

The Stations of the Cross and the Beatitudes, Week 2 2021ⁱ
Monday Feb 22nd – Sunday Feb 28th

Beatitude Two: *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” NRSV Matt. 5:4 (Luke 20: 21 says: “Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.”)*

The Jesus Seminar gathers biblical scholars from around the world to evaluate the historical validity of early Christian texts. Its translation of the gospels (*The Five Gospels: The search for the authentic words of Jesus*, Polebridge Press, 1993) indicates that Beatitudes One, Two, and Four are likely to be close to the actual words of the historical Jesus, and the rest are probably alliterations (based on Jesus words or probability of what Jesus may have said) of early leaders and writers. The consensus of the Jesus Seminar scholars is that in the Beatitudes, the more unexpected and contradictory to common assumptions the statement appears to be, the more likely it is that Jesus said it. There were probably plenty of people on the Mount who were mourning and were not being comforted. Jesus’ words to them may have felt encouraging, or at least they commanded attention.



Station Three: Jesus falls for the first time as he carries his cross toward Golgotha.

A soldier prods him with the butt of his rifle to get up. In the background figures watch from behind barriers guarded by armed soldiers.

St. Paul said: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” (Galatians 2: 20) One way to understand the Stations of the Cross is to see them as leading us into an “out of ego” experience. Jesus fell off the pedestal of admiration that so many people had for him. The crucifixion was a total humiliation, an “ego-buster”.

Think of the many things that trip us along life’s way — we are “busted” as we fall over desire, greed, ambition, lust, anger, prejudice. It hurts when our egos are insulted, but perhaps it can take us to the very core of our being where we can find oneness with God. Where we can find that “it is no longer I who

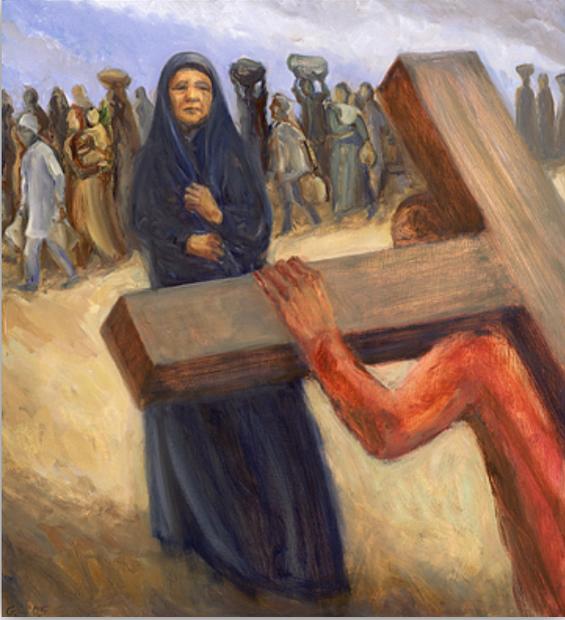
live, but Christ who lives in me”.

***When forgiveness is split off from reconciliation,
 then the forgiver deals primarily with resentment within
 but ignores the alienation between.***

In genuine mourning

the goal of the grief work is both healing within and healing between.

– David W. Augsburger, Helping People Forgive



Station Four. Jesus encounters his mother, Mary, as he carries his cross.

Mary is a peasant woman with dark robes pulled around her head (based on a photo of a mother standing vigil outside Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq). In the background a group of refugees walk along the horizon, carrying children and belongings.

Imagine the agony of Jesus' mother as she encounters her son on his way to his death. It is a reminder of the pain of parenting and being parented, the shared suffering that almost always comes between mother or father and child. This suffering is universal — it is inseparable from the human condition. This Station invites us to explore our most important relationships, and meditate on the ways we can bring wholeness, healing, and fulfillment to them.

A well-known story – often attributed to Ernest Hemingway but in fact anonymous – addresses the reality of grief in six simple

words: “For sale – baby shoes, never worn.”

Questions:

- I. When and how have you grieved? What helped you, and what helps others, through this process? What doesn't work in responding to people who grieve? How would you support Mary in her mourning for her son?
- II. When and how have you fallen down? When have you had your ego broken? What was painful, and what, if anything, was positive as a result of that “fall”?
- III. When Israel “fell” to the Roman occupation, what effect did that have on the national psyche? What happens when nations or groups of people are humiliated today? What can be done to help lift people up, if they have “fallen”?
- IV. What has remained unsaid, and undone, between you and your parents or siblings or children or friends, which needs to be resolved? What would you say, what would you do, if you could?
- V. How can you be an instrument of healing and reconciliation in your family or circle of closest friends?

Meditation on your Lenten Action:

Where do you find resonance, meaning, and inspiration in these Stations, and in these Beatitudes, in the course of your work of service or advocacy so far?

Artistic expression:

St. Paul says in I Corinthians 1:22-23: “For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

Take a stone or block and draw on it images of what makes you and others fall... images of what humbles you... what “busts” your ego.

Peace to you and yours

Colin

ⁱ Recommended books to accompany this Lent study:

adapted from [James Burklo](#)

Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary (Paperback)
by Marcus J. Borg (Harper One, 2008)

Campaign Boot Camp: Basic Training for Future Leaders (Paperback)
by Christine Pelosi (Polipoint Press, 2007)

The Last Week: A Day-by-Day Account of Jesus's Final Week in Jerusalem (Hardcover)
by Marcus J. Borg, John Dominic Crossan (Harper One, 2006)

Jesus: A New Vision by Marcus Borg (Harper One, 1991)

The Five Gospels: The search for the authentic words of Jesus, by the Jesus Seminar (Polebridge Press, 1993)