

Meditations
on the
Seven Last Words
from the Cross

Tre Ore Service
St. James Cathedral
Seattle, Washington

April 18, 2014

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THE FIRST WORD

I am, through the grace of God, part of the church catholic, but I am not a member of the Catholic Church. So I regard it as a great, unexpected privilege that your pastor and my friend, Fr. Michael Ryan, has invited me to preach in this beautiful cathedral on this sacred day. Let us take it as a sign of how the Holy Spirit is at work in our midst, dismantling the barriers that for far too long have divided the followers of Christ.

Having said that, I must admit that the Tre Ore service is foreign territory for most Protestant churches, which have preferred their crosses empty. But surely this focus on the Risen Christ, on the empty cross, risks missing something essential to the Christian story. Whatever we say about God is bound to be inadequate (a truth of which I am today acutely aware); but whatever we say must take full account of our Lord's suffering body on the cross and his agonized words from it.

Thus, I am very grateful to the Catholic tradition for its insistence that at least on this day we contemplate the mysterious depth of Calvary, that on this day we look directly at things about God and ourselves we might prefer to overlook. To say it another way, I am grateful to the Catholic tradition for its insistence that in the scheme of things Good Friday is far more important than Mother's Day or the Fourth of July. My own faith has been enriched by this invitation, for which I say "Thanks be to God."

The first word, like those that follow, blows away our normal expectations. For one thing, it is not spoken to the disciples, not spoken to us. Rather, we are overhearing a word spoken within the very life of the triune God: "Father [say the Son], forgive them; they know not what they do."

And here is the second challenge to our expectations: Forgiveness comes before repentance. We confess our sins, this first word suggests, not in order to be forgiven but in response to the astonishing, unmerited forgiveness already extended—even when we didn't know what we were doing. The movement of Christian life is not repentance-forgiveness, because then the first word would be ours. But the first word is God's, and it is "forgive them." This is what steadfast love looks like.

As I have meditated on this, the Parable of the Prodigal Son has kept coming to mind. The temptation is to read this parable as the story of a son who, realizing his sin, repenting of his dissolute ways, returns to the father; but that's not quite what it says. Rather, the son, having squandered his inheritance, develops a survival strategy. He will express contrition in order to go home where there is plenty to eat. And it is not until he is embraced by the compassion of the father that he truly understands what he has done. Can we even grasp the measure of our transgressions until we stand at the foot of the cross and hear the word of forgiveness? Can we even see how unloving we often are unless we know what it is to be loved?

Of course, this word, like those that follow, also raises questions, especially when we try to apply it to our lives. Isn't it possible for us to offer forgiveness too quickly, to let perpetrators off too easily? Doesn't this risk doing added violence to victims? I will leave this for you to ponder.

But reflect also on persons you have known or read about who bear injury without retaliation, without an apparent diminishment of their love. I can't help but think of the Amish community in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania who, as you may remember, comforted and supported the widow of the man who had just gunned down ten of their children. Or the grieving family of Claire Davis, the seventeen-year-old high school girl who was fatally shot by another student last December in Centennial, Colorado. "We ask all of you here to forgive Karl Pierson," said Claire's father during her memorial service. Pierson "allowed himself to become filled with anger, rage, and hatred.... The fact is that Karl was so blinded by his emotions he didn't know what he was doing. ...The last thing her mother and I want is to perpetuate this anger, rage, and hatred in connection with Claire."

Such forgiveness is sacramental: It is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual bond that connects us as children of the one Creator. When such forgiveness happens, the chains of pain, resentment, and retaliation that so constrict our lives are broken; and—dare we say it?—such persons help to take away the sins of the world. Not because they are "good people" or "holy people" (the Amish would deny this), but because they reflect something of the divine love we hear revealed from the cross: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

THE SECOND WORD

Once again we hear a word that confounds our expectations. For one thing, it's not spoken to us. (Imagine that. We are not the focus of the story!) But wouldn't you at least expect that the second word be one of comfort or explanation to the bewildered disciples? Instead, Jesus speaks to a thief: "This day you will be with me in Paradise."

Perhaps the biggest challenge to our expectations is in the words "this day." Paradise, this suggests, isn't a place or a future state. It is a relationship—"you will be with me"—and it can begin now—even in the worst of situations, even nailed to a cross.

My grandmother Monna's last days were quite agonizing. And more than once, in the haze of her pain and medication, she wanted to know from her grandson (the minister in the family): "What's going to happen to me? Will I be with Jesus?" What to say? As Luther once put it, we know as little of the nature of life after death as an infant in the womb knows of life after birth. But, Grandma, you need not wait. Yes, Christianity is a religion of hope; but it is also a religion of presence—now. You are loved—now. You are forgiven—now. You are in relationship with Jesus—now. And to recognize that we are with him is to be in paradise—now. This is what steadfast love looks like.

It brings to mind the final words in the Gospel According to Matthew: "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age"—not just at the end of the age or in some other realm. This is a central theme for Matthew: Where two or three of you are gathered in my name, I am there among you. Whenever you give food or drink or welcome or clothing to the "least of these," you are giving it to me. Whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup in my name, I am with you—now.

There is another challenge, in this second word from the cross, especially to those of us whose lives have not been lived on the margins of society, on the bottom of the economic pyramid. I have taught periodically in India where three-quarters of the native Christians are from what is now called the Dalit community—those who used to be called Untouchables. That so many Indian Christians are Dalits should come as no surprise since

Christian faith has usually spoken most compellingly to those who have not received a fair share of the earth's resources or political power—which is surely part of the reason why churches in Africa and Latin America are rapidly growing while churches in large parts of Europe are rapidly emptying. The thief turns to Jesus in a moment of utter desperation, just as persons have done for two thousand years since. Because it is when we stop trusting in our resources and our schemes that we can start trusting in God's.

Of course, it is still a wonder that the thief recognized in this broken body the One through whom the kingdom comes. I am reminded of Matthias Grünewald's great painting, known as the Isenheim Altarpiece. I am sure you've seen it—the body on the cross contorted in pain, the fingers twisted upward like the wicked sticks that pierce his skull, the flesh lacerated from head to foot. It is the visual depiction of Psalm 22: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint." No one, as the theologian Karl Barth often pointed out, would recognize this as God incarnate, except through the eyes of faith, except with ears that have heard the story of the gospel.

And now I fear that contemporary Christianity itself is making such recognition even more difficult. I don't think I overstate the case to say that ours is an age of therapeutic religion, which turns away from the gory particularity of the cross in favor of therapies that offer relief from our spiritual distress, even steps toward a purpose-driven existence. Not long ago, after I had given a sermon that dealt with the church's response to war, a woman, with exemplary honesty, said to me, "I don't like to hear about bad things in church. Church is a place for concentrating on the good and beautiful things in the world." I suspect she is not a fan of Good Friday services.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, the Good News, at least as scripture tells it, is not that we can draw near to God through programs and spiritual strategies, but that God has drawn near to us. Here on Good Friday, if we have eyes to see, we glimpse the cost of doing so—even as we hear the astonishing, life-giving word: "This day you will be with me in Paradise."

THE THIRD WORD

Notice, again, what he doesn't say: Not "behold this friend of mine" or "behold my mother." But "Woman, behold your son," and, friend, "behold your mother." Please look at a person near you, a person you don't know. Behold, your sister...brother...child...parent. At the foot of the cross, we are bound to one another because of him.

This, it seems to me, is the real beginning of the church—dare I say, the rock on which it is founded. From the cross, Jesus introduces us to nothing less than a new family. I have a close friend here in Seattle whose new spouse's sister is in prison. "And so," my friend told me recently, "for the next three years, I will be a prison visitor." That's what happens when we take on a new family; we find ourselves responsible for them. From now on, our care and affection has to take them in.

The United Methodist bishop and educator, William Willimon, says it more memorably: "In baptism, we are rescued from our family"—that is, from the one given us at birth or in which we were raised. Our families of origin, good as they may be, are too narrow—a constriction from which we are rescued by Jesus, whose boundary-breaking grace we hear in the words from the cross and receive in the waters of baptism. The old woman picking through garbage in the slums of Manila or Harare—behold your mother. The young man restlessly looking for work in Tijuana or Bucharest—behold your son. If we take this word from Jesus seriously, what happens to them happens to us. Those of you as old as I may remember a little book by J.B. Phillips, entitled Your God is Too Small. Yes, surely. And our conception of church is surely too small, even if we belong to one that calls itself "catholic" or "united."

As you reflect on this, are there passages of scripture that come readily to mind? For me, the echoes I hear are from Galatians 3: For those who are baptized into Christ "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female," because we are all one in him. It is an amazing word! All of the markers used to promote one over another, all of the markers used to divide us by class and tribe, fall away in what Paul later in this letter calls the "family of faith." We are, in the eyes of

the Apostle, related to each other by blood (not ours, but his), a relationship signified and sealed in the waters of baptism.

It is crucial that we say clearly why all of this is so important. Good Friday reminds us, as no other day can, that truth, for Christians, is incarnate. God's love for the world isn't just written in some text, it is embodied in Jesus of Nazareth and in the community that bears his name. If scripture is our guide, then the church is to be a visible sign, a demonstration project, of the reconciliation God offers to all creation. The great Mennonite theologian, John Howard Yoder, put the implications of this very bluntly: "Where Christians are not united, the gospel is not true in that place."

Yes, the followers of Christ are incredibly diverse; but that's the point. People should look at us and ask, "I wonder what holds them together. I wonder what in the world they have in common." Which is when we point to the One before us on the cross.

Of course, if you think the family you were born into can be a pain, behold the one you've been adopted into because of Jesus! In it, we find plenty of indifference and contentiousness and greed. And imagine what others say about us! But if we would be followers of the Crucified One, then we cannot wash our hands of one another. No Protestant can read of abuse in the Catholic Church and say, "Thank God that isn't us"—because it is. And no Catholic can hear of Bible-thumping fundamentalists and say, "Thank God that isn't us"—because it is. On the cross, in the body of Jesus, we see what steadfast love looks like. And from the cross, we are called to reflect such love in the way we live with one another in his body, the church.

I have two daughters, both adopted into our family as infants. So I know what it is to find family—intimate family, willing-to-die-for family—with those who don't look like I do and, God knows, don't always think like I do. Expand that more than a billion-fold and you have the mystery, the glory, and the burden of the church, given us in this third word from the cross: "Woman, behold your son...[friend] behold your mother."

THE FOURTH WORD

In 1995, I was privileged to travel with a church group to Vietnam, including a stop at My Lai where the others asked me to preach. All I now recall is that the pious words of that service sounded hollow, that whatever I said felt utterly inadequate. I have the same feeling faced with this fourth word from the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” The first three words have spoken to us of forgiveness, of relationship with Christ, of relationship with one another in his body. Surely, they reveal something of God’s nature and purpose. But now.... What does this word reveal?

As you may know, this anguished cry is the one word from the cross in both Matthew and Mark. But I am thankful it is not the first word of our service, because I, at least, would not have been ready to hear it. “Why have you forsaken me?” Where are you when I need you most?

I am aware, as I’m sure you are, that for many of our neighbors this question, a quotation from Psalm 22, is a primary reason they are not believers: God seems so maddeningly silent when so many are in desperate need. I understand their protest, feel its power. But, for me, these words are not faith shattering. What they shatter, at least for me, are our futile attempts to understand God in human terms. Human beings have always wanted a god who rescues us—a Zeus, a cosmic superhero—one who acts like we hope we would act in times of crisis. But I agree with the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams: “It’s when we try to make God useful in crises...that we take the first steps towards the great lie of religion: the god who fits our agenda.” I am reminded of the leader of a Germanic tribe, converted to Christianity around the year 800, who, when told of the crucifixion, declared, “If my warriors had been there, it never would have happened!”—one of history’s great examples of missing the point, of forcing the story to fit our agenda.

Once again, it is the last words of Jesus that confound our expectations. What if God is revealed precisely when God seems most hidden? What if the very nature of God is not worldly triumph through dominating power but eternal victory through suffering love? What if God experiences, not just recognizes but experiences, our moments of deepest abandonment? What if this is what steadfast love really looks like?

Many parts of scripture speak to these questions, but perhaps especially Philippians 2: “Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.” Obedient to the point of utter desolation—even the sense of divine abandonment. If this doesn’t undermine our attempts to define God in our terms, I don’t know what will.

This, it seems to me, is the place where faith begins. Notice that Jesus does not ask for deliverance, but for presence. Can we trust that God is with us even in the valley of the shadow of death? Can we trust that in the One who cries out from the cross we see the very presence of the One to whom he cries?

I will end this homily on a slightly different note. I am aware, as you may be, that some people have objected to the images of Good Friday because they seem to imply that in the divine scheme violence, as such, is redemptive. And God knows we have too many people who think that way in our society—many of them, apparently, in Hollywood or the Pentagon. But, again, I hear a different message. Jesus, it seems to me, is saying “I have assumed the violence of the cross so that you need not live by the disastrous notion that might makes right, that violence is the way of salvation.” The cross does not reinforce the logic of the world; it radically challenges it.

Others object that the images of Good Friday imply that suffering, as such, is redemptive. This, too, is a disastrous idea, favored often by those in power who throughout history have urged those with the short end of the stick to accept their “cross” rather than rebel against it. But, again, this is the agenda of the world, not of Christian faith. Even Jesus asked that the cup be taken from him. Even Jesus cried out in his abandonment. We are called to take up our cross and follow him, not for the sake of suffering, but for the sake of those neighbors who needlessly suffer.

THE FIFTH WORD

The previous words, in one way or another, have been deeply theological; they have each revealed something about God. But now, as Jesus suffocates and the blood drains from his body, the language turns physical: “I am thirsty.”

I’ve not said it the right way, however, for this, too, is deeply theological. We may prefer to think of God as a rather impersonal power; but God, for biblical faith, is shockingly physical. I suppose I am glad that there is such interest these days in spirituality, because this is part of the Christian story. But if the gospels are our guide, Christianity, first and foremost, is incarnational. “And the Word became flesh and lived among us...full of grace and truth.” “This is my body, which is given for you.” There is something about us that wants to make Christ uncarnate, but the last words from the cross resist this: “Jesus said, ‘I thirst.’”

These words not only challenge our expectations, they are filled with irony given that Jesus, especially in the Gospel According to John, is the ultimate thirst quencher. “Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’” “On the last day of the festival...Jesus cried out, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink.’” And, especially, the wonderful story of the Samaritan woman at the well: “Jesus said to her, ‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.’” Remember, however, that the story begins with him asking her for a drink from the well. Amazing! The one who gives us everything, asks something of us. It is the mark of a friend, inviting us into mutual relationship, inviting us to be givers as well as receivers. This, too, is what steadfast love looks like.

Having emphasized the physical, incarnational character of our faith, I want now to suggest that this fifth word is also metaphorical. I think that John wants us to see that Christ on the cross thirsts not only for water but for us, for humanity to live in relationship with the One he calls Father. And scripture, of course, is filled with images of our thirst for such relationship. The Psalms offer a half dozen examples, but none more beautiful than the Forty-Second: “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for

you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I behold God's face?"

All of this is latent, if I'm not mistaken, in this word from the cross, but it should never obscure the truly human nature of our Lord or the brutality of his execution. This cathedral is a wonderful, sacred space; but in such places I worry that we have grown too used to the cross, that we have turned it into an aesthetic object. So, at least in these minutes, let's hear again the human Jesus who says "I thirst."

I want to shift gears for just a minute. No one ever thinks alone, especially when thinking about a series of words that have been the object of special devotion since the twelfth century. My own reflections for these homilies have been influenced, if in ways I can't always trace, by a number of friends and theologians and spiritual leaders, including the Dominican Friar, Timothy Radcliffe, who preached at this service in 2002.

Fr. Radcliffe turned those homilies into a book; and in the "Afterword" to it he offers a most important reminder: Good Friday, a sacred day for Christians, has often been a scary day for Jews. Medieval Christian mobs, stirred by the claim, embedded for centuries in our Good Friday liturgies, that all Jews, the "perfidious" Jews, are responsible for the death of Jesus, often poured out of cathedrals intent on vengeance. And in recent days, we have tragically seen, from Kansas City to the Ukraine, that anti-Semitism is by no means dead. So it is of great importance that we tell our story the right way.

The Second Vatican Council, in its "Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" (Nostra Aetate), has moved all of us in this direction: "...what happened in [our Lord's] passion cannot be charged against all Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today... Christ underwent his passion and death freely, because of the sins of all and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation. It is, therefore, the burden of the Church's preaching to proclaim the cross of Christ as the sign of God's all-embracing love...."

In his "Afterword," Fr. Radcliffe poses these questions: "Can we retell these Seven Last Words in ways that will heal our relations with Judaism and Islam?... How can we as Christians tell of his passion and death in a way that does no violence to others?" May these be our questions, even today.

THE SIXTH WORD

The sixth word is one of completion. Not “I am finished,” but “it is finished.” You recall his words in the Garden of Gethsemane those many tortured hours ago: “If it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will but yours be done.” And now that will has been accomplished. “It is finished.”

But what really does this mean? In what sense has the work of redemption been accomplished? According to the United Nations, nearly 900 million people in this world for which Christ died do not have enough to eat, and every ten seconds—every ten seconds!—a child dies from hunger-related diseases. An estimated forty million of our global neighbors are living with HIV/AIDS, and a million a year die as a result of malaria. More than a billion of God’s children have inadequate access to water (they thirst), and two and a half billion lack basic sanitation. And in the past twelve months, at least a thousand (generally many more, but at least a thousand) persons, human beings who bear God’s image, have been killed in armed conflicts in each of the following countries: Afghanistan, Somalia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Mexico, Egypt, Iraq, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan. And more than 75,000 have been killed in Syria alone.

I suspect that the great Italian novelist, and devout Roman Catholic, Ignazio Silone, speaks for many of us when he writes that “In the history of the world, it is still Good Friday.” Or at least that’s how it feels. The Jew, wrote Martin Buber in the aftermath of Auschwitz, “feels the lack of redemption against his own skin, he tastes it on his tongue.... Because of this almost physical knowledge, he cannot concede that the redemption has taken place....”

And so the question for all of us: How do we make sense of the words, “It is finished”? Clearly they do not signal that human life is free of cruelty, of pointless suffering, of seemingly-random violence and death. We confess that the promised Reign of God has been in some sense inaugurated in the passion and resurrection of our Lord, but it clearly has not been consummated.

With this in mind, I have long felt that the most overlooked day on the liturgical calendar is tomorrow, Holy Saturday, because that seems to me to

be where we live—still confronted with the reality of crucifixion, yet comforted with the assurance (or at least the anticipation) that it does not have the final word. Perhaps this is what Pascal had in mind with his famous statement, “Jesus will be in agony even to the end of the world.” It is finished, but it is not over.

Let me try to say this another way. Christian faith that is blind to the deep-rootedness of poverty and racism and war hasn’t taken Good Friday seriously enough. But Christians who are paralyzed by these realities haven’t taken Easter to heart. Christians are a Holy Saturday people who live with the Easter-based conviction that the story does not end with Good Friday, and who demonstrate the credibility of this conviction by acting to help make it so. Perhaps part of what Christ accomplished on the cross is the formation of a community that knows itself responsible for helping to effect the future of God’s promise. Perhaps empowering us to be accountable for the world is what steadfast love looks like.

When I was a student in Israel, more than forty years ago, I attended an Easter morning service in what is called the Garden Tomb (a kind of Protestant alternative to the Holy Sepulchre), just outside the walls of Jerusalem’s Old City. In order to get inside the Garden, worshipers on that Easter morning had to walk through a gauntlet of persons asking for money—many of them disabled, all looking very impoverished. The preacher, I will never forget, was from the Netherlands; and he informed us, in no uncertain terms, that there was little point in helping those people along the walk outside because they were indications of God’s coming judgment on creation. The world must, in effect, become hell, he told us, before Christ will return in triumph.

Yes, I affirm, through gritted teeth, that this preacher is my brother in Christ; but I also declare to you that his message took neither the real human suffering of Good Friday nor the real human hope of Easter seriously enough. In the Crucified One, we see revealed a divine compassion that counts this world as precious and calls us to participate in its ongoing renewal. In this sense, we can say of Christ’s redemptive ministry: It is finished. But it is, by no means, over.

THE SEVENTH WORD

Several of our previous words from the cross draw on the language and imagery of the agonizing Twenty-Second Psalm: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?... I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.” But now, in the final word, we move in tone to the more familiar Twenty-Third: “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.” It is an expression of ultimate trust. The executioners do not carry the day. Jesus is still in charge of his life, and he gives it back to the One who is with him in this valley: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.”

We usually recite Psalm 23 at funerals, but I think it would be at least as appropriate to use it at baptisms. Through baptism, writes the Apostle Paul, we have been “united with him in a death like his” in order that we might rise with him in the knowledge that our lives belong to God. Church is the place, above all others, where we come to be reminded that this life we live is not our own. It is a gift which we commend to our Maker’s keeping—in the moment of our baptism, in the moment of our dying.

In this season of Lent, I have tried to reflect, as you perhaps have, on the biblical story of the temptations faced by Jesus during his forty days in the wilderness. And I have come to the conclusion that the distinctive temptation of our time and place is security.

We are, generally speaking, healthier than our ancestors and able to experience more of the amazingly-diverse human family than they ever could. Militarily and economically, this is the strongest country in the world, in the history of the world. And yet I think Fareed Zakaria is right when he argues that America and Americans are consumed by anxiety, worried to the point of sickness about Muslims and Mexicans, shoe bombers and cyber terrorists, economic trends and fluctuations in the stock market. It goes without saying that not all anxiety is misplaced. But it is the way we respond to legitimate concerns, its our preoccupation with security, that betrays our collective malaise.

The famous German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, not long before he was murdered by the Nazi regime, spoke of the three temptations in the wilderness as the temptation of the flesh (turn these stones into bread), the temptation of power (display your might by throwing yourself off the pinnacle of the temple), and the temptation of the spirit (these kingdoms will be yours if you will worship me). As I see it, our temptation of the flesh is to seek security through the accumulation of things, apparently forgetting Jesus' parable of the rich fool who thought life consists in the abundance of possessions. Our temptation of power is to seek security through the amassing of more and bigger weapons, apparently forgetting that, since all life is interrelated, true security comes through attentiveness to the injustice that afflicts our neighbors. And our temptation of the spirit is to seek security through forms of religion that promise easy answers to the always messy and sometimes painful mystery of living.

As you know, each of these is, in the end, illusory. To live is to be vulnerable. Living demands risk, it demands faith. And religion is the most subtle way of avoiding the risk of faith precisely because it tempts us to think we are protected by our piety, by the truth taught in our community, instead of by the One who transcends our doctrines and our structures and our perspectives. No amount of security—no amount of financial resources or military might or religious certainty—can protect us from that moment when all we can do is commend ourselves and those we love into the hands of the Lord, the Giver of Life—the One whose very nature is steadfast love.

It has been a blessing for me to reflect with you on these seven last words. Of course, you will be here, or in some other church, on Easter, because today would be but a remembrance of horror without the day after tomorrow. But, conversely, the great proclamation—"Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed!"—will not strike the deepest chords in our souls if we have not sat before the cross on this hardest of days and heard these words: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." "This day you will be with me in Paradise." "Woman, behold your son...[friend] behold your mother." "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" "I thirst." "It is finished." "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."