

Dear Mom.

I am very sorry for the pain I have caused you. I remember the first time you visited me when I was locked up.... I remember.... I remember....



Artist: T. Larimer

CLOSING PRAYER

Mary,

You received Jesus in your arms. You held him in your arms. You bathed him one last time. Even in this darkness, you had other mothers help you. Even in this darkness, you were able to feel your son's presence.

Be with me, Mary, in times of darkness and tragedies. Let me know I am not alone. Hold me in your arms. Amen.

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Good Friday

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

Dear Mom, I am very sorry for the pain I caused you. I remember the first time you visited me when I was locked up.

I remember sitting at the police station feeling defeated, lost, confused, and afraid that I'll never be able to live life with you as a free man. I was so scared and next thing you know they called me for a visit the 2nd day of my initial arrest, and there you were mom, as you have always been. Telling me not to worry and that everything was going to be ok. I cried like a baby when I saw you that day, I felt like I disappointed you and failed you as a son.

I am sorry for all the pain and headaches my past behavior brought you. My change is dedicated to you and I hope to make you proud. I love you. Thank you for NEVER giving up on me and for being here loving me as you son and for being my biggest supporter. Love, your son.

-Saul, who is in a California State Prison.

The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ Cycle C | April 18, 2025



Artist: T. Larimer

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Lord God. You invite me to share in the glory of the resurrection. Stay with me as I struggle to see how accepting the crosses of my life will free me from the power of the one who wants only to destroy my love and trust in you. Help me to be humble and be accepting like your son, Jesus. I want to turn to you with the same trust he had in you love. Save me, Lord. Only you can save me and bring me to the light. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12

See, my servant shall prosper, he shall be raised high and greatly exalted. Even as many were amazed at him--so marred was his look beyond human semblance and his appearance beyond that of the sons of man--so shall he startle many nations, because of him kings shall stand speechless; for those who have not been told shall see, those who have not heard shall ponder it. Who would believe what we have heard? To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? He grew up like a sapling before him, like a shoot from the parched earth; there was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him, nor appearance that would attract us to him. He was spurned and avoided by people, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity, one of those from whom people hide their faces, spurned, and we held him in no esteem. Yet it was our infirmities that he bore, our sufferings that he endured, while we thought of him as stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins; upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way; but the LORD laid upon him the guilt of us all. Though he was harshly treated, he submitted and opened not his mouth; like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, he was silent and opened not his mouth. Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away, and who would have thought any more of his destiny? When he was cut off from the land of the living, and smitten for the sin of his people, a grave was assigned him among the wicked and a burial place with evildoers, though he had done no wrong nor spoken any falsehood. But the LORD was pleased to crush him in infirmity. If he gives his life as an offering for sin, he shall see his descendants in a long life, and the will of the LORD shall be accomplished through him. Because of his affliction he shall see the light in fullness of days; through his suffering, my servant shall justify many, and their guilt he shall bear. Therefore I will give him his portion among the great, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty, because he surrendered himself to death and was counted among the wicked; and he shall take away the sins of many, and win pardon for their offenses,

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 31: 2, 6, 12-13, 15-16

R. Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

In you, O LORD, I take refuge;

let me never be put to shame.

In vour justice rescue me.

Into your hands I commend my spirit;

you will redeem me, O LORD, O faithful God.

R. Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

For all my foes I am an object of reproach,

a laughingstock to my neighbors, and a dread to my

friends;

they who see me abroad flee from me.

I am forgotten like the unremembered dead;

I am like a dish that is broken.

R. Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

But my trust is in you, O LORD;

I say, "You are my God.

In your hands is my destiny; rescue me

from the clutches of my enemies and my

persecutors.'

R. Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

Second Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

Brothers and sisters: Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help. In the days when Christ was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

The Word of the Lord. **R. Thanks be to God.**

Gospel: John 19: 25-30 (Taken from the Gospel John 18:1 - 19:42)

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clops, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son. Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I thirst." There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished." And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION: IN THE ARMS OF MARY

(through the eyes of mary)

at last it was time to bring my son down from the cross the earth had stopped shaking

the soldiers were pushing a small platform in front of the crosses starting with dismas i went over to his mother who was bent over and destroyed inside began consoling her in the midst of her sorrow the soldiers were handing her dismas

now they were in front of jesus' cross these two soldiers hurriedly taking out the nails in the hands one soldier holding jesus in place while the other was taking out the stake in jesus' feet it seemed as if jesus' body was weightless

i spread out my mantle on the ground i sat on the cloak these two soldiers slowly handed me jesus blood staining my cloak holding my son in my arms looking into his face feeling his body against my body gently rubbing my hand against jesus' face at last i could hold him in my hands

was not aware of anything else except this one in my arms iesus having lost so much blood that he was light in my arms i knew my son could hear me somewhere after these last days of suffering of torture needed to whisper softly

iesus

at last i have you in my arms having experienced such darkness during these days my heart has been broken so many times since your arrest i have seen the cruel face of darkness i want to tell you that i have felt the presence of your abba i know you are together now thank you jesus for being my son for all you have given me

at this moment
women came close
with cloths
with water
sitting down
taking the cloths
dampened in water
i started with jesus' face
slowly the dried blood
fell away
the cloth entering
the deep wounds

gently cleaning the wound on jesus' side taking his hands looking at them destroyed a huge hole where the spikes had penetrated it was as if

another cloth

there was a light still flowing from these wounds now taking another cloth how does one clean jesus' back? the flesh was hanging off his back there was so little to clean as i peered at jesus's back my friends tried to clean the wounds where the lashes had fallen

i was feeling my son close he was with us somehow he was present

at that moment the two mothers of the other crucified ones came over we cleaned the bodies of our sons together

all the pure and religious had wandered down the hill it was only a few of us left they bent down taking jesus' pierced feet into their arms with huge holes

how many mothers would experience what we were feeling? holding our dead sons in our arms with their blood soaking through clothes cries of sorrow so loud they were silent

no noise nothing else was moving in the universe i was holding the body i gave birth to the body i had bathed so many times this was the last time i would bathe the body of my son

the only comfort was the rubbing of the cloth against his skin again and again becoming aware not only of jesus but of his abba

such a deep mystery as we held iesus in our hands washing jesus with these women broken hearted mothers connected to the love from iesus' abba's heart love from their mothers' hearts being with walking with accompanying their criminal sons as they were laughed at made fun of being accused of not raising their sons in a good way being velled at how they had failed as mothers look how their criminal sons had ended up carrying a cross

this love they had for their sons was like the love strong flowing from the heart of jesus' abba

these two mothers
were also showing
the face of god
on this day
on this hill
love without conditions
self-giving
forgiving love

