the dehumanization of the masses of humanity.

Let us silently recall all those migrants who have died violently, or those who have been killed in their journeys. Let us recall the migrants who have suffered mental madness or were induced to take their own lives. Let us recall the migrants who were wrongly convicted to die or would rather die than commit mortal sin. Let us recall the migrants who were not surrounded by loved ones during their last breath. Through them and with them Jesus dies again today.

**PRAYER:**

*God of life, welcome in your arms all the migrants, both adults and children, who have died on their journey. Console their families and do not allow them to lose hope in life after the death of loved ones. Help us to promote life and to fight against all laws which cause death among migrants. May the cross of Your Son be for us a cry of protest against all unjust death and a symbol of new life for all humankind.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen*

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S T A T I O N 1 5

# Freedom



**XV. STATION:**  
**THE RISEN JESUS ACCOMPANIES**  
**HIS DISCIPLES**

**BIBLICAL READING: Lk. 24, 13-32**

*Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And 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. He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see."*

*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.*

*As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But 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?"*

### **REFLECTION:**

After Jesus' death His followers are left with a sense of guilt, confusion and deception. The disciples who were walking on their way to Emmaus had been certain that Jesus would be their liberator for whom they had been waiting for so long. However, His senseless and shameless death on the cross destroyed this hope and left them without any reference point. They are surprised and disconcerted by the news that the women found His tomb empty and saw an angel who told them that Jesus was alive.

In the middle of this crisis Jesus approaches the disciples, explains to them the meaning of these absurd events, and breaks bread with them. It is in that moment that the disciples recognize Him. Only then do they recognize that the God of life has conquered death and, unlike their first impression, has never abandoned them.

Jesus continues to walk with us, His pilgrim and migrant people even if we do not always recognize His presence among us. Let us be Jesus to our migrant brothers and sisters by loving them as Jesus loves us.

## **FINAL PRAYER:**

*God of the journey, we thank You for allowing us to accompany You during this Way of the Cross. In this celebration we have meditated on the painful journey of the migrants, as reflected in your Son's painful journey to the cross.*

*Inspire us now so that we can lovingly and generously accompany migrants on their journeys. We know that death is not the end; rather, life triumphs in you and because of you. Help us to recognize your resurrected Son in our migrant brothers and sisters. Renew our desire and commitment to be more loving in all our relationships. Renew in us the love you have taught us, the love that knows no borders or limits because of cultural, national or racial differences. Guide our steps toward your Kingdom, where no one is a stranger because we are all members of the human family with you as our only Father and Mother.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. AMEN!*

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Archdiocese of Vancouver

**SERVICE AND JUSTICE OFFICE**