

ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL WAY OF THE CROSS

Each year preceding Easter, Christian communities around the world gather in public places to recreate the story of Jesus' passion. In dramatic public liturgies, we remember who we are as people of faith and why we believe that even the greatest of evils will not have the last word. Often, in the retelling, this central story is cast in a contemporary context and serves as a powerful critique of social sins in our own times -sins that mirror the powers and principalities responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus in the first century. That is what we, who would be disciples, are called to do - to apply the message of the sacred story in our own lives, times and places. It is what we attempt in this Economic and Ecological Way of the Cross.

We know that powerful political and economic forces, in a macabre mirroring of Jesus' journey to the cross, are dealing death in our world by war and by working to the benefit of a privileged few while millions of people live and die in debt and in dire poverty. We touch, we feel, we live the pain of these many excluded ones and we see the brokenness of the earth. Because we are a global church, we are compelled to be in solidarity, to respond.

We are eyewitness to the destruction of our earth. We have stood by in the exploitation and waste of natural resources. Because our planet and all creation are gifts from God, we must care for them and see the beauty of God through them.

We know that the institutional roots of this suffering and devastation are painfully close to home - in government, in transnational corporations, in international financial institutions, in the set of transnational agreements that give shape to economic activity around the world and even in our own religious institutions.

To some of these institutions -often staffed by dedicated and well-intentioned individuals - we come in prayer to name our common guilt, to ask in public for pardon, to call for repentance and transformation.

However, also present in our community are signs of hope -those organizations and institutions that nurture solidarity and action for justice. To some of them we come as well -to pray for courage and strength on the journey toward a better world.

Leader: *So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out. "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. (Jonah 3: 3-5)*

All: By this action, we are donning the sackcloth of repentance, acknowledging our own complicity, calling for justice in the global economy and an end to war.

We are seeking justice, mourning suffering, repairing community. We are claiming hope; recreating the world... praying for peace and the fullness of life for all of creation. Amen.

FIRST STATION: JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

Political privilege and Corruption
Washington institution: US Congress

Leader: *Beware of the scribes who like to go around in long robes and accept greetings in the marketplaces, seats of honor in synagogues, and places of honor at banquets. They devour the houses of widows and, as a pretext, recite lengthy prayers. They will receive a severe condemnation.* (Mark 12: 38)

By condemning Jesus to death, the powers of his day believed they could sustain extraordinary privilege for themselves and for a few others by imposing exclusionary laws that burdened ordinary people and strengthened their own power. In our times, lawmakers are beholden to powerful corporations and other special interests that fund election campaigns. This funding ensures these entities that they will increase their power, while paying essentially no taxes.

Left: Our democracy has become an oligarchy – where a great majority of people no longer participate in the decisions that daily affect their lives. Pushed by special interests, politicians have ignored both people's and the planet's needs by enacting unjust laws that further pollute land air and water while laying heavy burdens on the backs of a vast majority of the population. (Matt. 23:4).

Right: In our local communities and throughout the world, those who are impoverished and vulnerable carry a cross of exclusion and marginalization and the earth itself carries the deep scars of neglect and abuse. They are both oppressed by the undemocratic influence of wealth and power.

Left: We have watched corporations influence congressional elections and place politicians in office who will do their bidding;

Right: We have seen the impact of tax and spending cuts that undermine the common good;

Left: We hear a concern among legislators for those who have lost jobs and homes, but high rates of unemployment continue.

Right: And we are worried about the already poor, here and around the world, who are falling into ever deeper poverty

Left: While our nation increases the military budget and considers attacking yet another country.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: God, we confess that we are too often disengaged. We fail to support legislators who strive to do justice or hold to account those who are corrupt and self-serving. We pray that the U.S. Congress will become a place of honest debate and discernment, a servant to the impoverished and a beacon of hope in the world.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

SECOND STATION: JESUS BEARS THE CROSS

Downfall of our Awareness of the Human Relationship to Earth and to the Greater Community
Washington institution: National Museum of the American Indian

Leader: *“Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in its fruits; but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. What grows of itself in your harvest you shall not reap, and the grapes of your undressed vine you shall not gather; it shall be a year of solemn rest for the land.”* (Leviticus 25: 3-5)

As U.S. territories expanded, a history of land theft, abuse and neglect of Native American peoples unfolded. In this process, people in the U.S. have lost the intimate understanding of the human connection to the natural world and with it, the indigenous people’s wisdom about the interconnection of all creation.

ALL FACE South

Right: We face to the south reminded of the way the sun sits in the southern sky faithfully giving us the harvest that sustains us.

ALL FACE WEST

Left: Looking towards the WEST where the sun sets, bringing the death of the day, we mourn the ways in which our collective ignorance has brought death and destruction to native Americans of the plains and to many of the land’s vast natural resources – depleted in the name of economic growth and progress.

ALL FACE NORTH

Right: Guided by the North Star, we look to the north for wisdom of the ancestors passed down through generations of Native American peoples instructing us to live in concert with nature rather than fighting against it and seeking to conquer it for our own gain.

ALL FACE EAST

Left: Facing east, where the sun rises, we acknowledge our openness to new beginnings. We seek conversion of heart; to change our wasteful ways; and to truly transform our culture.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we pray today for a new vision of economic life that emphasizes and provides for the real needs of people and our mother earth. We mourn the especially heavy burden of discrimination and injustice that falls on those who are poor throughout the world, and the destruction of the natural world leaving all living things with fewer and fewer resources to survive. We pray that the world's money serves the flourishing of all creation, rather than undermine it.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

THIRD STATION: JESUS FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Human Trafficking/Slavery

Washington institution: African Art Museum

Leader: *As the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:12)*

Today, there are more people enslaved than ever before in history. Some estimate up to 27 million people. Forms of exploitation and slavery can be found all around the world, including the United States. Sweatshops can be found in many US cities, the individuals that pick our crops are sometimes enslaved, and the woman forced into prostitution is a victim of modern day slavery. In West Africa, children are the targets of trafficking and slavery to produce chocolate treats that U.S. children enjoy. The Department of Labor exists to promote and secure just labor policies. We pray that the United States continues its abolition movement and ensures the 13th amendment holds true for everybody in the United States.

Left: We understand that the shirt we wear, the coffee we drink, the tomato we eat, and the cell phone we use may be products of slavery or exploitation. We ask for tougher regulations in the United States to protect the dignity of workers.

Right: We ask for the creation and enforcement of just trade and labor policies that guard against exploitation and slavery globally.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: God, please forgive us for our ignorance in not seeing the connections of how our consumption patterns fuel conditions that produce slavery and exploitation. Please enlighten our politicians to enact policies and laws in defense of the individual and not corporate profits.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

FOURTH STATION: JESUS MEETS HIS MOTHER

Genetically Modified Organisms

Washington institution: Department of Agriculture

Leader: *Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.* (Matthew 15:13).

Our earth must bear the burden of unsustainable agricultural practices. Among these practices is the use of genetically modified organisms -GMOs, which runs contrary to the sustainable practices farmers have used for millennia.

Right: The USDA has been at the forefront of promoting genetically modified organisms. GMOs are genetically manipulated to contain a dose of pesticide or herbicide so they can withstand heavy applications of these chemical inputs.

Left: Family farmers in the US and in global South are persuaded to use GMOs with promises of higher yields and lower costs. However, the potential positives are negated by the higher costs they eventually face. Yields diminish; locking them into applying increasing amounts of costly inputs to maintain adequate production levels.

Right: GMO corporations have also patented their plants such that farmers cannot save, trade or reuse seeds after harvest. This runs directly contrary to the belief that all life is the creation of God.

Left: Genetically modified organisms must be banned in order to protect farmers and the sanctity of life.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we confess our own misguided attempts to change your creation. We pray for the regulation and prohibition of genetically modified organisms, which wrongly manipulate your creation in the search for profit.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

FIFTH STATION: SIMON CARRIES THE CROSS

Development Policies

Washington Institution: United States Agency for International Development

Leader: *“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.”* (Matt. 26: 35)

Simon helped Jesus to bear the burden of the Cross. Like Simon, we must hear the cries of those who are poor around the world and come to their assistance. The Agency for International Development is our government’s primary organization for carrying out our development policies that benefit those who are economically poor. We lift up their successes and pray for increases in our collective generosity and service.

Right: Too often, our policies ignore the people whom they are designed to assist. Too often we meet the needs of our corporations and economy rather than listening to the priorities of local communities.

Left: Let our development policies always consider those who are poor, vulnerable and oppressed. May our policies place those we serve at the center of our plans. May we listen to their wisdom and create programs and policies that truly reflect their needs.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we dare to imagine a world where hunger has no chance to show its face. We dare to dream of a world where war and terror are afraid to leave their mark. We long to believe in a world of hope unchained and lives unfettered. We dare to share in the creation of a world where your people break free. Your kingdom come, O God. Your will be done.¹

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

SIXTH STATION: VERONICA WIPES THE FACE OF JESUS

Economic Inequality

Washington Institution: Freedom Plaza – Occupy DC

¹ Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, U.K.

Leader: *No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands.* (Isaiah 65:22)

As we ponder the woman who took pity on Jesus and wiped the sweat from his brow as he labored under a heavy burden, may we consider those who work at two or more jobs and still do not earn enough to feed, clothe and shelter their families adequately. What policies can we advocate for that will lighten their load and begin to narrow the growing wealth disparity in the United States?

Right: The top 1% of Americans own more than a quarter of all private wealth in the United States. The top 10% own 75% of private wealth.

Left: The goal of the U.S. government shifted from building a middle class in the period following World War II to letting the rich accumulate great capital in the belief that it would trickle down to everyone else.

Right: There has been explosive growth in executive salaries while the value of the minimum wage has fallen, and a weakened labor movement has been less able to prop up the wages of workers at the bottom of the income scale.

Left: Trade policies have favored corporations over workers, and taxes have favored the rich who derive most of their income from capital gains, which are taxed at lower rates than are wages.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: God of justice, we pray for the strength to speak out for policies that limit wealth inequality and income distribution. May we work toward building an economy that promotes livelihood rather than profits at all costs and that provides an adequate safety net to support subsistence for all.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

SEVENTH STATION: JESUS FALLS A SECOND TIME

Ravaging the Earth and its People in the Name of Economic Development
Washington institution: U.S. Department of the Treasury

Leader: *But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you... In God's hand are the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.* (Job 12:7-8, 10)

The neoliberal consensus, and with it, the idea that global economic integration will lead to steadily rising prosperity everywhere, has fallen apart. We continue to live through one of the greatest crises of all times, a crisis that is defined by the intersection of a deeply flawed global economic model and an imminent ecological collapse as we overwhelm the carrying/caring capacity of Mother Earth.

Right: Wasteful consumption and financial innovation have taken the place of a real economy. Growth, used universally as the measure of a “healthy” economy, has had little to do with real “development” or an improving quality of human life and the health of our ecological home.

Left: With accelerating climate change, the imminent end of cheap energy supplies, the depletion of most resources basic to the industrial system, the spread of societies dependent on over-consumption of commodities, and the destruction of societies that offer traditional alternative models, “progress” based on industrial development may well be destroying the ground of our existence.

Right: The dominant model of development has been determined by a worldview in which human beings are the subjects and nature is there only for humans to exploit;

Left: Our dedication to a certain kind of progress is consuming the earth upon which the survival of all life depends

Right: And systematically precluding the possibility that the majority of people in the world will ever reliably meet their needs or experience a life of dignity.

Left: But as we move forward, the same institutions that brought us the economic collapse continue to propose ways forward that fail to acknowledge ecological limits and the natural world’s need to rest and regenerate.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we pray today for new global relationships that honor the fact that in your hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of every human. Help us to serve you, not money. Help us to stop pursuing economic growth and start pursuing sustainable communities where the highest priority is life in abundance for all.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

EIGHTH STATION: JESUS MEETS THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

The double burden of economic injustice on women: Homelessness in the Park
Washington institution: Lafayette Park

Leader: *Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children." (Luke 23:28)*

Women today carry an oppressive cross of inequality. As the number of people living in poverty grows, the number of women among them grows disproportionately. Because of discrimination, it is women who bear the greatest cost of the burden of poverty.

Right: When impoverished countries seek dollars to pay debts they often court multinational corporations with promises of low taxes, low wages and weak labor standards. It is most often women who are employed in the difficult and sometimes dangerous work in low wage assembly plants.

Left: Global accumulation has relied heavily on the work of women, paid and unpaid. When government spending and public services are cut, it is women's unpaid labor that enables families and communities to survive. It is most often women who sustain families and communities, caring for children, ill family members, and the elderly.

Right: In the United States, as in the global South, women continue to bear a cross of domestic violence, workplace inequality and under-representation in government institutions.

Left: Since women carry a disproportionate share of the burden of poverty, they often have the greatest potential to see things differently and challenge the status quo.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we ask forgiveness for not heeding the voices of our sisters around the world. We pray for governments to represent the just demands of ordinary people, especially those oppressed because of gender or race. We pray for an economy at home and abroad that exists to serve people, families and communities. We pray that all may be heard and that the justice and mercy of God shall govern humanity and all of God's creation.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

NINTH STATION: JESUS FALLS THE THIRD TIME

Military Issues

Washington institution: White House

Leader: *You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD (Leviticus 19:18)*

Christ came in order to heal broken relationships, end violence and cause the nations to “beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks” (Isa. 2:4).

Left: Despite the persecution, ridicule, and hatred that Christ witnessed and endured while carrying the cross, he never countered back with the same evils. He countered with forgiveness. Rather than condemn those who persecuted him, he prayed for them.

Right: We must live our lives as Christ lived; we must treat everyone as our brothers and sisters. In each and every one of us, we must see God. To wage war against another would be to wage war against the Lord.

Left: Billions of dollars are being spent on the military budget to wage war and bring violence to our brothers and sisters across the world. U.S. foreign and economic policies prioritize the interests of corporations abroad, regardless of the needs and aspirations of the peoples of the world.

Right: To preserve and expand economic power, U.S. policy has supported – and where necessary installed by force --violent regimes that govern by brute force, torture and terror while not addressing the needs of the poor and exploited.

Left: The result is vast corporate profits, massive impoverishment, cultural disintegration and natural devastation. The hopelessness thus engendered contributes to cycles of violence in the global South, hatred of the U.S. government and terrorist attacks against the United States. In this way, our common insecurity escalates – for all peoples of the world.

Right: Here in the U.S., our budget resources are misspent to maintain and wield a colossal military machine and provide an illusory “homeland security.” Instead of directing our resources towards violence and aggression, resources should be directed toward the urgent needs of our brothers and sisters in communities throughout the world.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we confess that we too often attempt to enforce our will through the violence of angry words and selfish acts. On a larger scale, violence and injustice are destroying your daughters and sons. We pray that the governing authorities will help renew our nation and the world by repenting of violence. We pray for cuts in military spending. We ask that the resources saved be used to help bring our nation and the world an economic order that is just and sustainable without the intervention of violence.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

TENTH STATION: JESUS IS STRIPPED OF HIS GARMENTS

Extractive Industries

Washington institution: White House Council on Environmental Quality

Leader: *“The LORD God then took the man and settled him in the Garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it.”* (Genesis 2:15)

Many extractive industries destroy God’s creation. Oil and gas mining in Peru has caused gas leaks that have led to devastating fires and river contamination. Deforestation has caused erosion and landslides.

Left: These industries not only damage the environment, but also the communities where they occur. Deforestation displaces indigenous communities and extraction processes poison their food, water, and air.

Right: Local communities are also exposed to the risk of disasters at sites of operation. Excessive logging and mining in the Philippines have caused landslides that cover entire villages, leading to hundreds of deaths. The risks of an oil spill along the Ogallala Aquifer, source of irrigation for 30% of America’s crops, are great and must not be ignored.

Left: Local communities also suffer economically because of extractive industries. The same countries that are so rich in natural resources are home to some of the poorest of the poor, victims of extractive industries rather than beneficiaries.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we confess that we do not always care for your creation in the way that we should. We exploit our natural resources, causing damage to the Earth, the destruction of the economy, and suffering of marginalized people. We pray that our government policies and our own actions may reflect a respect and care for all of God’s creation.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

ELEVENTH STATION: JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Fair Trade NOT Free Trade

Washington Institution

U. S. Trade Representative Office

Leader: *The Lord says, “The people of Israel have sinned again and again. So I will punish them. They sell into slavery those who do what is right. They trade needy people for a mere pair*

of sandals. They grind the heads of the poor into the dust of the ground. They refuse to be fair to those who are crushed. (Amos 2: 6, 7.)

Left: Jesus Christ was unjustly tortured and killed by the powers and authorities of his day. He identified with all whose human rights are denied. In the mystery of redemption, the nails of his oppression become the linchpins of a just new order.

Right: Transnational corporations and U.S. trade negotiators, like the Israelites condemned by Amos, systematically place profits over human beings. They enrich themselves and their shareholders by undermining their employees' wages and working conditions. They destroy local industries and rural livelihoods, both domestically and abroad. All of us, producers and consumers, are harmed by this injustice.

Left: Any trading system should serve the common good and benefit ordinary people, especially those struggling against poverty. It should preserve natural resources, be democratically accountable and respect human rights. The right of each person, as a bearer of God's image, to participate in decisions that shape society is especially sacred.

Right: Fair trade systems can help redress the injustices of the global economic system. Buying fair trade products supports living wages for producers and higher social and environmental standards. By choosing fair trade products we help ensure that the wealth garnered by the products be distributed fairly, thus alleviating the cycle of economic inequality.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: We confess that we too try to dominate others and violate their human dignity. We pray today for the global trading system to become open to popular participation and democratic accountability. We pray for agreements that prioritize human rights and God's creation – supporting food security, sustainable agriculture and the right to life-saving medications.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

TWELFTH STATION: JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Destruction of God's Creation

Washington institution: World Bank

Leader: *Creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*" (Romans 8:21).

Jesus died on the cross, giving his life to free all of creation from bondage to the effects of sin. However, we are stripping the earth of its natural resources, destroying the environment, exploiting local labor, and displacing communities. Created by God as "very good" (Gen. 1:31), the whole community of life has borne the cross of human sin and misuse. Subject to the control

of the world's most powerful governments, the World Bank has been dominant in shaping the model of economic development in the global South. Under this model, poverty and the gap between the rich and the poor have increased in many places, while environmental degradation has worsened.

Left: Jesus said, "My yoke is easy and my burden, light" (Matt. 11:30), but the yoke of the World Bank --imposed on low-income countries in the name of free markets and free trade --has been an intolerable burden for too many people and for the earth.

Right: The World Bank has said that their policies will address the demands of a changing climate. Yet there is no indication that this has begun to occur or that it is really intended.

Left: It is time for the World Bank and other international institutions to acknowledge their accountability to the demands of love and justice. The welfare of the poorest person and the integrity of creation should be the standard by which their policies are judged.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we confess our indifference to massive destruction of human life and our failure to protect the integrity of creation. We have been wasteful and have benefited from economic policies that oppress others. We pray for a sustainable, people-and-earth-centered development that meets the needs of the impoverished majority of humanity and allows creation to survive and flourish.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

THIRTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

Need for a Transformed Economy
Washington institution: International Monetary Fund

Leader: *Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. (John 12: 24)*

Careful attention must be paid to the assumptions underlying IMF policy advice. The continued pursuit of worldwide quantitative economic growth that depends on the expanded exploitation of natural resources and results in the continued destruction of eco-systems is morally untenable. Urgent attention must be paid to achieving measurable improvements in real quality of life for marginalized and impoverished people.

Right: IMF conditionality applied to new loans and debt cancellations have contributed in significant ways to the deep injustices in the global economy and have been criticized for decades with little impact.

Left: The economic systems currently in place and upheld by institutions such as the IMF must change to support people and planet centered sustainability.

Right: Mechanisms such as international debt arbitration should be established to address the increasing debt burdens of yet-impooverished countries.

Left: Great care must be taken in designing our response to climate change to ensure that new mechanisms are not prejudiced against the global South

Right: And to recognize that earth cannot sustain the current pace of resource exploitation and waste.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, we recognize the need for deep transformation of the global economic system. No longer can we as humans exploit with abandon the global commons – the precious resources soon to be depleted. Our way of life is profoundly wasteful and unjust. We commit ourselves to change, to live more lightly on earth and more justly with others.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

FOURTEENTH STATION: JESUS IS PLACED IN THE TOMB

Border and Migration

Washington Institution: Mexican Embassy

Leader: *Woe to you who make iniquitous decrees, who write oppressive statutes, to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be your spoil, and that you may make the orphans your prey! (Isaiah 10:1-2)*

The torment Mary faced as she helplessly witnessed the execution of her only beloved son demonstrates the vulnerability and suffering she endured here on earth. Mary can often relate to the plight and suffering of the needy, including immigrants in a foreign land. Mary herself was once a migrant as she fled to Egypt with her husband Joseph and newborn infant Jesus. We ask Mary to pray that God brings together those called “alien” and those called “native” into one new humanity in Christ, “reconciling both of us to God in one body through his cross, which put that enmity to death” (Eph. 2:16).

Right: Today, immigrant workers and other people of color, bear the cross of a globalized economy. They are paid the lowest wages and work the longest hours.

Left: In the United States, the poverty rate increased to 15.1% in 2010, the highest level since 1993. Now, one in every five children lives in poverty. The poverty rate of Hispanics increased to 26.6 percent and the African American rate rose to 27.4 percent. Meaning, 46.2 million people live in poverty in the United States.

Right: Immigrants and communities of color also suffer the heaviest burden in an economic system that gives tax breaks to the wealthy and disinvests in social services in poor communities, privatizing health care and education, and providing less and less affordable housing.

All: We long for a moral economy that promotes and protects the whole earth community.

Leader: O God, work is a means by which we support our families and build just and sustainable communities. Our work, and the work of immigrant workers and other impoverished people of color, plays a role in lessening the suffering of the others. We pray for an end to self-serving policies that only benefit the wealthy while belittling the poor and marginalized. We pray for a new vision of community and peace with justice.

All: We pray for the coming of the New Creation; we believe that Another World is Possible.

FIFTEENTH STATION: THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Signs and Seeds of Hope, Another World Is Possible
Washington institution: Washington Circle Park

Leader: *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. . . . And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'See, the home of God is among human beings. God will dwell with them and be their God; and they will be God's people.' And the One who was seated on the throne said, 'See I am making all things new.'* (Revelations 21:1-5).

Left: Mindful of our own complicity in and responsibility for the global crises of our times, but claiming the hope that is rooted in the Resurrection, we now reflect on our lives and choices. We claim our God-given power as individuals and as a community to effect meaningful change, to name the signs of Resurrection – Shalom -that we can see, even in our broken world.

Right: We have followed a Jesus who suffers in the flesh of impoverished and excluded peoples. We have walked with Him to places of power where decisions are made daily that determine who will survive and who will not, who will flourish and who will not.

[Pause for a moment to reflect in silence on our own lifestyle. Do you think about where the products you buy or use are made, by whom, under what condition? Is your lifestyle sustainable? Do you live at the expense of others?]

Leader:

Response:

To our own greed . . . open our eyes.

To our habits of consumption . . . open our eyes.

To social systems and structures that oppress the poor . . . open our eyes.

To the roots of terrorism and war ... open our eyes.

Leader: Let us pray: Loving God, open our eyes as well to signs of hope in our world. Help us to believe that a better world is possible, and to act on that belief – personally, communally and institutionally.

[Pause for a moment to reflect in silence on signs of hope. After a short while, take turns naming some signs of hope aloud.]

All: Loving God who provides for all people at all times, we are frightened by signs of crisis, encouraged by signs of hope, compelled by the urgency of both. Thus, we commit ourselves to the works of repentance --to reparation, redress, revaluing. We commit ourselves to an ongoing journey --a living faith, a sign of freedom, a mark of discipleship. The contours of a better world that is peaceful and just are yet to be defined, but the invitation is clear and the need is great.

In the spirit of community, mindful of truth ever exceeding knowledge, we covenant to live in a manner explicitly informed by the Gospel we proclaim. Amen.