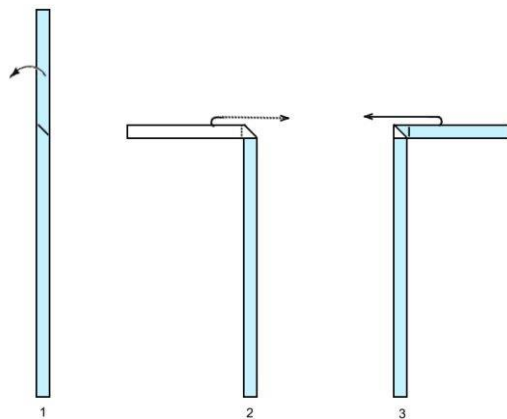


Good Friday Reflective Walk

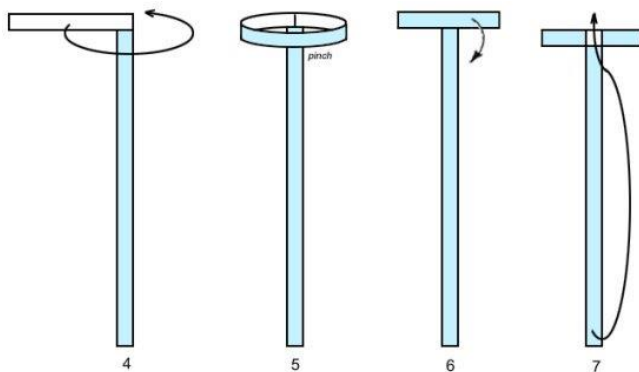
(Rev Nikki Watkin)

Before your walk

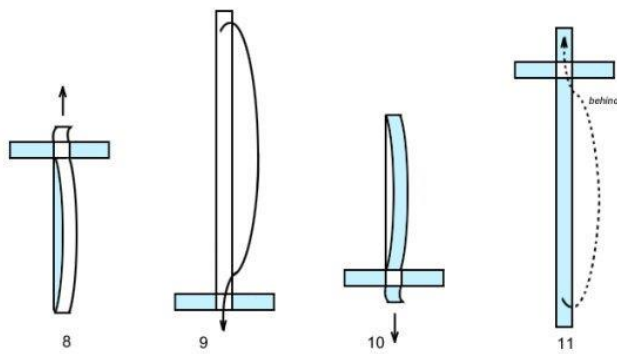
Make a cross to carry –it doesn't have to be large –and you can choose to be as creative or simple as you wish. The simplest is to cut out a cross shape, or you may enjoy folding a strip of paper like this –



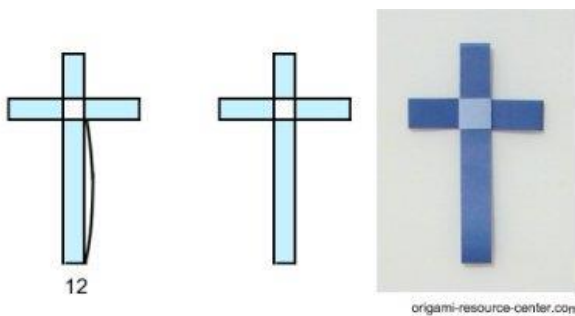
1. Take a long strip of paper and make a 45 degree fold so the top third of the paper points towards the left.
2. Take this end of the paper and fold it behind (mountain fold) and towards the right.
3. Fold the paper back towards the left. Make sure the folds are straight so you don't cinch the centre portion of the cross.



4. Loop the end of the paper towards the right and then back towards the centre of the cross.
5. Adjust the loop so the left and right side are even. Press down to flatten the paper. This makes the left and right arms of the cross.
6. Fold down the arms of the cross. A white, central square should be visible.
7. Take the bottom end of the paper strip and weave it through the centre of the cross.



8. Pull through completely. Once this is done, the model is quite stable and will not unravel.
9. Bring the end of the paper back towards the centre of the cross and weave it through again.
10. Pull through but leave enough paper so it makes the top part of the cross. This part should be slightly longer than the right and left arms of the cross.
11. Bring the paper back up **BEHIND** the model and weave the end through the centre part of the cross. If necessary, cut off excess paper.



12. Pull through as much as necessary to make a nicely proportioned cross. You can leave the arms of the cross slightly rounded, or press them down flat. Done!

NB: If you don't have a printer or a phone to bring the notes with you, you may need to write out the stations, in order to know what to do.

Your Good Friday Walk with the Cross

Daily walks have become common for most people under our new normal, and you are invited to use your new normal walk to follow the Stations of the Cross on this Good Friday either alone or in your bubble. Each station will require you to notice something in your walk and reflect on it, before you move to the next station. The invitation is to take your time and let God use this time to speak to you in a new, and yet very old, way. Take the cross with you, perhaps pop it in a pocket to let a little of it show, or pin it to your top.

Station 1: Jesus is condemned to death

Jesus was accused of many crimes he didn't commit.

You are invited to notice the first person you pass (with 2m distance)... What are the initial assumptions you make about him/her? Stay with that for a bit, before you pray for them... and as you pray, move past your assumptions, to reflect on how God might see that person. Let this challenge your first assumptions.

Station 2: Jesus accepts the cross

The cross was big and heavy. It was hard for Jesus to carry it. Jesus carried the heavy cross without complaining once.

As you walk, remember the last time you complained –whether out loud or in your head. Remember what happened and how it made you feel. Now look at it again and look for something you can be thankful for within that experience.

Station 3: Jesus fall the first time

Jesus was already badly wounded when he fell the first time. It must have hurt very much. Jesus got up and kept on going.

You are invited to reflect on a recent time you have failed –perhaps you failed to respond the way you would have liked to; perhaps you missed an opportunity for love. Take that moment and wrap it in God's forgiveness –knowing there will be new opportunities. Take hope's challenge to try again.

Station 4: Jesus meets his mother

Jesus knew that his mother was really sad to see him suffering so much. But he must have been so pleased she came to him. Mary loved Jesus very much.

As you walk, remember your own mother. How has she been there for you in your own difficult journeys. Although not there for all of the journey, how does simply showing up make a difference. Take some time to be thankful for those who show up in the hard times because they love you.

Station 5: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus

Simon didn't come to help Jesus but to see what was going on. Then he was ordered by the soldiers to carry the cross, because Jesus was having such a hard time.

As you walk, take time to think about those people around you who you don't really want to be there for. People you feel like you have to help. Offer these situations to God and ask God to create a willing heart within you.

Station 6: Veronica wipes Jesus' face

According to tradition Veronica stepped out from the crowd to wipe Jesus' face as he carried the cross... Veronica loved Jesus very much. When she stepped out, she risked getting in big trouble from the soldiers. Her love and kindness overcame her fear.

Sometimes reaching out to someone is costly. Think about the people around you and how they are coping with the lockdown. How might you offer to "wipe the face" of someone? –reaching out in care and love to remind them they are not alone in this journey.

Station 7: Jesus falls a second time

Jesus fell again because he was so weak and tired from all his wounds. He still didn't give up. He got back up and continued on.

What is it that makes you feel tired or weak at the moment? What might give you the energy to keep going even when you feel like this? What is the most difficult task for you in this current situation? Might you ask someone for help? Might God be able to help?

Station 8: Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

A lot of people were against Jesus, but a lot of people followed him. They were his faithful friends.

As you walk, think about the faithful friends you have. Give thanks for them. Is there someone God is asking you to be a faithful friend to?

Station 9: Jesus falls a third time

It's incredible that Jesus fell again and the soldiers didn't help him. They only yelled louder for him to get up and continue on. Jesus didn't get mad at them; he forgave them.

Look at the ground you are walking on. Feel it hard under your feet and imagine the hurt of falling. When have you felt hurt and no one has seemed to notice? Has that left you holding a grudge? Take some time to sift through an experience of hurt and look for moments of forgiveness.

Station 10: Jesus is stripped of his clothes

To be without clothes in front of everyone is a humiliating thing. Jesus wasn't ashamed because he knew his Father in heaven loved him and everyone who was there.

Can you recall a time when you felt embarrassed? A time when you felt caught out, without the covering you expected? How do we deal with being embarrassed? How honest can we be with God and with one another? When we feel stripped of what we thought we had, what are the basics we are left with? Name three things that you cannot be stripped of.

Station 11: Jesus is crucified

The soldiers drove nails through Jesus' hands and feet. They lifted up the cross and put it in place. Jesus was in a lot of pain.

Today we walk amidst a world where there is a lot of pain. Take some time to lift that pain to Jesus, who knows it more than we ever will.

Station 12: Jesus dies on the cross

When Jesus died, the sky got dark and the ground started to shake. This made some people very scared.

We are in a time when there is a lot of fear and anxiety. The sky can seem very dark, and the ground beneath us that once felt secure seems to become very shaky. Recognise the anxiety that might be building within you and those around you. Reflect on ways that decrease this. Talk to those around you later today about things that help you and ask others what they find useful.

Station 13: Jesus' body is taken down from the cross

Joseph of Arimathea gave Jesus his own burial cave because Jesus didn't have a place to be buried. Joseph was another one of Jesus' friends who took a risk to help him.

As you walk, and look at your local community, ask God how you might be able to offer what you have. What courageous risks might you be called to take, in order to benefit someone else in their time of need?

Station 14: Jesus is laid in the tomb

Sometimes things simply look very difficult and sad. We need to grieve for those times as we wait with hope for God to do a new thing.

Look around you where you are walking. Take in all the houses that represent all the people, and all the difficult situations that are being laid out before us. Instead of letting this overwhelm you, place them in God's hands. This is the time when we recognise the pain of our humanity. It is the time when we must wait for God to do a new thing that is not yet. Tomorrow we must still wait... but another day is coming... we do not wait in vain.

As you return homeward, remember the cross you made. The reminder of Jesus' challenge to take up your cross and follow him.

In the remaining time, breathe deeply and notice afresh this community in which you have been planted. Be thankful for all the lives around you. Lives that God loved so much that he sent Jesus to walk this walk before you even took the first step.