

**Archdiocese of Los Angeles  
Religious Education Congress  
Friday, March 16, 2018**

**Session 1-04  
10:00 – 11:30 AM  
Deepening Our  
Appreciation of the  
Passion and Death  
of Jesus Christ**

**THE GOSPEL OF LUKE,  
CHAPTERS 22 & 23**

**How Does the  
Passion and Death  
of Christ Speak to You?**

**SOME REFLECTIONS OF OTHERS:**

- † The Passion and Death of Jesus completely summarizes who He was and who we are, if we choose to call ourselves by His name: Christian.
- † The Christian revelation discovered in the Passion and Death of Jesus takes place at the intersections of love and violence, of reconciliation and rage, of the offer of love and the sentence of death.

continued

**REFLECTIONS**

- † Jesus reveals His Father as an everlasting offer of forgiveness and reconciliation – even in the face of human violence.
- † The cross rises in our midst as a symbol of God's everlasting offer of forgiveness and reconciliation and humanity's everlasting refusal to accept it and to live it.

continued

## REFLECTIONS

- † Christ hangs on the cross until the end of time to symbolize God's offer of a new way of being alive and people's refusal to accept it.
- † In the Passion and Death of Christ we see clearly and vividly that God is an endless flow of life and love to all people. Jesus takes that life and love into the world of death. Nothing and no human experience are devoid of God's everlasting offer of life, love, forgiveness and reconciliation.

continued

## REFLECTIONS

- † Divine love does not stop at human mortality.

## FR. DON SENIOR, C.P. REFLECTS ON THE SPIRIT IN WHICH THE PASSION STORIES WERE WRITTEN

Our goal, therefore, is to read the passion stories in the spirit in which they were written, intent not so much on retrieving the history that stands behind these texts but rather to absorb the faith understanding of Jesus' death that suffuses them. Lost in the familiarity of these stories that most of us have heard all our lives, may be the fact that each evangelist tells the account of Jesus' suffering and death in a distinct way.

continued

## FR. DON SENIOR...

Because each evangelist wrote for a different Christian community and because each of them was gifted with a unique style of narration and a particular point of view, the four accounts are diverse. Like four great artists, each evangelist produced a masterful portrait of the crucified Jesus. This is true of their gospel stories as a whole and remains way they present the passion of Jesus. We will savor each of their accounts in turn.

## THE LAST SUPPER

Lord Jesus, once in the wilderness your people ate heavenly manna and they were filled. And once in a desert place you fed the hungry with blessed bread.

A simple thing, we say, costing our mighty God little effort. But what if bread is a body offered for all, and a cup of wine your own life-blood given to those who hardly care. A costly thing, we say, is there anything more God could have done? Anything more Love could do than lay down his life for his friends?

Victor Hoagland, C.P.

## LUKE 22:14-38

When **the hour** came, he took his place at table with **the apostles**. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this **Passover meal** with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it (again) until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you (that) from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

continued

Then **he took the bread**, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "**This is my body**, which will be given for you; **do this in memory of me.**"

And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the **new covenant** in my blood, which will be shed for you.

"And yet behold, the hand of the one who is to betray me is with me on the table; for the Son of Man indeed goes as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed."

And they began to debate among themselves who among them would do such a deed. <sup>8</sup> Then an argument broke out among them about which of them should be regarded as **the greatest**.

continued

He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them and those in authority over them are addressed as 'Benefactors'; but among you it shall not be so. Rather, let the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant.

For who is greater: the one seated at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one seated at table? I am among you as the one who serves.

It is you who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer a kingdom on you, just as my Father has conferred one on me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

continued

"Simon, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers."

He said to him, "Lord, I am prepared to go to prison and to die with you."

But he replied, "I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows this day, you will deny three times that you know me."

continued

He said to them, "When I sent you forth without a money bag or a sack or sandals, were you in need of anything?" "No, nothing," they replied.

He said to them, "But now one who has a money bag should take it, and likewise a sack, and one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak and buy one.

For I tell you that this scripture must be fulfilled in me, namely, 'He was counted among the wicked'; and indeed what is written about me is coming to fulfillment."

Then they said, "Lord, look, there are **two swords** here." But he replied, "It is enough!"

## EXEGESIS

**The hour:** revelation will take place. It is time for things to be seen clearly.

**The apostles:** the twelve tribes of Israel; they will be sent forth – the nature of an apostle – one who is sent.

**Passover meal:** this meal is looking forward to a future meal. In Luke you do the future now. You pressure the present to do the future. People are not unified now, but you do this now to be one. That is the symbolic action of the Eucharist. Violence will not have the final say. Therefore pressure the present. This meal is a sign of the future; not a memory of the past. Jesus; when I am doing this meal, I am thinking of drinking in the Kingdom of God.

continued

**He took the bread; This is my body:** Jesus is filled with gratitude. He gives thanks. Gratitude is what fills us up from the inside ... just how much has been given to you by others. If you can get past the fear that you do NOT own your life, you, too, will be filled with gratitude.

**Bread:** is your life being broken and given to someone else so that they become strong on your life? Therefore, this is my life that is going to flow into your life, because the essence of my life is fundamentally life being poured into you ... you just have to flow. Filled up with divine life, we give life to one another.

**Do this in memory of me:** watch out for forgetfulness. Spend time with it. Spend time with me.

**New Covenant:** old covenant was written on stone; new covenant is written on your heart. Stones don't flow into another.

continued

This is a revelation of the mutual communion of all things. All things flow into one another as a form of life. The violence of the Passion and Death of Christ is the breaking of the flow of communion.

**The greatest:** Imagine the disconnect going on and the inability of the apostles to “get it.” Jesus is pouring out His life to them and talking about what is about to happen, and they are concerned about being the greatest! The “greatest” was one who lorded it over others, dominated others and often oppressed them. That is betrayal!

But the apostles have the revelation now. They are in Holy Communion with the Lord. The greatest must live as “one who serves others. I give you the food and the drink of My life. Are you giving food and drink to others? You pour life into life so others will grow strong. The underlying communion going on here is what will judge the world. Right now, when doing this, you are the future in the present. “Do this in memory of me!”

continued

**Peter:** “ I am prepared to die with you!” Peter is basing loyalty on ego not his deeper spiritual self. Peter is very ungrounded. For Luke grounding comes through prayer. And prayer is the preparation for action. You will know the deep truth.

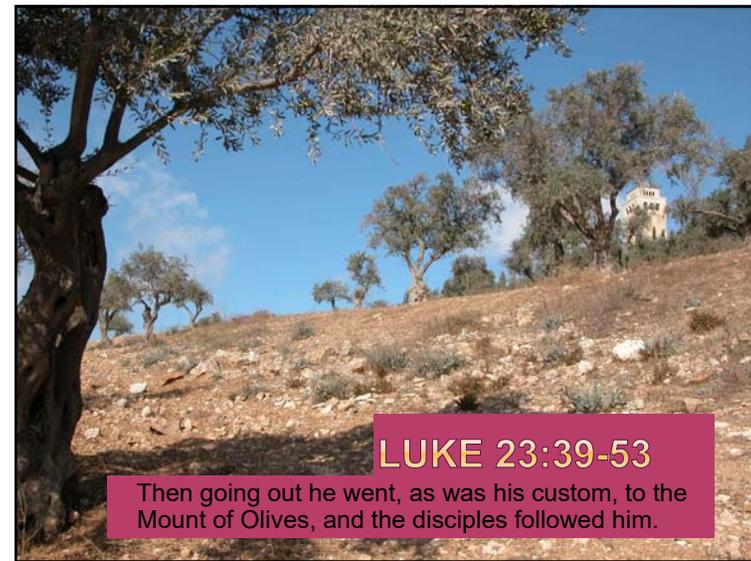
“...Were you in need of anything?” Just do it! You don’t need material support. Our mind stops us from doing this deeper truth because we think we need more things. The resource they need is their grouping in prayer (church).

**Two swords:** means they still don’t get it! Hot on the heels of communion is betrayal, denial, division ... and communion. This is spirituality in the real world. The spiritual life means to trust those special, fleeting, deeper moments of life. How do you let those moments influence you?

## THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

Passion of Christ strengthens me! Strengthen me under the pressure of temptation. Strengthen me when principle is at stake. Strengthen me to do Your Will, My God. Strengthen me in moments of suffering, in times of loneliness, in periods of depression. Strengthen me that I may never swerve from You, dear Christ, nor weaken through human respect, through a desire to be popular, through hope of social distinction. Strengthen me to accept my cross and carry it generously to the end. Amen.

Victor Hoagland, C.P.



**LUKE 23:39-53**

Then going out he went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him.

When he arrived at the place he said to them, "**Pray that you may not undergo the test.**"

After withdrawing about **a stone's throw** from them and **kneeling**, he prayed saying, "**Father**, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, **not my will but yours be done.**"

(And to strengthen him **an angel** from heaven appeared to him. He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.)

When **he rose** from prayer and returned to his disciples, he **found them sleeping** from grief. He said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not undergo the test."

While he was still speaking, **a crowd** approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named **Judas**. He went up to Jesus to **kiss** him.

continued

Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

His disciples realized what was about to happen, and they asked, "Lord, shall we **strike with a sword?**"

And one of them struck the high priest's servant and **cut off his right ear.**

But Jesus said in reply, "Stop, no more of this!" Then he touched the servant's ear and **healed him.**

And Jesus said to the chief priests and temple guards and elders who had come for him, "Have you come out **as against a robber**, with swords and clubs?"

Day after day I was with you in the temple area, and you did not seize me; but this is your hour, the time for **the power of darkness.**"

## Exegesis

**Pray that you may not undergo the test:** Keep this in mind from earlier in the Gospel: Jesus was led into the desert to be tested (tempted). What was the test: what does it mean to be the Son of God? So here what Jesus was about is running into something He is not about. The test is the intersection between love and violence, life and death, faithfulness and accusation. Remember satan/devil are two strategies at work in the world: division and accusation. They are deep forces that inhabit people.

With all of that going on can you stay in touch with the deeper source of love: God, the Creator?

continued

**A stone's throw:** a short distance ... into the world of violence

**Kneeling:** connected to the earth

**Father:** Jesus centers Himself into the source of love and reconciliation ... Abba.

**Not my will but yours be done:** will of the Father is that Jesus continue to manifest the Father's love and reconciliation no matter what happens. Can you stay in touch with a stronger power within yourself?

**An angel:** the power of God is entering Him. Angel is like a trainer ... a spiritual trainer for the great contest (test) between the power of the Father's love and division and accusation.

**He rose:** same word for resurrection. To what does Jesus rise? Always to life!

continued

**Found them sleeping:** not conscious to what is going on. They still don't get it! They are not in touch with the deepest truth ... the source of love in the world. Why are you asleep to your deeper truth?

**A crowd:** means everybody. Humanity is losing the test!

**Judas:** manifest, division / accusation

**Kiss:** a symbol of loyalty. This is the power of diabolos ... outer world is split from the inner world. A kiss is an act of loyalty. Betrayal is an act of the inside ... it divides and accuses. Jesus brings this out in the open ... betrayal on the inside; fidelity on the outside.

**Strike with a sword:** you are not free with these evil sources. You just act out with a sword. You are not in touch with the deeper self ... the truth of who you are.

continued

**Cut off his right ear:** this ends the process of communication (division/diabolos)

**Jesus healed him (ear):** Jesus the healer, the One who gives people reconciliation, restores relationships, and offers people communion with one another.

**As against a robber:** They turn him into a bandit in order to get him. They must make the son of God, the son of man, the embodiment of humanity, killable. But no one kills the Son of God. Must turn him into a bandit. It's the power of diabolos ... it misrepresents people. Violence is most revealed when it has to deal with love.

**The power of darkness:** the Light is fading.



## THE QUESTIONING

Lord Jesus, betrayed by a loyal kiss, bound like a bandit,  
abandoned by your disciples,  
have mercy on me, O Lord.  
Lord Jesus, condemned to death by unjust rulers,  
taken as a criminal before Pilate, ridiculed by Herod,  
have mercy on me, O Lord.  
Lord Jesus, publicly stripped of your garments  
and cruelly flogged at the pillar,  
have mercy on me, O Lord.  
Lord Jesus, crowned with thorns, beaten and  
blindfolded,  
clothed in rich purple and mocked,  
have mercy on me, O Lord.

## LUKE 22:54 – 23:25

After arresting him they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest; **Peter was following at a distance.**

They lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and **Peter sat down with them.**

When a maid saw him seated in the light, she looked intently at him and said, "This man too was with him."

But he denied it saying, "Woman, I do not know him."

A short while later someone else saw him and said, "You too are one of them"; but Peter answered, "My friend, **I am not.**"

continued

About an hour later, still another insisted, "Assuredly, this man too was with him, for he also is a Galilean."

But Peter said, "My friend, I do not know what you are talking about." Just as he was saying this, **the cock crowed**,

and the **Lord turned and looked at Peter**; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times."

He went out and began to weep bitterly.

The men who held Jesus in custody were ridiculing and beating him.

They **blindfolded him** and questioned him, saying, "**Prophecy!** Who is it that struck you?"

And they reviled him in saying many other things against him.

continued

When day came the **council of elders** of the people met, both **chief priests and scribes**, and they brought him before their **Sanhedrin**.

They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us," but he replied to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I question, you will not respond.

But from this time on the Son of Man will be seated at **the right hand of the power of God.**"

They all asked, "**Are you then the Son of God?**" He replied to them, "You say that I am."

Then they said, "What further need have we for testimony? We have heard it from his own mouth."

continued

Then the whole assembly of them arose and brought him before **Pilate**. They brought charges against him, saying, "We found this man misleading our people; he opposes the payment of taxes to Caesar and maintains that he is the Messiah, a king."

Pilate asked him, "**Are you the king** of the Jews?" He said to him in reply, "You say so."

Pilate then addressed the chief priests and the crowds, "I find this man not guilty."

But they were adamant and said, "He is **inciting the people** with his teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to here."

On hearing this Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean; and upon learning that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him **to Herod** who was in Jerusalem at that time.

continued

Herod was very glad to see Jesus; he had been wanting to see him for a long time, for he had heard about him and had been hoping to see him **perform some sign**.

He questioned him at length, but he gave him no answer. The chief priests and scribes, meanwhile, stood by accusing him harshly.

[Even] Herod and his soldiers treated him contemptuously and mocked him, and after clothing him in resplendent garb, he sent him back to Pilate.

**Herod and Pilate became friends that very day**, even though they had been enemies formerly.

Pilate then summoned the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them, "You brought this man to me and accused him of inciting the people to revolt..."

continued

... I have conducted my investigation in your presence and have not found this man guilty of the charges you have brought against him, nor did Herod, for he sent him back to us. So no capital crime has been committed by him. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him."

But **all together they shouted** out, "Away with this man! Release **Barabbas** to us." [Now Barabbas had been imprisoned for a rebellion that had taken place in the city and for murder.]

Again Pilate addressed them, still wishing to release Jesus, but they continued their shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Pilate addressed them a third time, "What evil has this man done? I found him guilty of no capital crime. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him."

continued

With loud shouts, however, they persisted in calling for his crucifixion, and their voices prevailed. The verdict of Pilate was that their demand should be granted.

So he released the man who had been imprisoned for rebellion and murder, for whom they asked, and he handed Jesus over to them to deal with as they wished.



## EXEGESIS

**Peter was following at a distance:** Peter still doesn't get it. He is the leader who is following from a distance. He can't let go of Christ. He is caught in the grip of the vision. He is looking for life. But always repenting .... the split between attraction and misunderstanding.

**Peter sat down with them:** division / accusation ... Peter is sitting among the accusers of Jesus.

**I am not:** ... says Peter. And Jesus will say (and is) "I am." [That is the revelation of Yahweh to Moses at the burning bush: I am.] That, again, is the revelation of the deepest truth ... you are in touch with the source of life.

continued

**The cock crowed:** beginning of morning ... light coming into darkness. The Light shows you the truth!

**Lord turned and looked at Peter:** Not Jesus here, but Lord... to gravitate toward Christ, you must know your prisons. There is no accusation in Christ; only reconciliation and healing. Jesus turns to Peter; He is concerned about Peter. When we (Peter here) are caught in the world of division and accusation, we do not think reconciliation is available to us. Jesus looked into that deeper part of Peter ... into the spirituality of love and forgiveness deep with us all.

**Blindfolded him, "Prophecy!"** They are totally ignorant. They think prophecy comes from physical eyes. No. It comes from spiritual insight. Jesus saw the present moment with His spiritual depth.

continued

**Council of elders and chief priests and scribes and Sanhedrin:** lots of people are present to Jesus. A mob will develop. It reveals that this type of thinking and acting is in ALL people.

**The right hand of the power of God:** this is the judge ... the persistent outreach of love.

**"Are you then the Son of God?"** The world of titles was totally misconstrued. Jesus has redefined every title.

**Pilate:** enter now the political realm. Jesus is accused of perverting the nation.

Evil in Luke comes in the form of a test (remember Christ's 3 temptations). Pilate is tested. He knows Jesus is innocent. Pilate is confronted 3 times (3 tests/temptations). And he fails the test, while Jesus sustains the test. Pilate: when tested, stays in solidarity with his enemies. Jesus: when tested, stays in solidarity with God. continued

How will you stay in solidarity with God and neighbors when violence occurs?

**Are you the king:** Jesus won't use the title. Interestingly, in some ways He is, in others ways He is not.

**Inciting the people:** He stirs up the people. That's what Christians do!

**To Herod ... perform some sign:** Herod like leaders throughout the Gospel think they will believe if they see some sign. They won't believe. They will just be fascinated. Yet Herod and everyone are seeing a sign ... of constant love and forgiveness.



continued

**Herod and Pilate became friends that very day:** that same day – a day of revelation about the reconciliation of relationships ... even Herod and Pilate!

**All together they shouted:** Everybody is there. Violence gets loud. It has no case on a rational level. Shouting is a sign of the irrational.

**Barabbas:** means son of the Father. They will now choose another son of the Father. They will choose the mirror image of themselves. Barabbas: insurrection is to divide and murder.

## THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Lord, have mercy.  
 Jesus, Eternal Son of God  
 Jesus, born into the human family  
 Jesus, rejected by the world you came to save  
 Jesus, bargained for and sold for money  
 Jesus, foreseeing your torments and sweating blood,  
 Jesus, betrayed by a false friend,  
 Jesus, deserted by those you loved,  
 Jesus, slapped in the face and spit upon in a court of justice,  
 Jesus, accused by liars,  
 Jesus, disowned by Peter,  
 Jesus, insulted by Herod,  
 Jesus, condemned to death by Pilate . . .

continued



Jesus, beaten with whips,  
 Jesus, crowned with thorns,  
 Jesus, rejected for the murderer, Barabbas,  
 Jesus, burdened with a cross,  
 Jesus, stripped of your clothing,  
 Jesus, nailed to a cross,  
 Jesus, taunted in your pain,  
 Jesus, abandoned,  
 Jesus, shedding the last drop of your blood,  
 Jesus, dying for us,  
 Jesus, laid in a tomb,  
 Jesus, rising in glory,  
 Jesus, ascending into heaven,  
 Jesus, sending down the Holy Spirit,  
 Jesus, our ransom,  
 Jesus, our brother,  
 Jesus, our God, have mercy on us.

### LUKE 23:26-32

As they led him away they took hold of a certain **Simon, a Cyrenian**, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus.

A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him.

Jesus turned to them and said, "**Daughters of Jerusalem**, do not weep for me; **weep instead for yourselves and for your children**, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.'

continued

At that time people will say to the mountains, 'Fall upon us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!'

For if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?"

Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed.



### EXEGESIS

**Simon, a Cyrenian:** Mark calls Simon the father of Alexander and Rufus without explanation. Mark wrote his gospel for the Christians in Rome. There is an assumption that they were early Christians and very possibly their father, Simon, too. Christian tradition holds that Alexander and Rufus became missionaries. To carry the cross becomes the future of all Christians.

**Daughters of Jerusalem:** The next generation! They were the women of Jerusalem. In spiritual literature a woman is one who gives life to the world. And Jerusalem was more than a city. It was the temple...

continued

... the house of the Lord. It symbolized the very heart and love of God. So these "daughters" were the ones who give life to God's love and who are now grieving at a time when God's love is being ripped away from them and from all in Jerusalem. Diabolos is seen here ... division and accusation.

**Weep instead for yourselves and for your children:** If this is being done to me, what will it be like when I am not around ... the next generation: your children?

continued

## THE CRUCIFIXION

Look on me, Lord Jesus Christ, as you looked on the thief on his cross and on every sinner whom you have ever forgiven.

Look on me, merciful Lord, as you looked on your mother, Mary, standing in sorrow beneath your cross. Let me feel in my heart her compassion for you, and let my eyes weep for the sorrows my sins have caused.

Call me from darkness to my Father's house, give me a new heart and a place at your side at the banquet of your kingdom. Amen.

Victor Hoagland, C.P.

## LUKE 23:33-49

When they came to the place called **the Skull**, **they crucified him and the criminals** there, one on his right, the other on his left.

[Then Jesus said, "**Father, forgive them**, they **know not what they do**."] They divided his garments by casting lots.

The people stood by and watched; the **rulers**, meanwhile, **sneered** at him and said, "He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the **Messiah of God**."

Even the **soldiers jeered** at him. As they approached to offer him **wine** they called out, "If you are King of the Jews, save yourself."

continued

Above him there was an inscription that read, "This is the **King of the Jews**."

Now one of the **criminals** hanging there **reviled** Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us."

The **other**, however, rebuking him, said in reply, "Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation?"

And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal."

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

He replied to him, "Amen, I say to you, **today** you will be with me in **Paradise**."

continued

It was now **about noon and darkness** came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the **veil of the temple was torn** down the middle.

Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "**Father, into your hands I commend my spirit**"; and when he had said this **he breathed his last**.

The **centurion** who witnessed what had happened **glorified God** and said, "This man was innocent **beyond doubt**."

When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home **beating their breasts**; but all his acquaintances **stood at a distance**, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events.

continued

## EXEGESIS

**The Skull:** possibly a used up quarry ... The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone (of a new creation).

**They crucified him and the criminals:** Jesus is among the outcasts. Now no one is outside the universal outreach of Christ.

**Father, forgive them:** Jesus is still doing what He always does ... offering forgiveness and reconciliation to all. He is not concerned about Himself, but always reaching out to others. "Father": this is where He is living, His interior. ..

continued

His love of the Father is an infinite act of forgiveness in 2 ways: 1. Untie the knot to your destructive parts; 2. Give yourself to the emerging person in the present moment. Jesus wants people to see that His Divine center wants to give you life ... no violence, no vengeance, no punishment in God.

**Know not what they do:** Jesus prays that they see the truth and break their destructive behaviors.

**Rulers sneered / soldiers jeered / criminal reviled:** 3 scoffings, 3 insults, 3 temptations (parallels the 3 temptations in the desert, which ended when the devil left him to wait another time. This is that other time.).

**Messiah of God / King of the Jews:** They keep using titles thinking it is all about power. Yet it is about power – God's infinite power to forgive and give life.

**Wine:** like a servant offering a king some wine.

continued

**Other criminal:** (the good thief) uses no titles but Jesus (which means the one who saves). Jesus is re-interpreting all titles. He is turning everything upside down. Salvation is NOT rescue from physical harm. Here it is staying in touch with God, who offers all the perpetual offer of love.

**Today:** when is today? It is right now. Salvation, staying in touch with God, is happening to you right now. It is communion with the truth ... right now. I am united with you right now.

**Paradise:** refers back to Genesis, when in the Garden of Paradise, when all were the daughters and sons of God. That is the message and symbol of paradise.

**About noon and darkness:** at the brightest time of the day the power of Satan (darkness) is at work. Yet the light of Christ will shine in this darkness, but the world won't see it today.

continued

**Veil of the temple was torn:** curtain hides the holy of holies. It is now torn. You can now see God. Now you can see the divine at work.

**Father, into your hands:** Jesus is one with God, Jesus stayed in union with God and others. No scattering, no dividing.

**He breathed his last:** Now they/we have His spirit. Remember how Yahweh gave life to Adam (humankind)? He breathed into him the breathe of life. That is what Jesus has done to the very end ... breathed life into the world.



continued

**Centurion glorified God:** the foreigner, the pagan, the soldier, the one putting Christ to death, his enemy got it! He saw all this and he got it. It is meant for ALL people. He praised God ... he now knows the revelation ... to give life to creation that all might live.

**Beating their breasts:** not a good thing. Breast is the symbol of how to nurture the world. You don't beat or destroy that which nurtures the world. Here it is also a symbol of repentance.

**Stood at a distance:** still not connected

## THE BURIAL

Lord Jesus, when our earthly lives have ended, may we too breathe, "It is finished." May we breathe into Your people, before we leave this earth, Your everlasting life, mercy and love.

Grant that we may resurrect with you in paradise. Help us to conquer the grave and rise to discover the beauties of your love and life. No more will there be sin, separation division, accusation, violence hurt or evil. All will be love with God forever and ever. Amen.

## LUKE 23:50-56

Now there was a virtuous and **righteous** man named Joseph who, though he was a member of the council, had not consented to their plan of action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea and was **awaiting the kingdom of God.**

He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. After he had taken the body down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid him in a rock-hewn **tomb** in which no one had yet been buried.

It was the day of preparation, and the **Sabbath was about to begin.**

continued

The women who had come from Galilee with him followed behind, and when they had seen the tomb and the way in which his body was laid in it, they returned and prepared spices and perfumed oils.



Then they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

## EXEGESIS

**Righteous:** is to know the truth

**Awaiting the kingdom of God:** Joseph does not have to wait any longer.

**New tomb:** this was unique. Something new, a death that revealed life.

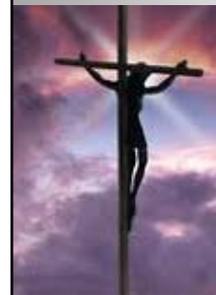
**Sabbath was about to begin:** You don't do work on the Sabbath. This was not God's work. To rest in God is to be active for God's creation.

## LET US PRAY...

God of all Creation, during this season of Lent, we have come here to "Lift our Gaze, and See Anew." Help us to use this time at Congress wisely. May we be open-minded and see anew what it means to be your beloved daughters and sons. May we be kind and generous in sharing what we learn here. May your creative energies and the wisdom we receive from one another, renew your spirit within us and replenish our energy to do great things in Your name. And may we always be grateful for the lavish gift of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, whose life, death, and resurrection taught us how to live, how to love, and the truth that divine love stops at nothing.

Be our peace. Be our hope. Be our life. Be our God. We pray through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## DEEPENING OUR APPRECIATION OF THE PASSION AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST



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