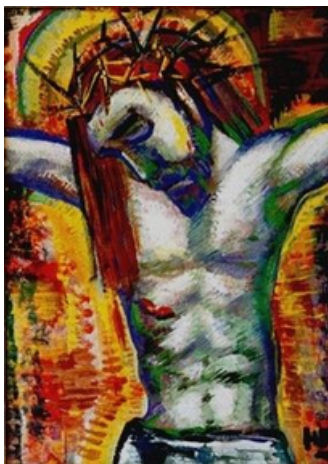
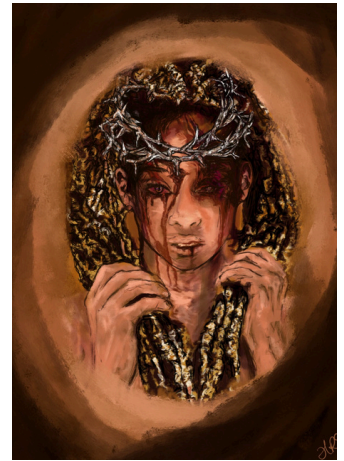


FACE TO FACE WITH  
**JESUS**  
*in Holy Week*



Face to Face with Jesus is a pack of 40 postcards, portraying images of Jesus Christ from through the ages and around the world. The pack includes 10 images of Christ's Passion. These could be used in a number of ways during Holy Week, for prayer, discussion or as a basis for a reflection or led meditation.

Below are 10 short reflections that I have written to accompany each of these images. They could be printed and placed alongside each image, for people to read and ponder on at their own pace, or they could be led aloud as part of a service. Feel free to use them however you wish.

The Face to Face is pack is available to purchase from [stclaresatthecathedral.org](http://stclaresatthecathedral.org)



### **Christ Crowned with Thorns, Hans Breinlinger, 1936**

It seems to me that in this image, behind Christ's head, there is a rainbow. The rainbow, a symbol of God's covenant with creation, God's promise that however bad things get, however we behave, he will never again destroy the earth. God said, 'I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth, the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature on the earth.' God's answer to sin is not that we should die, not that the earth should be destroyed. God's answer to sin is that his only son, Jesus Christ should die on our behalf.

*God of Love,  
Thank you that you so loved the world,  
that you sent your only Son,  
to live and die for us,  
that we might have everlasting life.  
Amen.*



### **Abstract Jesus, artist unknown**

This image is a riot of colour and spattered paint. For me this seems to capture something of the noise and chaos of our world. We will all have known times when we have felt almost overwhelmed by endless tasks to be done, other people's expectations, the burden of responsibilities. Yet in the midst of the painting is Jesus. And despite all that he is going through, his eyes are closed and his face is at peace. Jesus is the peace in the midst of our busy and sometimes chaotic lives. He promised his disciples, promises us: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

*Jesus, prince of peace,  
This day when things get busy,  
or I am stressed or anxious or overwhelmed,  
remind me to look to you,  
and to receive your gift of peace.  
Amen.*



## **The Yellow Christ, by Paul Gauguin, 1889**

This painting by Paul Gauguin shows the crucifixion of Jesus Christ taking place in 19th-century northern France as Breton women are gathered in prayer. Gauguin said he chose yellow to convey how he felt about the isolated life and piety of the peasants, pictured here dressed in their distinctive regional costume and kneeling at the foot of the cross during the evening hour of Angelus - a devotion said daily at morning, noon, and sunset. It reminds us that Christ lived and died for all people. Wherever you are, whoever you are, Christ lived and died for you.

*Pour forth, we beseech Thee O Lord,  
Thy grace into our hearts;  
that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ,  
Thy Son, was made known  
by the message of an angel,  
may by his Passion and Cross be brought  
to the glory of his Resurrection  
through the same Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

Prayer from the Angelus



## **Che Jesus**

This image is based on a famous image of Che Guevara, an Argentine Marxist, best known for his role in the Cuban Revolution. His stylized image has become a symbol of rebellion and revolution. But as with most revolutions, even those started with the best intentions, the Cuban Revolution led to bloodshed, violence and oppression. This image reminds us that Jesus was different. He resisted the temptation to rise up against the Roman occupiers. His way was much more radical. His way was to love his enemies, to be the receiver of violence and not the perpetrator. His way was and is the way of non-violence and love.

*Jesus, the real revolutionary,  
Grant us grace to love our enemies,  
to forgive those who hurt us,  
and change the world through love, not hate.  
Amen.*



### God crucified, Ethiopian Orthodox. c 1800

It seems strange that everyone in this picture is smiling. The figures at the cross probably portray Jesus's mother Mary and his disciple John. They have little reason to smile. Jesus is dying an agonising death, and yet he too is smiling. I remember as a child asking why the day we remember Jesus' death is called Good Friday, when it didn't seem good at all. It's because we, like the painter of this picture, know the end of the story. We know that just as spring follows winter, Good Friday is followed by Easter. We know that Jesus' death has brought us life. And that is something to smile about.

*O God,  
who by thine only-begotten Son hast overcome death  
and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life;  
grant, we beseech thee,  
that those who have been redeemed by his passion  
may rejoice in his resurrection;  
through the same Christ our Lord.  
Amen*

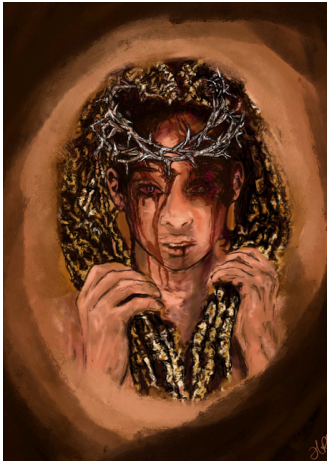
From the Gelasian Sacramentary

### Face of Christ, After a woodcut by Hans Sebald Beham



This image is nothing more than black lines on a white background. And yet there is nothing 'black and white' about it. This picture, and Jesus' eyes in particular, convey so much emotion. As you look at Jesus as he is portrayed here, what emotions do you see? Does this change as you look for longer? What emotions does it stir in you? Do your emotions reflect those you see in the image of Christ?

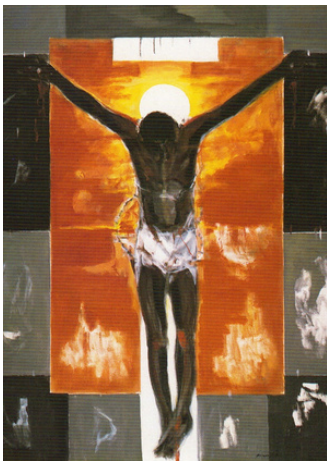
*Thank you Jesus,  
that you share in all my emotions,  
in my joys and sorrows,  
my contentment and my anxiety,  
my love and my anger.  
Thank you that however I am feeling today,  
you are with me, and understand.  
Amen.*



### **Jesus Like Me, by Hannah-Rebecca Eldritch, 2023**

Black women are some of the most oppressed and marginalised people in our society and our world. And so it seems right that we should see the face of Christ in their image, and their image in the face of Christ. This painting by a member of the St Clare's community holds together the suffering of Christ and of so many black women, alongside the strength and determination, so often found in them, through Christ. Are there other people that you fail to see in Christ's image? Are there people in whom you struggle to see the image of Christ? Pray for them.

*Lord of all life,  
We give you thanks that each one of us  
is created in your image.  
Help us to see all people in the face of Christ,  
and in all people to see Christ's image.  
Amen.*

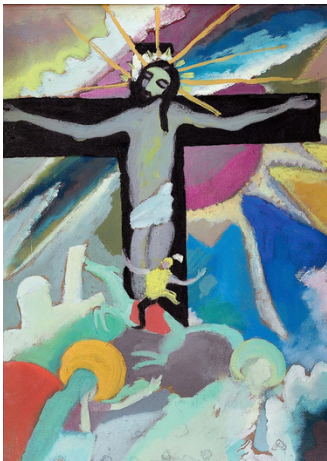


### **Cristo Negro (Black Christ) Ruiz Anglada, 2014**

Black lives matter. This picture of Jesus, beaten and broken, his head bowed, speaks to me of the intolerable injustice that people of colour continue to endure. Today we pray for all those who suffer from discrimination, prejudice, oppression, poverty, ill health or any kind of harm, simply because of the colour of their skin. If that is you, remember today that Jesus suffers with you, and feels the pain of the injustice. If that is not you, then pray that today you can do something (however small) to challenge the unjust structures of our world.

*Merciful God,  
you are righteous and love justice:  
stir the hearts of your people that,  
rejoicing in our diversity,  
we may repent of the wrongs of the past,  
and, by your grace, seek the peaceable kingdom of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.*

Collect for Racial Justice Sunday, The Church of England



### **Crucified Christ, Wassily Kandinsky, 1911**

This painting by Kandinsky, inspired by Bavarian Folk Art is a riot of colour and movement. There's a pink sun and blue mountains. St George, dressed in bright yellow, is seen riding across the scene at the foot of the cross. Beams of light shoot out from the head of the crucified Christ. In contrast to all this is the cross, devoid of colour, almost absent in black. It reminds me that out of all the absolute despair and darkness of the cross, comes all the glorious light, colour and new life of resurrection.

*Jesus, Light of the World.*

*Where there is darkness and despair,  
Bring your light and colour,  
and the hope of the resurrection.  
Amen.*



### **Jesus Christ, Joseph Paelinck, 1781-1839**

In this image of Jesus on the cross, there is nothing but him. No cross of nails, no clothes, no other people, barely the outline of the cross itself. Just Jesus, giving of himself for the world he created and loved. Just Jesus, refusing to the last to respond to violence with more violence. Just Jesus, showing us the depths of his love for us. Spend a moment pondering on these things and this image. How do you respond to this love?

Were the whole realm of nature mine  
That were an offering far too small  
Love so amazing, so divine  
Demands my soul, my life, my all

*Eternal God,  
in the cross of Jesus  
we see the cost of sin  
and the depth of your love:  
in humble hope and fear  
may we place at his feet  
all that we have and all that we are,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

Common Worship, Collect for Good Friday