

LIVING LENT
THE CRUCIFIXION AND DEATH OF JESUS



**Let us lift up our prayers
in the sane spirit we lift up the Cross:
proclaiming our Lord as the Way that is no end,
the Truth that cannot be silenced,
and the Life that will not be entombed.**

Leader: Lord, send down Your abundant blessing upon us who devoutly recall the death of your Son in the sure hope of the resurrection.

All: Grant us pardon,
bring us comfort.
May our faith grow stronger
and our eternal salvation be assured.

They came to a place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"). There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, He refused to drink it. When they had crucified Him, they divided up His clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over Him there. Above His head they placed the written charge against Him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Two rebels were crucified with Him, one on His right and one on His left. Those who passed by hurled insults at Him, shaking their heads and saying, "You Who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! Come down from the cross, if You are the Son of God!"

In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked Him. "He saved others," they said, "but He can't save Himself! He's the king of Israel! Let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in Him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue Him now if He wants Him, for He said, 'I am the Son of God.' " In the

same way the rebels who were crucified with Him also heaped insults on Him.

From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over all the land. About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, [a] lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?").

When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling Elijah."

Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge. He filled it with wine vinegar, put it on a staff, and offered it to Jesus to drink. The rest said, "Now leave Him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to save Him."

And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up His spirit.

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely He was the Son of God!"

Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for His needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Matthew 27:32-66

OUR RESPONSE

You love humankind, O Christ, and we glorify You for that.

You are the Only Son, the Lord of All things.

You alone are without sin.

You gave Yourself up to death for us, Your unworthy sinners.

Through Your suffering You have delivered all human beings from the snares of evil.

What shall we render to You for such goodness?

Glory to You, friend of us all!

Glory to You, O merciful Lord.!

Glory to You, longsuffering God!

Glory to You Who takes away all sins!

Glory to You Who came to save us!

Glory to You bound in cords!

Glory to You whipped and scourged!

Glory to You crowned with thorns!

Glory to You mocked and derided!

Glory to You nailed to the cross!



HYMN: LIFT HIGH THE CROSS

Refrain:

**Life high the cross, the love of Christ proclaims;
Around the world we glorify His name.**

- 1. God's sacred Word from all eternity
became like us in our mortality.**
- 2. He emptied Himself, dying on a tree;
let us carry our cross with His humility.**
- 3. Other lives mattered more than His own;
therefore God raised Him to the heavenly throne**
- 4. And so this sign of torment and strife
became the sign of God's eternal life.**

REFLECTION

It is not quite accurate to say that wicked people crucified Jesus. Those who caused the crucifixion were community and church leaders, persons of good reputation, acting from motives to preserve the peace and protect the sacred in their society and in their religious life. The responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion lies precisely there.

Because we share much in common with those people it is we, as well as they, whom Christ sees as He looks down in agony from His cross. We, too, bear some responsibility. It is futile to blame any one person or group of people. For the fault is everywhere and it is no farther away than our own hearts and wills. Sinfulness is universal and, like a deadly disease, infects us every one. So, with St. Paul, we must confess that the good we would, we do not; and that which we would avoid is the very thing we do. O, sinful one that I am!

As we reflect on the crucifixion, let us do so with contrite and humble hearts, praying for our own forgiveness and for the forgiveness of the entire world. Let us pray with the understanding that Jesus Christ, knowing all there is to know about each and everyone, submitted to death on a cross that we might be forgiven and restored to unity with God and each other through the merits of His self-offering sacrifice. Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. Accept His forgiveness. Receive and share his peace.

For the sake of His sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

"Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." – Luke 23:33-34

"Today you shall be with Me in Paradise" - Luke 23:39-43

"Woman, behold, your son!" - John 19:26-27

"My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?" - Matthew 27:46

"I Thirst." - John 19: 28

"It is finished!" - John 19:30

"Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit." - Luke 23:46

HYMN:

**When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.
See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did ever such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?
His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o'er His body on the tree:
Then am I dead to all the world,
And all the world is dead to me.
Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That would be an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

OUR PRAYER

**Look down upon us, good and gentle Jesus,
while before Your face we humbly kneel and,
with burning soul, pray and beseech You to
fix deep in our hearts lively sentiments of
faith, hope and charity; true contrition for
our sins, and a firm purpose of amendment.
While we contemplate, with great love and tender
pity, Your five most precious wounds,
ponder over them within us and calling
to mind the words which David, Your
Prophet, said to You, my Jesus:
"They have pierced My hands and My feet,
they have numbered all My bones."**



HYMN: JESUS REMEMBER ME

**Jesus, remember me when You come in to Your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when You come in to Your kingdom.**

**Behold the Lamb
Slain from the foundation of the world
For sinners crucified
O holy sacrifice
Behold the Lamb of God
Behold the Lamb
Heaven and earth resound**

