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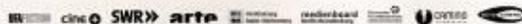


LEA VAN ACKEN FRANZISKA WEISZ

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

A FILM BY DIETRICH BRÜGGEMANN

BETA CINEMA presents a Production of DPA FICTION in Co-Production with SWR ARTE and CINE PLUS FILMPRODUKTION with LEA VAN ACKEN FRANZISKA WEISZ FILIVAN STREIFER LUKE ARON MORITZ KNIPP MICHAEL KAMP GIORG WESCH CHARIA PALMER LIMAS PULHI SIRGE SOHNKE RAMMO YKZMAN ANNA BRÜGGEMANN and HANNS ZSCHLIER supported by MFG FILMFÖRDERUNG BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG MEDIENBOARD BERLIN-BRANDENBURG DEUTSCHER FILMFÖRDERFONDS Director of Photography ALEXANDER SASS Set Design KLAUS-PETER PLATTEN Costume Design BETTINA MARK Editing VINCENT ASSMANN Make Up MARIKE MOHMANN ANKE THOT Sound JACOB KÜNER Sea & Stage Design MARTIN FRÖHMÖRGEN Re-Recording Maren HÖLGER LEHMANN Casting DANIELA TOLDOEN Children Casting MANDI(MA) MÜLLER Casting France CHARLOTTE ROUSTANG Line Producer MICHAEL LINGGERSCH Production Manager KONSTANTIN KAPSAIDS Executive Producers LEIF ALEOS FABIAN MAIBACH Co-Producers CINE PLUS FRANK EVERS HEISE MELBRONNER Commissioning Editors STEFANE GROSS (SWR) BARBARA HÄBE (ARTE) Producer JOCHEN LAUBE Written by DIETRICH and ANNA BRÜGGEMANN Directed by DIETRICH BRÜGGEMANN Music Sales BETA CINEMA





STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Directed by
Dietrich Brüggemann

Starring
Lea van Acken, Franziska Weisz, Florian Stetter, Hanns Zischler and Lucie Aron

Produced by
UFA Fiction Ludwigsburg in co-production with SWR, arte and Cine Plus

Supported by
**Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, MFG Filmförderung, Deutscher
Filmförderfonds**

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CAST

Maria	Lea van Acken
Mother	Franziska Weisz
Father Weber	Florian Stetter
Bernadette	Lucie Aron
Christian	Moritz Knapp
Father	Klaus Michael Kamp
Mortician	Hanns Zischler
Sports Teacher	Birge Schade
Thomas	Georg Wesch
Physician	Ramin Yazdani

CREW

Director	Dietrich Brüggemann
Screenplay	Anna & Dietrich Brüggemann
Cinematography	Alexander Sass
Editing	Vincent Assmann
Executive Producer	Jochen Laube
Costumes	Bettina Marx
Make-up	Mareike Mohmand, Anke Thot

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Genre:	Drama
Language:	German
Original Title:	Kreuzweg
Length:	107 min.
Format:	1:2,39

LOGLINE

STATIONS OF THE CROSS is an indictment and, at the same time, the legend of a saint. It's a story of religion, devotion and radical faith, and the film itself comes along just as radical as the subject matter, telling the story in only 14 fixed-angle long shots, allowing the viewer to contemplate the interactions on screen in an entirely different way than in a traditional film.

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Maria is 14 years old. Her family is part of a fundamentalist Catholic community. Maria lives her everyday life in the modern world, yet her heart belongs to Jesus. She wants to follow him, to become a saint and go to heaven – just like all those holy children she’s always been told about. So Maria goes through 14 stations, just like Jesus did on his path to Golgatha, and reaches her goal in the end. Not even Christian, a boy she meets at school, can stop her, even if in another world, they might have become friends, or even lovers. Left behind is a broken family that finds comfort in faith, and the question if all these events were really so inevitable.

SYNOPSIS

Maria is 14 years old and lives with her parents and three siblings in a small South-German town. The profoundly Catholic family belongs to the congregation of the fictitious Society of St. Paul which is comparable in real life with the Society of St. Pius X. This society rejects all the reforms that were made in the Church since the 1960s and propagates a very rigorous faith, as was allegedly taught for ages. It is a clear, simple system whose radicalness leaves no space at all for individual growth and fulfillment. Maria is preparing for her Confirmation and attending the lessons of the parish priest. He tells his young students about the value of sacrifice, about their special status as soldiers of Jesus Christ, and about those who have a calling and whose holiness clearly emerges even in their childhood. These holy children are often called to God at a very early age – a concept that falls on fruitful soil for Maria. In these holy children, Maria discerns clear-cut role models, figures she can identify with. Besides, making sacrifices is the only autonomous activity that she can accomplish. Maria’s family is governed by rules that are as strict as those of the Church: the domineering mother continuously dressing down her eldest daughter since she is afraid that Maria might elude her grasp as puberty begins... The father who hardly says a word since he, too, is dominated by the mother. The three younger siblings, 11-year-old Thomas, 7-year-old Katharina and 4-year-old Johannes, who are under comparatively less pressure. Johannes suffers from a rare disease and has not yet learned to speak to this day. Maria’s relationship with him is very close, and she wishes nothing more fervently than that he should become healthy. The French au-pair girl Bernadette is both a role model for Maria as well as her only confidante. She, too, comes from a St. Pius X Society circle, but the society is less radical in France and better grounded in the community.

At the school library, Maria gets to know a fellow student, Christian, from the parallel class. They chat about math homework and Christian invites Maria to accompany him sometime to a choir rehearsal in his church community. Maria has pangs of conscience about telling her mother that she would like to sing in the choir of a modern church community – and at the invitation of a boy! Yet she does tell her mother about this, but replaces “Christian” with an invented girlfriend. Even with this feint, the mother is beside herself with anger.

At her next confession, Maria tells the priest all her sins. He listens closely, pokes around in her inner life, and gives her as penance the task of confessing to her mother that she has lied to her. Maria tries to do this at dinner, but gets a severe punishment from her mother. Maria bursts into tears and can’t stop crying. This is the moment when Maria realizes that there can be no compromises between a secular life and the path to holiness: she must choose Jesus. She takes her first steps on this path in sports class when she announces that she is opposed to the music played to accompany the exercises. Christian, the fellow student who likes Maria, is the only one who comes to her aid. But because he defends her, the two of them end up being scorned as outsiders. Later Maria makes it clear to Christian that he should stay away from her.

For further Information:

On the day of her confirmation, Maria faints in church. The physician who examines her is alarmed. Sensing the unholy power struggle festering between mother and daughter, he has Maria taken to the hospital. Bernadette, who has been following the developments as an outsider up to now, becomes seriously worried. And when Maria tells her on her sickbed that she has decided to sacrifice her life to Christ and ascend the path to God in heaven, Bernadette knows she must do something urgently. But by now Maria is too weak. Father Weber comes to the Intensive Care ward and gives her holy Communion before she dies. Later, as the mother talks to the undertaker, she tries to defend her stance: Maria died as a saint, since a miracle took place: little Johannes spoke his first word exactly at the moment of Maria's death. Now, however, the mother is alone with her fanaticism, and even her husband turns away from her. For the first time, she realizes that she herself was at the center of this preventable tragedy. Maria is buried, and after the official ceremony, when the grave is being filled, Christian stops by to take leave of her personally. For the first time, the camera moves and pans up into the sky, where Maria's soul is perhaps finally free.

DIRECTOR DIETRICH BRÜGGEMANN ON "STATIONS OF THE CROSS"

The subject of this film contrasts strongly with everything I've done to date. Formally, it reprises something that I used in the past, and there are even certain connections between the contents.

Why this form?

Working with stable, up to 15-minute-long tableaux was one of the most rewarding experiences I made with my no-budget debut film NEUN SZENEN of 2006. At the latest when this film turned out to function as a comedy and score such an unexpected success among festival audiences did it become clear to me that I had come upon something that I would probably want to pick up again and develop in the future. Apart from the fact that this is the most wonderful and concentrated way to spend a day of shooting, there is also an artistic treasure buried here. The uncompromising gaze of an immobile camera, a space that one always sees as a whole, an ensemble of actors who are choreographed as in the theater and who can command this space through a camera that covers everything from long shot to close up. We don't need to take the viewers by the hand through resolution and editing; instead, we allow them to let their eyes wander and perceive everything in its simultaneity. Then there's the work with the actors, who automatically fall into a completely different style of dedicated concentration than in a conventional film through the long takes... The pressure that you can slowly build up in one long, single take. These are all aspects that I wanted to take up again in some way.

Why this topic?

The topic of STATIONS OF THE CROSS is, if you wish, a version of NEUN SZENEN seen from its dark side. Back then we asked the question: What goes on between 20-year-olds and their parents? How does one finally cut the umbilical cord? How many ways are there to hold on to your children – or to give them their freedom. This time, we begin a few years earlier and ask: what happens in a strictly religious family that prays to a God who takes himself more seriously than anything else? Of course, we find ourselves facing a couple of very big issues which we have "broken down" into individual questions. While in the late 20th century we were still able to believe that religion had more or less become irrelevant, today we see the opposite everywhere: the spread of Evangelical Christians in America, the permanent media presence of militant Islam... The Society of St. Pius X – which provided the inspiration for the Society of St. Paul in the film – is, when compared with the other societies, not a mass movement even though it does have its followers. And far from being on the fringes of Catholicism, it is practically in the center of the Church. According to them, the Church hollowed itself out on its own in the 1960s, and only the Society of St. Pius X remained faithful to the true core of faith. Their absoluteness poses a few uncomfortable questions to Mother

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Church: How serious are you here? Are you spreading the faith with commitment and consistency or are you a kind of modern, “boutique” service company that really doesn’t interest anyone anymore?

Why precisely now?

We hadn’t heard very much about the Society of Saint Pius X for a long time. Every now and then you’d come across amusing or even well-meaning articles about the “religious fundamentalists.” But it was only with the election of Josef Ratzinger as Pope that Catholicism – including the traditionalists – once again moved into the center of public debate. In 2009 the Pope repealed the excommunications of the St. Pius bishops, and, at the same time, it also came to light that one of them, Bishop Richard Williamson, kept repeatedly making denials of the Holocaust, which led to major upheavals in the Church. A hate-filled, rabble-rousing website called kreuz.net began to draw ever larger audiences until a massive resistance formed itself last year and the home page was removed from the net. While doing research for this film, we realized that the Society of St. Pius – which seems to have many followers – had long stopped holding its services in warehouses and other types of industrial buildings; wherever we looked, they had found domiciles in solid, often newly built churches. All of these aspects suggested that the time was right. Moreover, in my own circles I perceived a kind of return to a longing for religion. Our own lives are so splintered, we’re swimming in a sea of meaningless actionism – it is only one little step before we start dreaming ourselves away to a monastery, watching films in which the silent practice of one’s faith is interpreted favorably. Add to this the aforementioned, global resurgence of radical practitioners of faith. But before I make a film about radical Baptists or Muslims, I prefer to observe this phenomenon from the viewpoint of its local manifestations, as it appears here in the society in which I am living.

What don’t we want?

We want to delimit ourselves from the usual critiques leveled at the Church. Personally, I have nothing against religion and nothing against the Catholic Church. Let people form communities, found choirs and help one another. This is one of the sub-systems that gives birth to our society as such, and it has its legitimacy. I’m also not interested in abuse scandals; there has been enough reporting about this and the interest taken in this matter always leaves a bitter aftertaste of morbid sensationalism. But I would like to pose a more radical question: Where is abuse in the system? What happens when no one steps beyond his firmly delimited boundaries? When the parish priest gives his confirmation lessons and parents raise their children in conformity with what their conscience dictates? Isn’t this already abuse in itself, not sporadic or sexual, but global and spiritual?

Why precisely us?

Anna and I know the milieu which we’re addressing here since our own family associated with Pius Society circles in the 1990s. Back then, our father was of the opinion that this was right. He eased down on this later, however. Our family was rather untypical, and the reasons for this are complex. The film absolutely does not portray our family, nor does it seek to settle any scores. The decisive point is: Thanks to this situation, we have obtained several results from our research that would otherwise have been very difficult to come by. I am always in favor of filmmakers being knowledgeable about what they’re showing us. Which is the case here.

SCRIPTWRITER ANNA BRÜGGEMANN ON “STATIONS OF THE CROSS”

Fundamentalist religious societies really can’t complain about dwindling membership over the past years. There is apparently a very strong yearning for unshakable values and simple truths. But what do you do to a child who is told that a higher being can look into every nook and cranny of its heart to find sins there? How can a teenage girl face the world when she’s learned to mistrust it? And not only the world, but also her own feelings? How is she expected to silence her instincts? To a certain

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extent, a system that allows no other truths than its own, no matter whether it is about religion or ideology, is always life-negating. Nothing is left to chance, including the inner world of one's own children. As a child, you have the choice: either your will is broken and you subordinate yourself blindly to this system, or you rebel and aim your energy at yourself. We wanted to make a film that exemplarily shows how an idea is placed above human beings, and how children do not have the basic trust of their parents. We wanted to portray a young person with a strong will, who finds a drastic solution for uniting the strict faith in which she was raised, and her wish – repressed but still very much alive – to lead a different life. A young girl who ultimately wins her mother's love yet eludes her mother's grip forever.

PRODUCER JOCHEN LAUBE ON „STATIONS OF THE CROSS“

In spring 2013, Anna, Dietrich and I had about one and a half years of project development behind us, and I went to see important potential financing partners in order to speak to them about STATIONS OF THE CROSS. Prior to our meeting I had sent them the script and our concept, and hoped to be able to convince the powers that be of the appeal of our project. We had already worked together very well several times. But this time he made it short and sweet: "Jochen, take my advice, as a friend: Don't make this film!"

Ever since I've known Anna and Dietrich Brüggemann, we often spoke about religion. In our childhood, all three of us had been confronted with extreme forms of faith, and at some point, this topic no longer let go of us. After our mutual experiences in MOVE, the collaboration with Anna and Dietrich Brüggemann became more familiar, focused and wonderful. To develop this story with both of them, and to bring it to the big screen – this was one of the most significant and intensive experiences of my professional life. We were all blown over by the intensity with which Lea van Acken, Franziska Weisz, Florian Stetter and all the other cast members interpreted their characters in front of the camera, brought them to life and stamped them with their sensational achievements. In view of the extraordinary efforts made by each and every one in front of and behind the camera, I hope that the audience will feel personally addressed by this socially explosive and important topic, and will go see STATIONS OF THE CROSS in theaters. I am very glad that I ignored the advice of my colleagues, so that I am now able to present you with STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

LEA VAN ACKEN

Lea van Acken was born in 1999 and began gathering her first acting experiences at the age of 12 at the Karl May Festival in Bad Segeberg in 2011. She is making her film debut in the role of Maria in STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

"For me, STATIONS OF THE CROSS is a great debut film. I was really excited by the role of Maria. Preparing for it was a fantastic task, and I even trained myself to have a different posture as Maria. Whenever I had an especially difficult scene, it helped to imagine that I was all alone in the world. Although I, too, am getting ready for my Confirmation, it isn't in the intensive and sometimes limiting manner of Maria. I am overjoyed to have been entrusted with this weighty role."

FRANZISKA WEISZ

Franziska Weisz began her acting career in 1999 in Ulrich Seidl's DOG DAYS. This was followed by more than 40 roles in cinema and TV productions. In 2004 the Austrian native was given the Undine

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Award in the category Best Young Actress in a TV movie for her role as Vreni in Holger Barthel's IN LIEBE VEREINT. That same year she was one of the Berlinale Shooting Stars. For her acting achievements in the films DOG DAYS, RENDEZ-VOUS and DISTANCE she was honored with the Franz Hofer Award in 2008. In the internationally award-winning film HOTEL by Jessica Hausner, Weisz played the lead role of Irene and starred one year later next to Ken Duken as the lead female role of Jana Wallat in DISTANCE, which had its premiere at the Berlinale. In Benjamin Heisenberg's THE ROBBER, which was presented in competition at the Berlinale in 2010, she plays Erika, the girlfriend and accomplice of the title hero. STATIONS OF THE CROSS is her third project with Dietrich Brüggemann after RUN IF YOU CAN and MOVE.

FLORIAN STETTER

Florian Stetter studied acting at the Otto Falckenberg School in his native Munich and was cast while still a student by Dominik Graf in his FRIENDS OF FRIENDS of 2002. He obtained the Max Ophüls Award for his role in Philipp Gröning's L'AMOUR in 2001. Three years later he starred in Dennis Gansel's BEFORE THE FALL and in the highly praised TV movie THE YOUNG SCHILLER directed by Martin Weinhart. He portrayed Humphrey van Wayden in THE SEA WOLF and Jakob Lehn in Friedemann Fromm's three-part historical drama WOLVES OF BERLIN, which was awarded an Emmy®. In the BR Alpha production INKLUSION - GEMEINSAM ANDERS by Marc-Andreas Bochert, Stetter plays the teacher Schwarz, and in the ARD production DIE VERFÜHRERIN ADELE SPITZEDER he stars as the charming poet and dramatist Balthasar next to Birgit Minichmayr. On the big screen, he has played Reinhold Messner in early 2010 in Joseph Vilsmaier's NANGA PARBAT, and in the screen adaptation of the bestseller THE TASTE OF APPLE SEEDS directed by Vivian Naefe, he starred as Max, with whom Hannah Herzprung's Iris has fallen in love.

Florian Stetter will be competing for an award at the 2014 Berlinale in two films at once: he portrays Friedrich Schiller in Dominik Graf's THE BELOVED SISTERS, and accompanies the young Maria on her way to holiness in STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

DIETRICH BRÜGGEMANN (Director, Scriptwriter)

Born in Munich in 1976, Dietrich Brüggemann studied directing at the HFF "Konrad Wolf" in Potsdam Babelsberg from 2000 to 2006. After several short films, his feature film NEUN SZENEN, for which he wrote the script together with his sister Anna, became an audience favorite at the Berlinale in 2006, screened at various festivals in Germany and abroad, and was repeatedly honored with, a.o. the Best Feature Film at the Achtung Berlin Festival. His first theatrical feature RUN IF YOU CAN opened the Perspektive Deutsches Kino at the Berlinale in 2010. It was shown at about 30 festivals around the world and won various jury and audience awards. He worked with his sister Anna, who wrote the script together with him, on his film MOVE. STATIONS OF THE CROSS is the fourth collaboration of them. In addition, Dietrich Brüggemann shot several music videos, among them for Thees Uhlmann and Judith Holofernes, and accompanied silent films on the piano.

ANNA BRÜGGEMANN (Scriptwriter, role of Physician)

Born in Munich, Anna Brüggemann spent four years of her childhood in South Africa and starred in her first lead role in Lutz Konermann's TV movie VIRUS X at the age of 15. Now 32, she can be seen in over 60 feature films and TV movies, including Carsten Fiebeler's KLEINRUPPIN FOREVER and WITHOUT YOU I'M NOTHING, both directed by Florian Eichinger, Marcus Imboden's EIN DORF SUCHT SEINEN MÖRDER and the SCENE OF THE CRIME - VORSTADTBALLADE by Martin

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Enlen. In Sebastian Schipper's romantic quadrangle *SOMETIME IN AUGUST* she stars as Augustine. She makes regular appearances as the ambitious assistant Alex Eggert in the ZDF series *KOMISSARIN LUCAS*.

Since 2005 Anna Brüggemann has been writing scripts with her brother Dietrich for their joint projects. He directs them, she acts in them – thus arose such theatrical films as *NEUN SZENEN*, *RUN IF YOU CAN*, *MOVE* and, most recently, *STATIONS OF THE CROSS*.

JOCHEN LAUBE (Producer)

Jochen Laube studied production at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg and graduated in 2005 with the feature film *URLAUB VOM LEBEN*. In 2006 he founded the production company *sommerhaus filmproduktionen* with which he produced, among other films, *NOVEMBER CHILD*, *SONBOL*, which was hailed with the Grimme Award, and *DIE HAUSHALTSHILFE*, which won a Lola at the German Short Film Awards. Jochen Laube has been working as producer for UFA FICTION (former teamWorx) since 2008 and heads its Ludwigsburg office. This is the birthplace of many award-winning feature films and TV movies, including *THE DAY I WAS NOT BORN* (awarded a.o. the German Film Award 2011 in two categories and the Bavarian Film Award 2011), *CRACKS IN THE SHELL* (awarded a Lola at the German Film Awards in 2012 and two awards at the 46th International Karlovy Vary Festival), *TRANSPAPA*, *MOVE*, the Christmas special in several parts *BARON ON A CANNONBALL*, which was nominated for the International Emmy® Kids Awards 2014, and the docu-drama *GEORGE*. In May 2013 German cinemas brought out *5 JAHRE LEBEN*, the story of how Murat Kurnaz coped with his imprisonment. Jochen Laube was the German "Producer on the move" of the eponymous program at the Cannes Film Festival. He has just finished work on the production *WE ARE YOUNG, WE ARE STRONG (WT)* about the events that occurred in the "night of fire" in Rostock-Lichtenhagen. Laube is currently working on the continuation of the successful transmedial TV series *DINA FOXX* and on the Canadian coproduction *COCONUT HERO (WT)* directed by Florian Cossen. His latest theatrical film *STATIONS OF THE CROSS*, directed by Dietrich Brüggemann, is in competition at this year's Berlinale. The theatrical launch in Germany is scheduled for 20 March 2014.

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Stations of the Cross illustrate the path taken by Jesus Christ from his death sentence proclaimed by the Roman governor of Palestine Pontius Pilate up to his entombment. The tradition of "doing the stations of the cross" or of praying them, exists in the Catholic and Anglican churches. It was introduced in the 14th century by Christians in Jerusalem who wanted to follow Christ's Way of the Cross along the "Via Dolorosa" with a cross on their shoulders to show that they had accepted Jesus' invitation: "Whoever wishes to be my disciple must be self-denying, and must take up his cross and follow me." (Gospel of St. Mark, 8,34)

The Stations of the Cross then came to Europe through the returning crusaders. At the beginning, there were only seven stations, which were called the seven falls of Christ, or the seven ways of Jesus. It was not until the 17th and 18th centuries that the two Franciscan monks Antonius Daza and Leonard von Porto Maurizio presumably gave the Stations of the Cross their present form with 14 stations, which then spread throughout the Christian world.

The Stations of the Cross can be walked at any time, alone or in a group. Such stations are found in every Catholic church, sometimes outdoors as well, whereby in mountainous areas the path often ascends so as to symbolically convey Jesus' arduous ascent to Mount Golgotha, where he was

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crucified. The walking of the Way of the Cross can also be understood as a devotion that is a form of meditation, especially when done alone.

Station of the Cross devotions are held above all during Lent, and especially on the day of Christ's death, Good Friday. The best-known devotion of this kind is the one on the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem. This road probably does not fully correspond to the path that Jesus took. The 14 Stations of the Cross depict not only occurrences mentioned in the Gospels, but were also supplemented with the three stations in which Jesus fell to the ground under the crushing weight of the cross; the meeting with his mother; and the meeting with Veronica, who gave him a cloth with which he cleaned his face of sweat and blood. This face-cloth later gained great fame as an object of the cult, similarly to the Shroud of Turin which was said to show Jesus' face.

In 1731 Pope Clement XII recognized this form of the Way of the Cross as part of the religious canon. Whoever walked it obtained the promise of the remission of various sins. When the Spanish monk Estanislao died at the age of 24 in March 1927, he left a God-given list of promises which would fulfill themselves for the benefit of everyone who would devotedly pray the Stations of the Cross. Among them are listening to the prayers spoken on the Way of the Cross, as well as the forgiving of all sins. The Stations of the Cross are important to Catholics not only because they assert that Jesus was a man ["Ecce homo!" – "Behold the man", John 19,5] who had to endure many sufferings, from being arrested without reason, to accusations of treason, torture, physical abuse and up to an unimaginably painful death, but also because the symbol of Christianity stands in the forefront: the cross which each of us carries, but which also brings redemption when one professes one's belief in it. In Jesus' day, death on the cross was not only a particularly gruesome death, but above all a disgrace, which others wished upon those they considered the lowliest among men.

The 14 Stations of the Cross

1. Jesus is condemned to death
2. Jesus takes up the cross on his shoulders
3. Jesus falls for the first time
4. Jesus meets his mother
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus
7. Jesus falls for the second time
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem
9. Jesus falls for the third time
10. Jesus' clothes are taken away
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross
12. Jesus dies on the cross
13. Jesus is taken down from the cross and placed in his Mother's lap
14. The holy body of Jesus is laid in the tomb

THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X

This religious society is formed of Catholic priests who have refused to acknowledge the reforms made by the Second Vatican Council (1962 to 1965). Among them are the opening to ecumenical movements, religious freedom, the Bishops' Conference which was set up at that time, the acceptance of the Jewish faith as a way of salvation (Nostra Aetate) as well as the reform of the liturgy. The latter introduced many simplifications. For example, the Mass no longer had to be read in Latin but in the vernacular of the region in question, and the priest now faced the worshippers instead of turning his back to them.

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The Society of Saint Pius X, as it is officially called, was founded in 1970 by the French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who died in 1991. The Society's goal was to maintain the rites and teachings of the Roman-Catholic Church as they had existed until the Council. The Society strove for a "renewal of the priesthood" and the "dissemination and restoration of the authentic Catholic teachings." Pope Pius X, whose pontificate lasted from 1903 to 1914, is viewed as "a conservative reform Pope," who attacked every form of modernism in his writings.

The members of this Society oppose religious freedom, divorce, homosexuality, equal rights for women, abortion, the separation of State and Church, Islam, Judaism, and the Enlightenment itself. They are against everything that belongs to a modern-day society, which is why they are sometimes called Catholic fundamentalists, a concept which they interpret as a compliment.

In 1975 the Society was banished from the Church community. Its members then set up their own seminaries, priories and chapels without the permission of Rome. In 1988 Bishop Lefebvre elevated four priests to the rank of bishops, including the Swiss Bernard Fellay, who has been Superior General of the community since 1994. The Vatican regarded this as a first step towards a schism – a break with the Church – and excommunicated the four bishops who had been consecrated and the two bishops who had consecrated them. In 2007 Pope Benedict XVI, who was seen as conservative, allowed the reintroduction of the old type of mass which had been practiced in the 16th century but forbidden by the Council. In 2009 he repealed the excommunication of the four ordained bishops in order to stimulate a dialogue with the Society, but this came to a standstill in 2012.

In order to be able to return to the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, Bernard Fellay had had to accept the tenets of the Council, which he and the Society continued to reject. According to Canon Law, they are considered as "vagrant clerics," who can still be active without the Church's permission. However, in the dioceses of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, the Society is generally banned from using Roman-Catholic church buildings, including for funerals, baptisms, weddings or pilgrimages.

Among the four bishops ordained by Lefebvre is Richard Williamson of Great Britain, who repeatedly denied the Holocaust and, after long public discussions, was excluded from the Society in 2012. Nevertheless, the Society made it possible to have a funeral service held for the Nazi war criminal Erich Priebke in Rome in October 2013.

The Society numbers about 900 members in 63 countries. But since there are no official statistical documents available, estimates of their followers vary between 150,000 and 600,000.

BETA CINEMA – WORLD SALES

Beta Cinema has established itself as a "boutique-operation" for independent feature films with strong theatrical potential. Beta Cinema's philosophy is to keep its selective acquisition policy of 10 to 12 titles per year in order to fully develop the theatrical potential of each title according to its individual character.

Beta Cinema's portfolio includes outstanding productions like Berlin 2013 Golden Bear-winning CHILD'S POSE, Academy Award 2011-nominated IN DARKNESS, Cannes 2008 Jury Prize-winning and Academy Award-nominated IL DIVO, Academy Award 2007-winning THE COUNTERFEITERS, Academy Award 2007 nominated MONGOL, Academy Award 2006-winning THE LIVES OF OTHERS and the Academy Award 2004-nominated DOWNFALL.

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