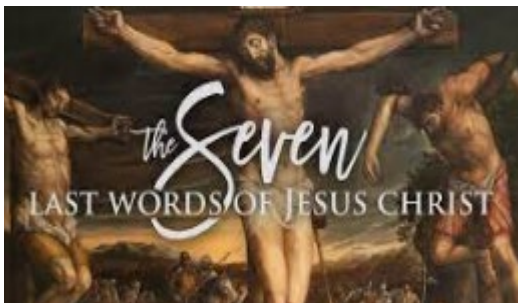


## Faith in 5 – Adults The Seven Last Words of Christ



Jesus knew and loved us all during his life, his agony and his Passion, and gave himself up for each one of us: "The Son of God. . . loved me and gave himself for me" (CCC,478).

The Church, following the apostles, teaches that Christ died for all men without exception: "There is not, never has been, and never will be a single human being for whom Christ did not suffer" (CCC, 605). Christ's sacrifice not only redeemed

us from our sins, but restored our relationship with God.

1. Jesus' last words on the cross, provide an opportunity for us to study and meditate on His great sacrifice and love for us. In his darkest hour, we see Jesus as both God and Man. CCC 477: "... in the body of Jesus "we see our God made visible and so are caught up in love of the God we cannot see." The individual characteristics of Christ's body express the divine person of God's Son. The interpretation of Jesus' spoken last words may serve as lessons for us as we approach Good Friday and the Easter Triduum. A [short prayer follows each statement, from a Catholic meditation](#) on these words.
2. The seven last words of Jesus:
  - a. "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34)
  - b. "This day you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:34)
  - c. "Woman, behold your son" (John 19:26-27)
  - d. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" (Mark 15:34)
  - e. "I thirst" (John 19:28)
  - f. "It is finished" (John 19:30)
  - g. "Father into your hands I commit my Spirit"(Luke 23:36)
3. **"Father, forgive them"** (Luke 23:34) – Jesus after his painful scourging and crucifixion does not immediately cry out for help. He thinks of others first and asks His Father to have mercy on those who cruelly mistreated him. Jesus does not hold their actions against them.

*Open our hearts to offer forgiveness when we are wronged.*
4. **"This day you will be with me in paradise"** (Luke 23:34) Jesus, mocked by the other criminal crucified does not open his mouth to the man's taunts or those in the crowd. In Isaiah 53:7, " Though harshly treated, he submitted and did not open his mouth; Like a lamb led to slaughter or a sheep silent before shearers, he did not open his mouth". Jesus, Who acknowledges the good thief for his faith and repentance, mercifully extends the grace of redemption to him.

*Teach us to comfort those around us.*

5. **“Woman, behold your son”** (John 19:26-27) Jesus, concerned for his mother, assures she will be taken care of. As first-born son and caretaker of the family, Jesus is still fulfilling his responsibility of caring for his mother. “Typically, a dying son would commit his mother into the care of another member of his immediate family”. From the earliest days following the Resurrection, the Church has believed that Mary was a perpetual virgin, and that Jesus had no biological brothers or sisters. The Catholic Church declared that when the Gospels described Jesus' siblings, “brothers of the Lord,” the words—translated from the Greek—really meant “cousins” or “relatives”. Since Jesus did not have any siblings, He most likely chose John, the only disciple at the foot of the cross, – the disciple whom He loved - out of profound spiritual concern and love for His mother. “Even in death, Christ was focused on spiritual matters” ([Source](#)). As Catholic disciples who love Jesus, we also have an opportunity to take Mary our Mother into our hearts and homes.

Move us to compassion to see the needs of others.

6. **“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me”** (Mark 15:34) Jesus, not feeling the loving presence of the Father, calls out to God. The CCC 603: “But in the redeeming love that always united him to the Father, he assumed us in the state of our waywardness of sin, to the point that he could say in our name from the cross: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”, ...”establish[ing] him in solidarity with us sinners”. Jesus became sin for us (something God imposes severe judgment on). Jesus knows that the sins He bore will separate Him from God “...your iniquities have separated you from your God, your sins have hidden his face from you so that he will not hear”(Isaiah 59:2). The Father does not abandon Christ; rather, Christ abandons himself to the Father.

Enlighten our hearts to the intimate relationship you want for us.

7. **“I thirst”** (John 19:28) In this passage, Jesus fully human, asks for a drink long enough to give him the ability to speak his last words, bringing his mission to completion. Hyssop, used to provide the vinegar, can be traced to its use in the Old Testament, where the blood of the lamb was sprinkled on the lintels of the door during Passover (Exodus 12:22), and in the tabernacle, for atonement and sacrifices (Leviticus 14:4). He also remembers Scripture and fulfills Psalm 69:21- they gave me vinegar to drink.

May we thirst for your living water.

8. **“It is finished”** (John 19:30) In His obedience, He fulfilled God’s will and purpose for our salvation. He once and for all, became expiation for our sins. The depth of His suffering demonstrated the depth of His love for us.

Reveal what we need to surrender to you.

9. **“Father into your hands I commit my Spirit”** (Luke 23:36) Jesus places ultimate trust in God’s will; departs from earthly life and into the refuge of God’s eternal Kingdom.

May obedience to you be our greatest desire.

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