

VIA LUCIS



The Paschal Way of the Light

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Written by Fr. Peter John Cameron, O.P., for *Magnificat* April 2013

The Paschal Way of the Light {*VIA LUCIS*} is a new devotion resembling the Way of the Cross {*VIA CRUCIS*}.

Instead of carrying the cross, the symbol of the Passion, a paschal candle or icon of the Resurrection is raised for all to see.

Friday was the special day for the *VIA CRUCIS*,
Sunday is the special day for the *VIA LUCIS*.

Includes 14 stations for reflection on Christ's
Pasch {Passover}—from Resurrection to Pentecost.



First Station
Jesus Rises from the Dead

MEDITATION

As Jesus rises from the dead, our hopelessness, fatalism, and despair all drop away.

We leave in the wake of Christ's rising all that weighs us down: our self-absorption, insolence, and indignation.

The higher we rise with Jesus, the smaller every enslaving thing becomes.

What once seemed impossible is now altogether likely.

The elevation of the host at Mass is a symbol of our elevation in the resurrected Christ.

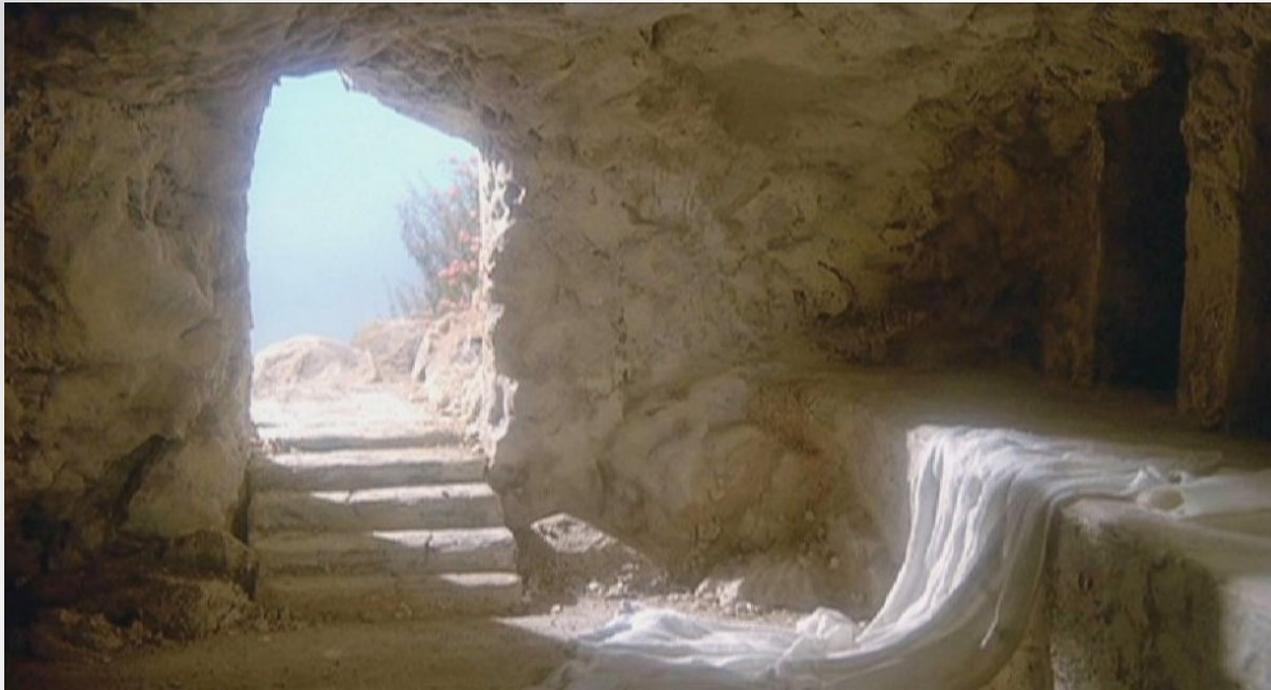
*The author of life you put to death,
but God raised him from the dead.*

(Acts 3:15)



Prayer

Lord Jesus, may this Easter be for me a new beginning in grace in which I keep my mind and heart fixed on the higher things of heaven.



SECOND STATION The Disciples Find the Empty Tomb

*Peter got up and ran to the tomb, bent down, and saw the burial cloths alone
(Luke 24:12)*

MEDITATION

After the Blessed Virgin Mary, the tomb may be the most privileged creature in all creation because it received the body of Jesus Christ.

J.S. Bach celebrates this grace in his *Saint Matthew Passion* when the singer compares himself to the tomb:

*“Make thee clean/ my heart from sin/ I would my Lord inter./ May he find rest in me, ever in eternity/
His sweet repose be here/ world depart/ let Jesus in!”*

Paradoxically, when we allow the body of Christ into our life, all death disappears. We become as empty as the tomb of all that is deadly. The empty tomb remains a glorious linen closet.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, make me as empty as your tomb of everything that separates me from you, and fill me with your risen presence.

THIRD STATION



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Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

*Jesus said to her, "Mary!" [...]
"Stop holding on to me,
For I have not yet ascended to the Father."
(John 20:16, 17)*

MEDITATION

How Mary Magdalene suffers at the loss of Jesus.
Whenever we suffer, God asks us
to be separated from something we dearly love
so that God can give himself to us
that much more.

We grow in love for the Lord
only by becoming more conformed to him. This
requires becoming less conformed to ourselves.
Suffering effects this.

To the extent that we cling to things outside of
God, we cannot suffer for God.

The risen Jesus calls us by name
to give us the joy of consolation in our suffering so
that we can welcome the love of the Father.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to understand that suffering means receiving your love in the measure that you desire to give it for my benefit and to your glory.

FOURTH STATION

Jesus Walks with the Disciples to Emmaus

Jesus asked them, “What are you discussing as you walk along?”

(Luke 24:17)

MEDITATION

The Paschal Mystery presents itself, not through ideas, but via a personal encounter with a loving Presence.

Otherwise Easter would be reduced to an ideology easy to dismiss.

Hence, “the balance struck by Christian holiness...is a dynamic destined to give more fullness to our pilgrimage on earth withGod is Someone who has joined man on his path, who has become his companion” (Giussani). Because of our encounter with unutterable love our lives can be utterly loving.



Prayer

Lord Jesus, as I journey through the day be close to me so that all those I encounter may experience your presence through your Word dwelling within me.



FIFTH STATION

Jesus Reveals Himself in the Breaking of the Bread

*The two recounted how he was
made known to them in the breaking
of the bread.*

(Luke 24:35)

MEDITATION

Blessed John Paul II wrote that “man
achieves the fulfillment of his destiny

through the sincere gift of self...made possible only through his encounter with God. It is in God that man finds full self-realization. Man fulfills himself in God, who comes to meet him through his Eternal Son.” The breaking of bread is the symbol of Jesus’ perfect gift of self.

In recognizing Christ, the disciples discover the truth of themselves, and they are fulfilled by that encounter. Thus, St. Augustine wisely advises, “Learn where to look for the Lord, learn where to have him, learn where to recognize him. It’s when you eat him.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to live by faith so that my life may be a perfect gift of self.

SIXTH STATION

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

*When the doors were locked,
where the disciples were,
Jesus came and stood in their midst.
(John 20:19)*

MEDITATION

After Good Friday, the absence of the Apostles from society betrayed their doubt in the Presence of the Savior.

Their fear leaves them prey to the Evil One. But “the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord [Jesus] will kill...by the manifestation of his coming” (cf. 2 Thes 2:8).

Jesus penetrates the locked doors and defenses of our life so that we will see him by faith, for “everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life” (Jn 6:40).

Thus, “we must give ourselves up to this presence and live our life within it and under its influence, being judged, illuminated, and sustained by it (Giussani)...and nothing else.



Prayer

Lord Jesus, may I live fully mindful of your Presence,
and fully alive through my union with You.

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus Confers on His Disciples the Power to Forgive Sins



Prayer

Lord Jesus, keep me united to you in holiness that I may always be generous in showing forgiveness to others.

Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them.
(John 20:23)

MEDITATION

The ability to forgive sins remains a supernatural capacity that is a direct effect of the Resurrection.

“We must forgive all our enemies or be damned. To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you. To refuse it is to refuse God’s mercy for ourselves”
(C.S. Lewis).

Yet, “it is impossible to keep the Lord’s commandment [to forgive] by imitating the divine model from outside; there has to be a vital participation...in holiness and the mercy and the love of our God (CCC 2842). The most difficult duty on earth is doable only because the risen Jesus endows us with his divine power.

EIGHTH STATION

Jesus Confirms Thomas in Faith

*Have you come
to believe
because you
have seen me?*

(John 20:29)



“Make a sweet dwelling in the side of Christ crucified in order to have a holy knowledge of yourself and a true knowledge of the greatness of his goodness” (Saint Catherine of Siena).

MEDITATION

“The human heart is converted by looking upon him whom our sins have pierced” (CCC 1432). However, this does not require a miraculous confrontation with the pierced Christ. We encounter the risen Jesus by devoting ourselves to the physical and spiritual wounds of others.

“In showing his wounds, Christ shows the efficacy of the cross, by which he undoes all evil things and gives all good things, which is peace” (Saint John Chrysostom).

Prayer

Lord Jesus, heal me by your wounds and make me compassionate and generous in embracing the woundedness of others.



NINTH STATION

Jesus Appears to His Disciples On the Shore of Lake Galilee

*Jesus said to them,
“Come, have breakfast.”*
(John 21:12)

MEDITATION

Ever since the Epiphany, Jesus Christ continues to manifest himself to those in need of salvation. “The grace of God has appeared, saving all...When the

kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, [...] he saved us” (Ti 2:11; 3:4-5).

We need the revelation of Jesus in our life, not only regarding those things that exceed human understanding, “but also about those religious and moral truths which of themselves are not beyond the grasp of human reason” (CCC 38). Like the disciples on the sea, this means leaving behind our old way of life. To such an obedient follower Jesus promises: “I will love him and reveal myself to him” (Jn 14:21).

Prayer

Lord Jesus, may the appearance of your grace transform my worldly ways,
and keep me obedient to your commandments with confidence and joy.

TENTH STATION

Jesus Confers Primacy on Peter

Simon, son of John, do you love me?

[...] Feed my sheep.

(John 21:17)

MEDITATION

Nicholas Cabasilas (14th century) writes, “To ask such questions is more effective for friendship than anything else. The speaking of friendship is capable of evoking it where it has not yet begun.”

After his denials of Christ, Peter requires a new beginning. Jesus asks Peter this question three times because Peter needs to hear himself say how much he love Jesus. That confession remains the key to his shepherding of the Church.

We love Jesus by receiving his love as he ordains to give it via his Church. “Only those who follow the Church have a sure guarantee that they have not really followed just their own know-it-all wisdom” (von Balthasar).



Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to make every moment of my life
An act of unceasing love for you and to be ever
obedient by loving your Church.

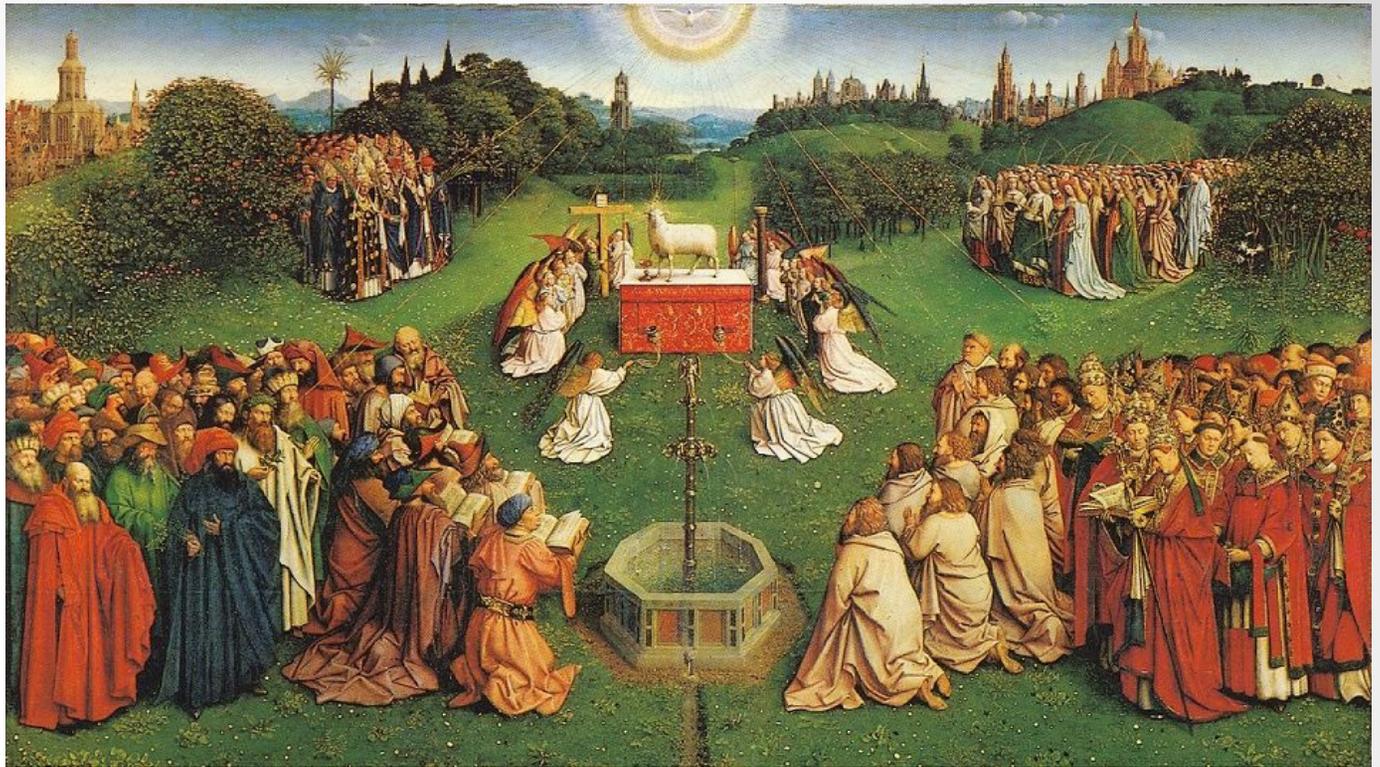
ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus Entrusts His Disciple with a Universal Mission

*Go [...] and make
disciples of all
nations.*

(Matthew 28:19)

MEDITATION



The Catechism teaches that “man’s vocation to eternal life...actually reinforces his duty to put into action in this world the energies and means received from the Creator to serve justice and peace” (CCC 2820). Our faith-encounter with eternal life in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ longs to express itself in mission. As Servant of God, Luigi Giussani writes, “only a lived faith brings about mission, because only faith that is lived brings a change, the kind of change that anyone can come across and be shocked by, and start following. This shows how faith opens one up to a new way of thinking and a new kind of morality.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, may the witness of my life proclaim your holy name so as to draw others into union with you.



TWELFTH STATION

Jesus Ascends into Heaven

[Jesus] was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.

(Acts I:9 b)

MEDITATION

Saint Augustine wrote, “You will cease to be unspiritual if this human form, the body of Jesus, is taken from before our eyes, so that the form of God may be grafted instead upon your hearts.

Unless this human form is taken away, you will be wholly unable to think of anything divine.” By embracing this Ascension we let go of all that is beneath us. Thanks to the fact that Christ is taken up into heaven, we remain taken up in his love.

The raised hands of the priest at Mass mirror those of Christ who extends to us the divinity to which he ascends.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, give me the eyes of faith and make me deeply spiritual so that I will always think and act in a godly way.

THIRTEENTH STATION

Mary and the Disciples
Await
the Coming of the Holy
Spirit

*All these devoted themselves
[...], together with some
women,
and Mary the mother of Jesus.*
(Acts 1:14)

MEDITATION



After the Ascension, the company of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the midst of the Church was a source of unique consolation for the followers of Jesus. For, as Blessed John Paul II writes, “Mary reminded his disciples of Jesus’ face.” As the disciples gazed upon the face of Mary, they beheld the Lord whom they missed so much. The Blessed Virgin, “the living icon of the Father’s mercy,”... “communicates to the community of believers an ever new capacity to await God’s future and to abandon themselves to the Lord’s promises.” The witness of the Mother of God attests that “Mary’s unique vocation is inseparable from humanity’s vocation.”

Prayer

Lord Jesus, through the maternal mediation of your Holy Mother, bring about in me the moral perfection and holiness befitting the children of God.



FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus Sends the Spirit
Promised by the Father
To His Disciples
Receive the holy Spirit.
(John 20:22)

MEDITATION

Saint Cyril of Alexandria wrote that
“the Holy Spirit changes those
in whom he comes to dwell
and alters the whole pattern of their lives.
With the Spirit within them it is quite natural
for people who had been absorbed by
the things of this world
to become entirely otherworldly in their outlook,
and for cowards to become
men of great courage.”

The Person of the Holy Spirit interiorly
perfects our spirit
so that it refrains from evil for love.
It is free because its interior dynamism
makes it do what divine law prescribes”
(Saint Thomas Aquinas).

Prayer

Lord Jesus, free me from all shackles of the flesh
to live by the Spirit to your everlasting glory.