

An abstract painting depicting the Resurrection. A large, dark, angular shape representing the stone is being rolled away from the entrance of a tomb. The scene is rendered in a vibrant, non-naturalistic color palette of reds, oranges, yellows, and greens. The background is a mix of dark and light tones, suggesting a landscape with trees and a sky. The overall style is expressive and modern.

ROLL AWAY THE STONE

JOHN PAUL KIRKHAM

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

**PAINTED
BY
JAN KALINSKI**

ROLL AWAY THE STONE

JOHN PAUL KIRKHAM

First published in Great Britain in 2021
revised 2nd edition 2023
Copyright © 2021 John Paul Kirkham

The moral right of the author has been asserted in accordance
with the Copyright,
Designs and Patents Act 1988

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a
retrieval system or transmitted in any form, or by any means,
without the prior permission in writing of the author.

www.johnpaulkirkham.co.uk

Remembering all victims of violence

PAINTINGS BY JAN KALINSKI

Introduction

The idea behind these “*Stations*” originated in the immediate aftermath of those shocking and savage terrorist attacks on New York and London in 2001 and 2005.

For twenty years these stations had been an unfinished work in progress until the celebrated artist Jan Kalinski came up with a proposal (during the Covid 19 pandemic in 2020) of producing 14 new paintings depicting in an accessible abstract form the “*Via Dolorosa*” (The Way of Sorrows). I was persuaded to revisit, resurrect and re-write the meditations and this quickly developed into a collaborative project that became this book.

My early background and experiences as a forensic photographer in Liverpool in the 1970s and 1980s allowed me to become a very personal witness to some of the most disturbing and horrific scenes that a human body can suffer. And so the subject matter is by admission stark, abrasive and thoughtfully

uncomfortable but the unconventional format and reflections are deliberately and necessarily short.

To journey with and intercede for us I have respectfully selected many well and some lesser known saints from the Roman Calendar. For we are ordinary people living in extraordinary and often threatening times and the journey towards crucifixion is by definition harrowing - it is a pilgrimage of penance but also a passage to redemption, forgiveness and to the light of hope in a darkened world.

John Paul Kirkham

A Brief Background to the Devotion of Stations of the Cross

The Fourteen Stations of the Cross can be found across the globe in every Catholic Church and in many Anglican places of worship. They may take the form of elaborate sculptures or carvings, striking paintings or small plain wooden crosses simply numbered.

As early as the 4th century, pilgrims would make the arduous journey to follow or walk the dusty path from the house of Pontius Pilate to Golgotha the place on the hill of Christ's crucifixion.

In the 1450s and 1460s the Englishman William Wey an original fellow of Eton College made pilgrimages to the Holy Land and became the first person to use the word "station" (*to stop as in standing*) as when praying and walking in the Lord's footsteps. After his final pilgrimage to Jerusalem he returned and left his rich and famous college life to join the Augustinian religious order.

For centuries there had been many variants of these number of stops from as few as five to more than twenty and to rectify this confusion, in the 1720's a Franciscan (St. Leonard of Port Maurice) established the coordinated order of the popular fourteen Stations that we know today. Given Papal approval in 1731 by Pope Clement XII there quickly followed what we believe to be the first written meditations by St. Alphonsus Liguori to accompany the stations which along with those written by St. John Henry Newman still remain very popular in present day devotions especially during the period of Lent.

Opening Prayer

The steps we make on this journey remind us of just how fragile we really are. Lord, give us your blessings and help and to pray for and find peace in this troubled world of ours. Amen.



STATION NUMBER ONE

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

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

We pray for all who suffer serious injuries and face violence or death by the hands of others. Often those who are setting out on their journeys are condemned even without their knowledge because those who condemn are themselves camouflaged by their cowardly acts.

Saint's Peter and Paul

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER TWO

JESUS RECEIVES THE CROSS

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

We remember all the victims of global brutality, terrorism and persecution, all those who carry their own individual cross of burdens and are hurt by the tragedies that unfold each day.

Saint's Perpetua and Felicity

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER THREE

JESUS FALLS THE FIRST TIME

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

The first fall represents all of those whose trauma may seem minor to the distant outsider or those who observe from the comfort of a television screen or newspaper as we glimpse superficially perhaps at life in a cramped asylum or refugee camp in familiar or forgotten places yet everyone from whatever background always needs our help and care and prayers.

Saint's Benedict and Scholastica

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER FOUR

JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

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

We pray for all women and girls suppressed by harsh cultures and those maimed, killed and bereaved. Let us look to Mary Mother of God who took upon herself an immense pain in her heart for the human race as she looks at us as she did her Son so tenderly.

Saint's Francis and Clare of Assisi

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER 5

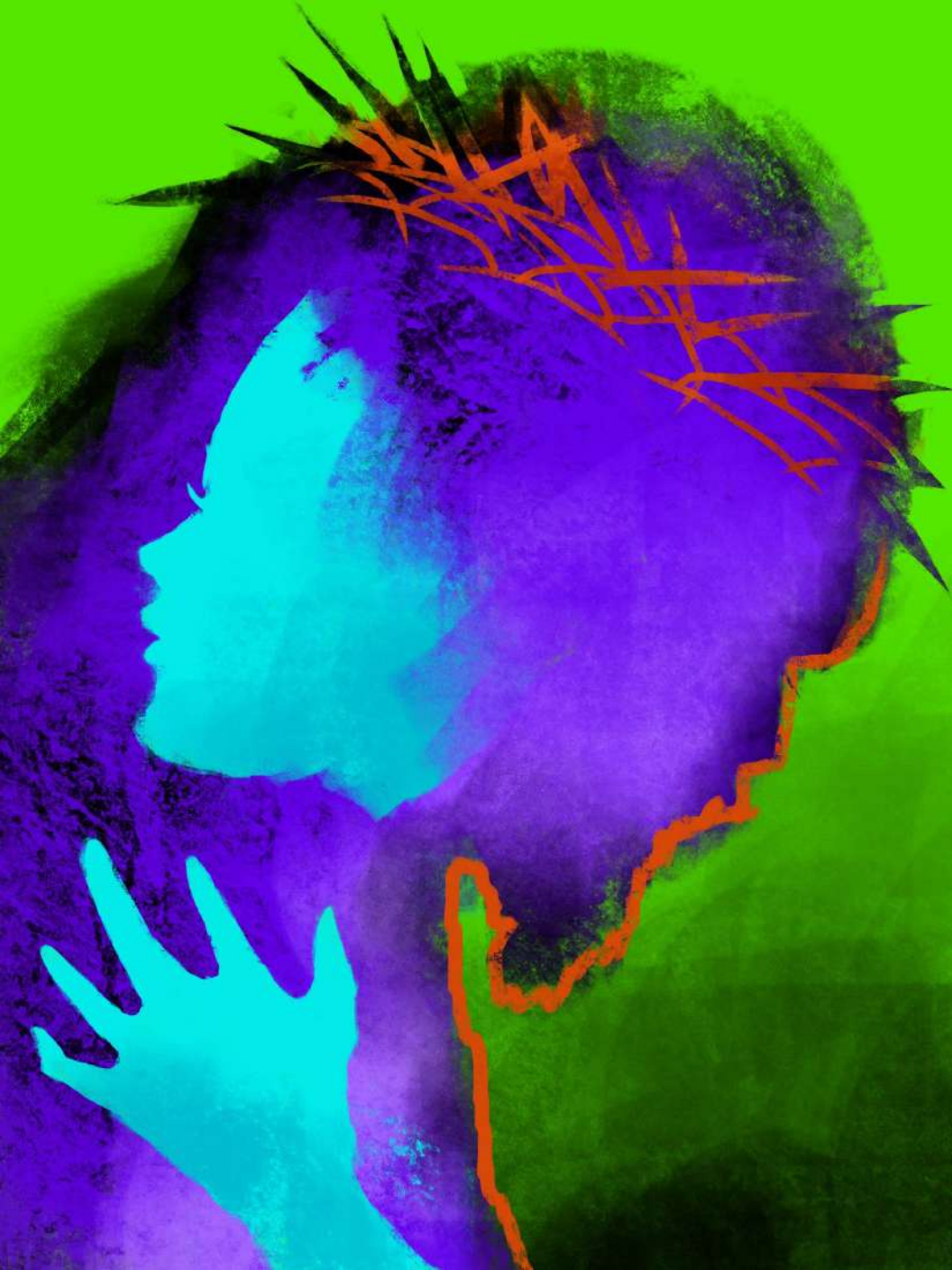
THE CROSS IS LAID ON SIMON OF CYRENE

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

As Simon helped carry the Cross let us remember all of the volunteers that help and reach out when called for in times of chaos, crisis and emergency. The self sacrifice of doctors, nurses, paramedics, care workers and all medical research and support staff.

Saint Camillus de Lellis

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER SIX

VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

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

The impression of the face of Jesus reminds us of the
grey and black atomic human shadows blast etched by
intense heat and light onto the white washed walls of
Hiroshima and Nagasaki - the negative stains of mass
destruction.

Saint John Almond

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER SEVEN

JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME

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

The second fall takes the place of those who sustain from criminal acts serious injuries, ordinary innocent victims who are traumatised physically and emotionally.

Saint's Louis and Zelig Martin

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER EIGHT

THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM MEET JESUS

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

We pray for all people who mourn the loss of a partner,
child, parent or sibling due to the atrocities of a cruel
world.

Saint Maria Goretti

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER NINE

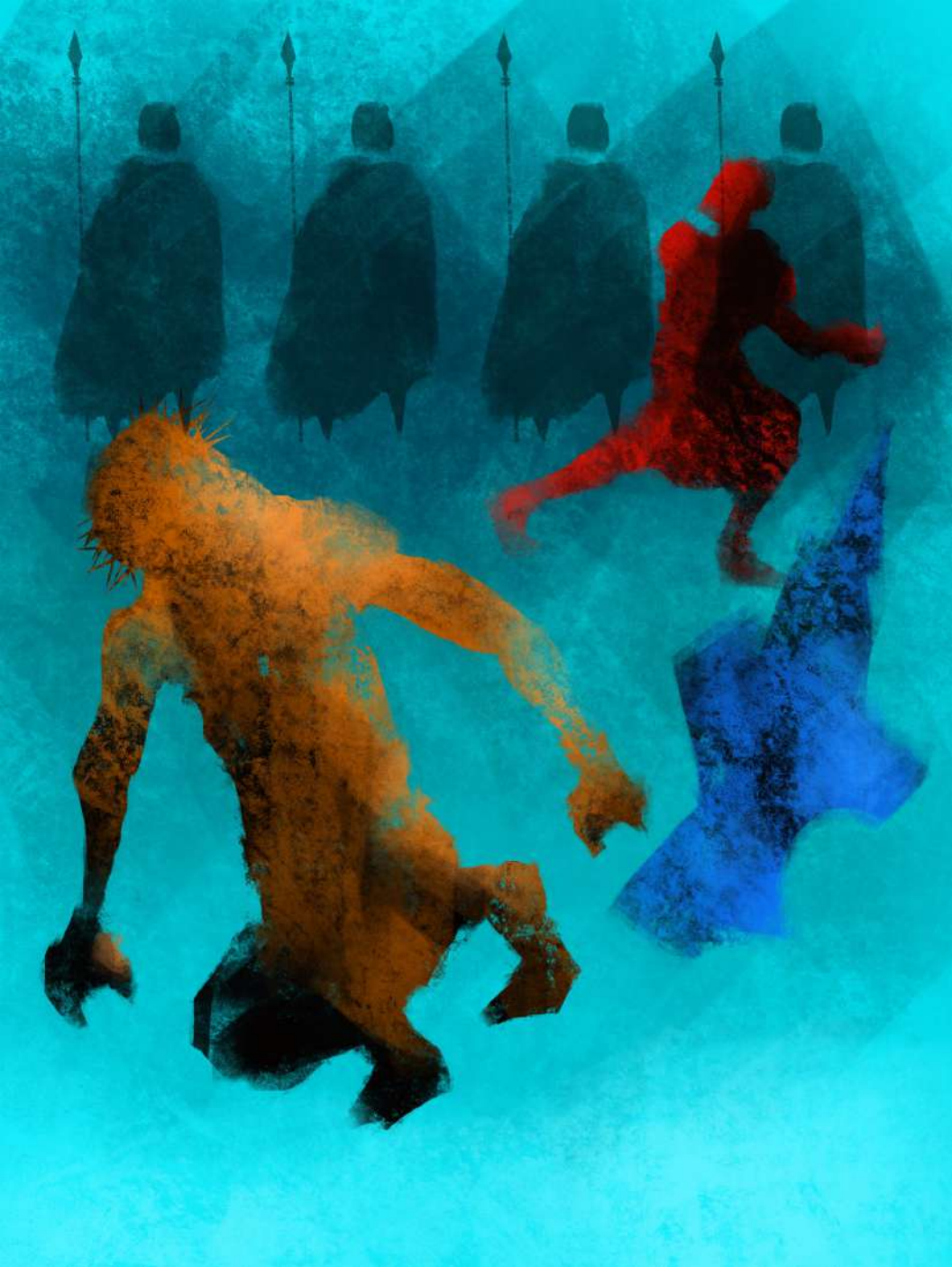
JESUS FALLS A THIRD TIME

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

The third fall embodies all who suffer not just for days, weeks, months and years, but those with psychological injuries who may never find peace or healing in this present life.

Saint Gemma Galgani

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER TEN

JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

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

This station brings together all those passers by in the wrong place at the wrong time. A burst of white light before the sound and explosive force that tears off clothing pulling away flesh from broken bodies.

Saint's Francesco and Jacinta Marto

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER ELEVEN

JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

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

This station could be any railway or bus station. The nails are shrapnel, fragments of glass, metal and wood travelling at velocity piercing limbs, hands, feet and torso.

Saint Maximillian Kolbe

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER 12

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

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

For all those suffering victims who during their final agony in the darkness of a subway tunnel, destroyed building or blinded by fires, may they be led to the eternal light of God the Father.

Saint Benedicta of the Cross - Edith Stein

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER THIRTEEN

JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

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

Into the arms of Mary whose arms are those of loved
ones or strangers at the roadside or bedside vigil; the
last embrace.

Saint Pio of Pietrelcina

Pray for us



STATION NUMBER FOURTEEN

JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

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

Jesus is placed in the tomb. We witness many funerals for the victims of the crimes against humanity but we also believe in the bodily Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ who will return to lead all who believe to the heavenly homeland.

Saint Oscar Romero

Pray for us

Closing Prayer

As Jesus suffered death he forgave his oppressors, may we too find it in our hearts to forgive and pray for the conversion of those who inflict such pain.

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, give this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from all evil. Amen.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Epilogue

We all suffer either in smaller or greater amounts from hindsight. Looking back and making excuses perhaps for our faults, failings and facile judgements of others. In recognising these shortcomings and searching to find the best in people we make an act of contrition and say sorry.

For in the world today
we must strive to practice peace and love
then when all has been said and done
we can say that we have tried our best

Where Art & Books Collide

About the Author - John Paul Kirkham

John Paul Kirkham is a poet, photographer and writer living in the city of Liverpool and has written 22 books including four books of poetry and prose *"In Violet"* - *"Zig Zag Road"* - *"Afterglow of Zephyrs"* - *"Rebel Hearts"* and the autobiography *"I Saw Her Standing There"* and is the official biographer of two Italian saints: Clare of Assisi and Gemma Galgani of Lucca.

John Paul studied in the 1970's at the John Laird School of Art in Merseyside leading to a long career as a photographer firstly in forensics (yes the scary stuff of *"Silent Witness"*) then general press, running a studio, advertising, documentary film making and managing Britains largest private photographic and film archive. John Paul also spent twelve years on Kensington Palace's royal photographic rota with HRH Diana - Princess of Wales and over the years has featured on television, radio and as a real life character in Blake Morrisons book of stories *"Too True"*

About the Artist

Jan Kalinski

(1956 - 2023)

The celebrated artist Jan Kalinski was based in Kent after spending many years teaching drawing and painting in Western Canada and worked in oils, acrylics and digital mediums. In 1992 Jan was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) resulting in permanent numbness of his fingers. When he could no longer hold a fine pencil or write his own name he would never let go of a paintbrush and never stopped creating remarkable images.

Jan died on Remembrance Day 2022.



If you would like to know more and to access the
poetry, photographs and books please visit
www.johnpaulkirkham.co.uk

