



Stations of the Cross, Relic Chapel

This devotion originated in Jerusalem where pilgrims followed the *Via Dolorosa* (the route of sorrows) in the footsteps of Jesus on his way to Calvary. This practice was developed by Franciscan friars who looked after the holy places in Jerusalem and was later reproduced (at first at outside shrines) in Europe. At one time there could be as many as thirty stations (or stopping places) but this eventually became fixed at 14, or, as at Aylesford, 15 with the inclusion of the final station, the resurrection.

The 15 Stations of the Cross at Aylesford are by the artist Adam Kossowski.

Suggested programme

Basic Experience

- Facing the altar and beginning with the 1st station follow the way of the cross slowly round the chapel. (The Roman numerals to indicate the direction are found beside the title of each station).
- Look at the colours used and examine the background to each station.

Fuller Experience

- Look at the figure of Jesus in each station and reflect on what the artist is showing here.
 - Reflect on the attitudes of the women depicted (4,6,8,13,14,15).
 - Reflect on the attitude of the soldiers found in many of the stations.
 - In the 1st station, study the figure of Pontius Pilate and consider what he is doing. Notice the servant's expression too.
- Spend some time looking at the Resurrection (15). Notice ways in which it is different from the others.

Extended Experience

Choose one of the stations, sit near it and reflect on what is happening, what your response to it might be and perhaps write a line, a prayer or a poem to express this.

