

A Way of the Cross for Children

H.J. Richards



With illustrations by Rachel Mabey



McCRIMMONS

Great Wakering, Essex, United Kingdom

Introduction

Text first published in 1986 by McCrimmon Publishing Co. Ltd.
This edition first published in 2011 in the United Kingdom by
MCCRIMMON PUBLISHING CO. LTD
10-12 High Street, Great Wakering, Essex, SS3 0EQ
www.mccrimmons.com

Text © 1986 H.J. Richards
Illustrations © 2011 Rachel Mabey
Compilation and layout © 2011 McCrimmon Publishing Co. Ltd.

ISBN 978-0-85597-712-2
(Book order ref: MB712-2)

(Posters order ref: RMWCP)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Gospel texts used are, in some case, adapted from *New World* by Alan T Dale (Oxford 1967). Grateful acknowledgement is here made for permission to make this adaptation.

Cover design, page design & layout by Big Roar Creative
www.bigroarcreative.co.uk

Typeset in Folio Light/Light Italic 14pt and Papyrus 23pt
Printed & bound by Thanet Press Ltd, Margate, Kent, UK

For many hundreds of years, the friends of Jesus have held a service called the *Way of the Cross*.

Some have been able to do this in Jerusalem itself, where Jesus first carried the cross. Others, who were not able to get to Jerusalem, have done it in their churches, schools, or in their homes.

They have imagined themselves following Jesus on his last journey to his death, and stopping at various places on the way to think about him.

The vivid illustrations in this book will encourage young readers to focus on Christ's journey to the Cross.

1

Jesus in agony

On the night before he died, Jesus took his friends into a garden to pray.

He went off a little way by himself.

He knelt down on the ground.

'Father,' he prayed, 'take this suffering away from me. Yet I will do what you want, not what I want.'

God gave him the strength he needed. He was in very great distress, and prayed with all his heart.

So much sweat poured off him, it was as if he was bleeding.

Luke 22: 39-44

Agony and pain come to all of us. Jesus asked God to help him bear it bravely. He wants his friends to do the same, and to pray as he did:

'I will do what you want, God, not what I want.'



2

Jesus is betrayed by his friends

As Jesus was praying in the garden,
his friend Judas came with
a gang, armed with swords.
He went straight up to Jesus.
'Sir', Judas said, and kissed him.
The men grabbed Jesus,
and put him under guard.
Everybody left him and ran away.

Mark 14: 43-50

*When it came to the crunch,
Jesus was left on his own.
All his friends let him down.
Judas, a very close friend, turned
against him. Peter, whom Jesus
had chosen as leader, pretended he
didn't know him. The rest ran away,
and Jesus was on his own.*

*Lord, we've all suffered from loneliness.
We're glad you know what it's like.*



3

The crown of thorns

Jesus was taken to the Roman Governor, Pilate. Pilate had him flogged, and then turned him over to the soldiers to make fun of him. They made a crown out of some thorn twigs, and pressed it on his head. Then they kept saluting him with the words, 'Long live your Majesty' and slapped him on the face.

John 19: 1-3

*Which is worse...
people pushing sharp spikes into you,
or people making fun of you?*

Jesus had both.

*Because we know this,
we pray that we may find it a bit easier
when the same pain comes to us.*



Jesus is raised from the dead

Very early on the Sunday morning, three women friends of Jesus came to his grave. They found the stone had been rolled away. They went into the cave, and were amazed to see an angel sitting there. He said: 'Don't be frightened. You are looking for Jesus. You won't find him here. He has been raised from the dead. He is alive.'

Mark 16: 1-6

*If you leave seeds in a packet,
they remain just what they are – seeds.*

*If you bury them in the ground,
they turn into grain and grass and flowers.*

*Jesus said his death
would be like planting a seed.*

Today the life of Jesus is everywhere.



A note to ministers and teachers

This service has been used successfully on Good Friday as a children's alternative to the liturgy of the day.

Middle school boys and girls were chosen to read out the Gospel texts and to hold up the illustrations in large poster form*.

A teacher or minister read out the meditations without further comment. At the end, each child was given a spring flower to take home as a reminder of the meaning of Jesus' death.

* Accompanying posters are available from www.mccrimmons.com (Order ref: RMWCP)