

REFLECTION & PRAYERS ON

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS ON THE CROSS



FIRST WORD
"FATHER, FORGIVE THEM,
FOR THEY KNOW NOT
WHAT THEY DO."
-LUKE 23: 34

SECOND WORD
"AMEN I SAY TO THEE,
THIS DAY THOU SHALT BE
WITH ME IN PARADISE."
-LUKE 23: 43

THIRD WORD
"WOMAN, BEHOLD THY
SON. AFTER THAT, HE
SAID TO THE DISCIPLE:
BEHOLD THY MOTHER."
-JOHN 19: 26-27

FOURTH WORD
"ELI, ELI, LAMMA
SABACTHANI? THAT IS,
MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY
HAST THOU FORSAKEN
ME?" -MATT 27:46

FIFTH WORD
"I THIRST." -JOHN 19:28

SIXTH WORD
"IT IS CONSUMMATED."
-JOHN 19:30

SEVENTH WORD
"FATHER, INTO THY
HANDS I COMMEND MY
SPIRIT." -LUKE 23:46

There was never a preacher like the dying Christ, and there was never a sermon like these seven words.

By contemplating on these last words of Jesus, especially in this Feast Day of the Exultation of the Cross, we can better appreciate His sacrifice on the cross for us. Reflect on these words, as though we were present at the time Christ spoke them.

First Word: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” Luke. 23:34.

Reflection: The forgiveness of God through Christ doesn't come to us, only when we don't know what we are doing is a sin, but in the mercy of God, we receive His forgiveness even when we do what we know to be wrong . God chooses to wipe away our sins, not because we have some convenient excuse and not because we have tried hard to make up for them, but because He is a God of amazing grace, with abundant mercy. Having received the forgiveness from God let us forgive others wholeheartedly.

Prayer: *As I read the words, “Father, forgive them,” may I understand that I too am forgiven completely through Christ. Help me to know with conviction that I am fully and finally forgiven, not because of anything I have done, but because of what you have done for me. May I live today as a forgiven person, and forgive all those who have hurt me knowingly and unknowingly, with the same forgiveness I have received from You, opening my heart to You, choosing not to sin, because the power of sin has been broken by Your salvation. Amen.*

Second Word: “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” Luke. 23:43.

Reflection: Heaven is real, and salvation is sure for those who truly repent from the heart. God forgives and generously opens the door to heaven for those who will to repent of their sins. The sinner recognized Christ for who He was. The mercy of God is always ready to reach out and save a soul, even at the last minute. Jesus, embodying the mercy of God, says to us also, “You will be with me in paradise.” We are welcomed there not because we are living rightly, but because God is merciful and because we have put our complete trust in Him.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, Your mercy, exceeds anything I can even imagine. It encourages me and heals me. Jesus, I also pray, remember me when you come into your kingdom! Jesus, remember me today as I seek to live within your kingdom! Amen.*

Third Word: 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.” John.19:26-27.

Reflection: Jesus, when You gave Mary to St. John, You were giving her, the one who fed You and raised You, as our mother also. Jesus, by this action, we see the immense mental agony You experienced, and that You were fully human, as much as You were fully divine. Even as You were dying on the cross as the Savior of the world, You didn't neglect Your duty as a son. Let us learn from Jesus to value relationships and take care of each other.

Prayer: *Lord, I seek Your help and guidance to fulfil my duties and responsibilities. I offer my sincere gratitude for Your suffering. Thank you for bearing my sin on the cross. I give You my praise, my love, my heart. all that I am, because You have given me all that You are. All praise be to You, Lord Jesus, fully God and fully human, Savior of the world . . . my Savior! Amen.*

Fourth Word: “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Mathew.27:46

Reflection: Even though Jesus experienced the fullness of human emotion, He also knew the Scriptures, and God the Father's plan for salvation. Thus Jesus chooses to pray, Psalm 22, a Psalm that begins with discouragement and ends with joyful hope and faith. In that excruciating moment, Jesus definitely experienced something far more horrible than physical pain, the mystery which we can never grasp. Like Jesus, we should also express our true feelings to God.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I am overwhelmed with gratitude, for what you suffered for me. Thank You dear Lord for taking my place, so that I might never be forsaken by the Father. Amen.*

Fifth Word: “I thirst.” John.19:28.

Reflection: Among the seven last words of Jesus on the cross, this is the only verbal expression of His physical suffering. John notes that Jesus said “I am thirsty,” not only as a statement of physical reality, but also in order to fulfil the Scripture. Jesus was suffering for the sins of the world. His thirst on the cross was more than a physical thirst; it was a thirst for souls for whom love compelled Him to redeem. Let us be thirsty for God, who loves us more than anyone else in the world.

Prayer: *Lord, besides extraordinary pain, You also experienced extreme thirst. All of this was part and parcel of Your taking on our humanity so that You might take away our sin. Lord, I too am thirsty, not for physical drink, but for Your living water. Lord, quench the thirst of my soul. Amen.*

Sixth Word: “It is finished.” John.19:30.

Reflection: The Greek verb translated as “It is finished” (*tetelestai*) does not mean “This is finally done!” but “It’s completely done .” On the cross, Jesus finished His work of salvation. Let us also not give up on what we ought to do.

Prayer: *Lord, You accomplished that which no other person could do, taking the sin of the world upon your sinless shoulders taking my sin so that I might receive Your forgiveness and new life. Lord help me to live the life You have given me, in the way You want from me. Help me to accomplish Your plan for me. All praise be to You, gracious Lord , for finishing the work of salvation . All praise be to You, dear Jesus, for saving me! Amen.*

Seventh Word: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit” Luke 23:46

Reflection: The very last words Jesus spoke on the Cross before His final breath, was Ps 31:6. Jesus willingly gave up His soul to His Father in Heaven. He was perfectly obedient to His Father's will. The Lamb of God has been slain for my sins also. Let us place our lives in God’s hands and hope for a union with Him after death.

Prayer: *Jesus, just like You entrusted Your spirit into the hands of the Father, I give my life to You. I trust You, and accept You as my savior. I submit to Your sovereignty over my life, and seek to live for Your glory alone. Here I am, Lord, available to You, both now and in the future. I reflect upon Your death, not in despair, but in hope. With cross behind me, resurrection is on the horizon. All praise be to You, dear Jesus, for saving me by Your death and resurrection! Amen.*

(All sing together:)

¶ *Jesus, remember me, when You come into Your Kingdom...*¶