

The Seven Last Words of Christ

The **Seven Last Words of Christ** (also called the **Seven Last Words from the Cross**) are seven expressions traditionally attributed to Jesus during his crucifixion, gathered from the four Canonical Gospels. Three of the sayings appear exclusively in the Gospel of Luke and three appear exclusively in the Gospel of John. The other saying appears both in the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of Matthew. In Mark and Matthew, Jesus cries out to God. In Luke, he forgives his killers, reassures the good thief, and commends his spirit to the Father. In John, he speaks to his mother, says he thirsts, and declares the end of his earthly life. Since the 16th century these sayings have been widely used in the preaching on Good Friday.

Silent Gathering

The First Word

Leader: *“Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”*

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. *(Please bow.)*

Leader: *“As we forgive those who trespass against us.”*

All: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

All: Glory be to Jesus, who suffered for us his bitter passion and death! Grace and life eternal are in them, we find; blessed be his compassion infinitely kind! Blessed through endless ages be the precious blood, which for sin and sorrow does the world redeem. Lift now then your voices; and praise him evermore!

Reader: When the soldiers came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, *“Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”* *(Luke 23: 33-34)*

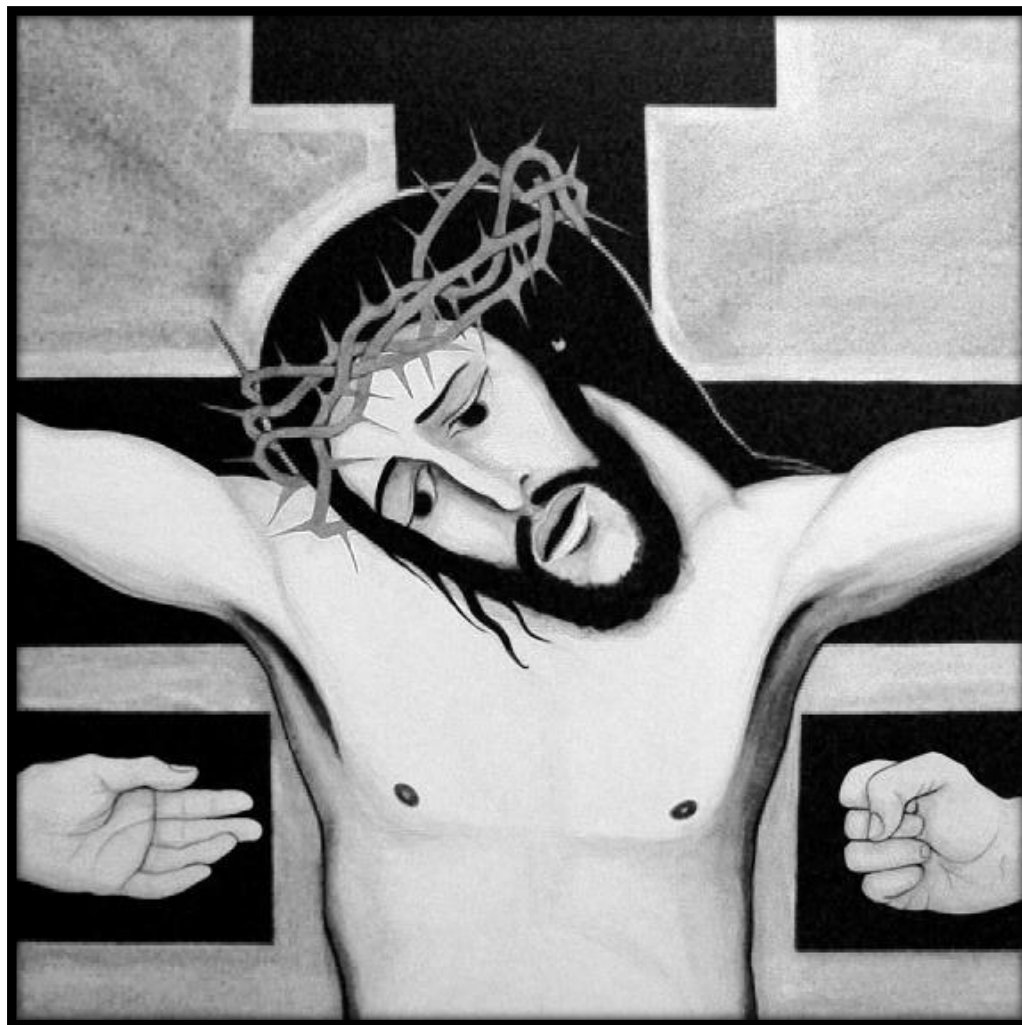
Leader: Merciful Savior, and loving friend, in your compassion you forgave your enemies who sentenced you and nailed you to the cross. By your gracious example, help us forgive our enemies from the heart and make friends even with the sinful. Blessed be your forgiving heart, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the bitter passion of our Lord Jesus Christ bring us to the joys of Paradise.

All: Amen.





The Second Word

Leader: *"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."*

Leader: We adore you Christ and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. *(Please bow)*

Leader: The noble tree of the cross stands in the midst of Paradise.

All: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

All: Glory be to Jesus, who suffered for us his bitter passion and death! Grace and life eternal are in them, we find; blessed be his compassion infinitely kind! Blessed through endless ages be the precious blood, which for sin and sorrow does the world redeem. Lift now then your voices; and praise him evermore!

Reader: One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." *(Luke 23:39-43)*

Leader: Merciful Savior, and loving friend, you heard the repentant plea of the criminal on your right hand and promised him Paradise for his faith. As we are dying in the midst of our sins, let us hear this same word from your lips in response to our prayer of faith and the life-giving power of your holy sacraments. Blessed be your undying mercy now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the bitter passion of our Lord Jesus Christ bring us to the joys of Paradise.

All: Amen.

The Third Word

Leader: *"Woman, here is your son." ... "Here is your mother."*

Leader: We adore you Christ and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. *(Please bow.)*

Leader: Sweet wood, sweet nails, bearing so sweet a load;
save us who sing your praises.

All: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

All: Glory be to Jesus, who suffered for us his bitter passion and death! Grace and life eternal are in them, we find; blessed be his compassion infinitely kind! Blessed through endless ages be the precious blood, which for sin and sorrow does the world redeem. Lift now then your voices; and praise him evermore!

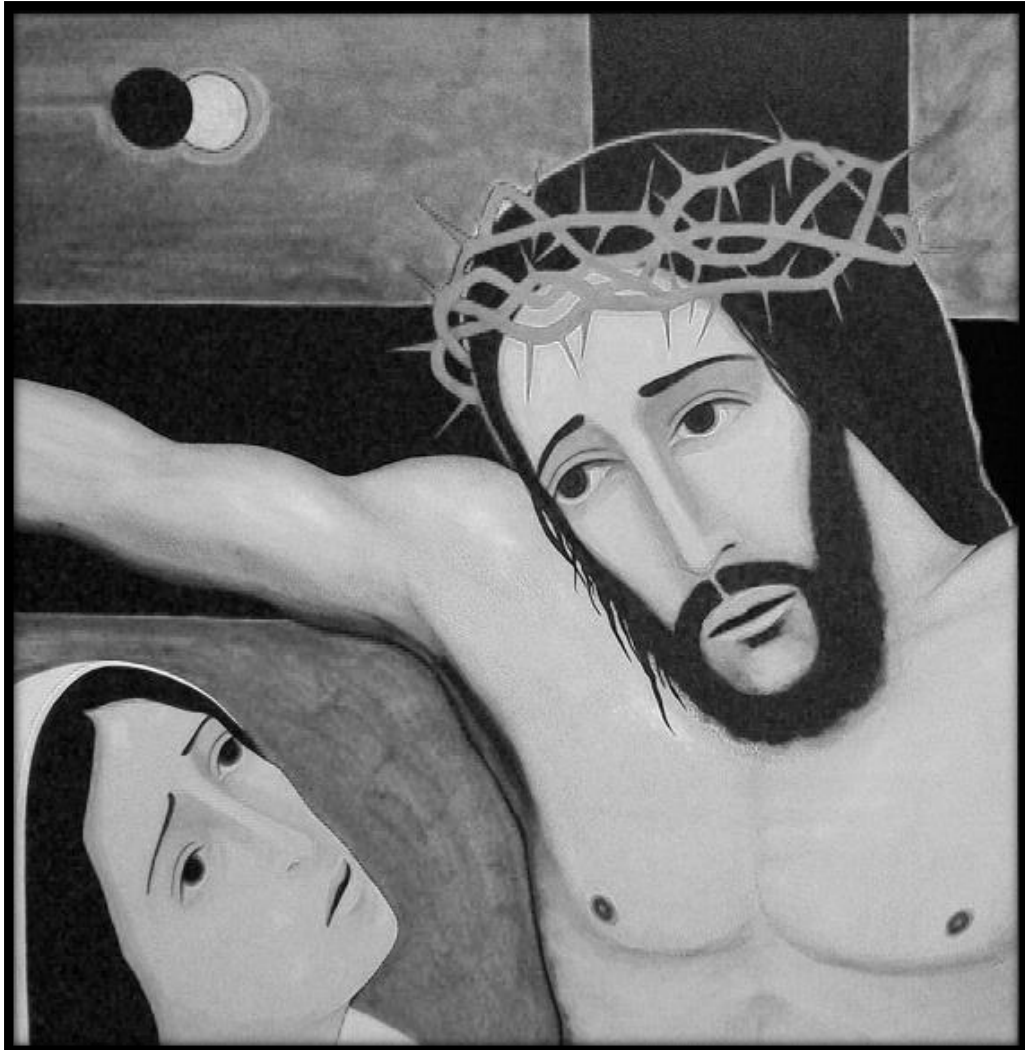
Reader: Standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. *(John 19:25-27)*

Leader: Merciful Savior, and loving friend, on Golgotha you consoled your loving mother and entrusted her to your beloved disciple. By her tears and prayers, break our proud hearts as we worship your cross and passion and let us take her into our hearts and homes, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the bitter passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
bring us to the joys of Paradise.

All: Amen.



The Fourth Word

Leader: *"My God, my God why have you forsaken me?"*

Leader: We adore you Christ and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. *(Please bow.)*

Leader: For I am the Lord your God, who grasp your right hand;
It is I who say to you, do not fear. *(Isaiah 41:13)*

All: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

All: Glory be to Jesus, who suffered for us his bitter passion and death! Grace and life eternal are in them, we find; blessed be his compassion infinitely kind! Blessed through endless ages be the precious blood, which for sin and sorrow does the world redeem. Lift now then your voices; and praise him evermore!

Reader: When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?" *(Mark 15:33-34)*

Leader: Merciful Savior, and loving friend, as darkness came over the whole land you cried out in agony to your Father, our Father. By this cry of desolation, rescue us from the torments of despair and entrust us to your love. You live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the bitter passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
bring us to the joys of Paradise.

All: Amen.

The Fifth Word

Leader: *"I am thirsty."*

Leader: We adore you Christ and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. *(Please bow.)*

Leader: The sign of the cross will appear in the heavens,
when the Lord Jesus returns in glory.

All: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

All: Glory be to Jesus, who suffered for us his bitter passion and death! Grace and life eternal are in them, we find; blessed be his compassion infinitely kind! Blessed through endless ages be the precious blood, which for sin and sorrow does the world redeem. Lift now then your voices; and praise him evermore!

Reader: When Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. *(John 19:28:29)*

Leader: Merciful Jesus and loving friend, as your life drew near its end, you cried out in thirst, a thirst for souls. By this dreadful and abiding thirst, draw our hearts and minds to your great love for us, and especially at the hour of our death. Blessed be your merciful love now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the bitter passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
bring us to the joys of Paradise.

All: Amen.

The Sixth Word

Leader: *"It is finished."*

Leader: We adore you Christ and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. *(Please bow.)*

Leader: Reign from a noble tree of the cross,
and establish the reign of God in our hearts.

All: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

All: Glory be to Jesus, who suffered for us his bitter passion and death! Grace and life eternal are in them, we find; blessed be his compassion infinitely kind! Blessed through endless ages be the precious blood, which for sin and sorrow does the world redeem. Lift now then your voices; and praise him evermore!

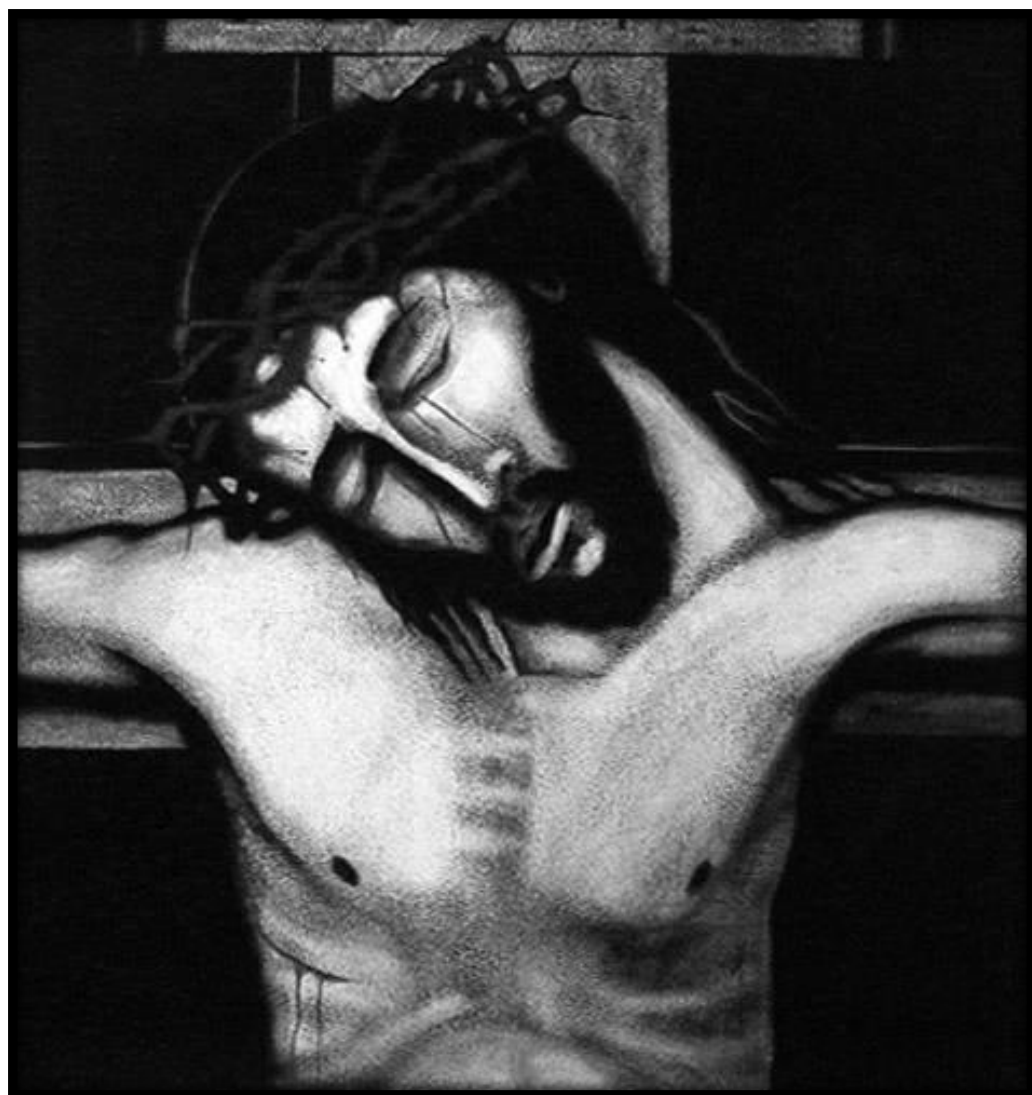
Reader: When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished."
Then he bowed his head. *(John 19:30)*

Leader: Merciful Savior and loving friend, as darkness closed in on you, you gave a loud cry, bowed your head and died. By your perfect surrender to the Father, make us worthy disciples of the cross and defend us from our spiritual enemies, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the bitter passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
bring us to the joys of Paradise.

All: Amen.



The Seventh Word

Leader: *"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."*

Leader: We adore you Christ and we bless you,

All: Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. *(Please bow.)*

Leader: Come, let us adore Christ crucified; come, let us adore him.

All: Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

All: Glory be to Jesus, who suffered for us his bitter passion and death! Grace and life eternal are in them, we find; blessed be his compassion infinitely kind! Blessed through endless ages be the precious blood, which for sin and sorrow does the world redeem. Lift now then your voices; and praise him evermore!

Reader: Darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. *(Luke 23:44-46)*

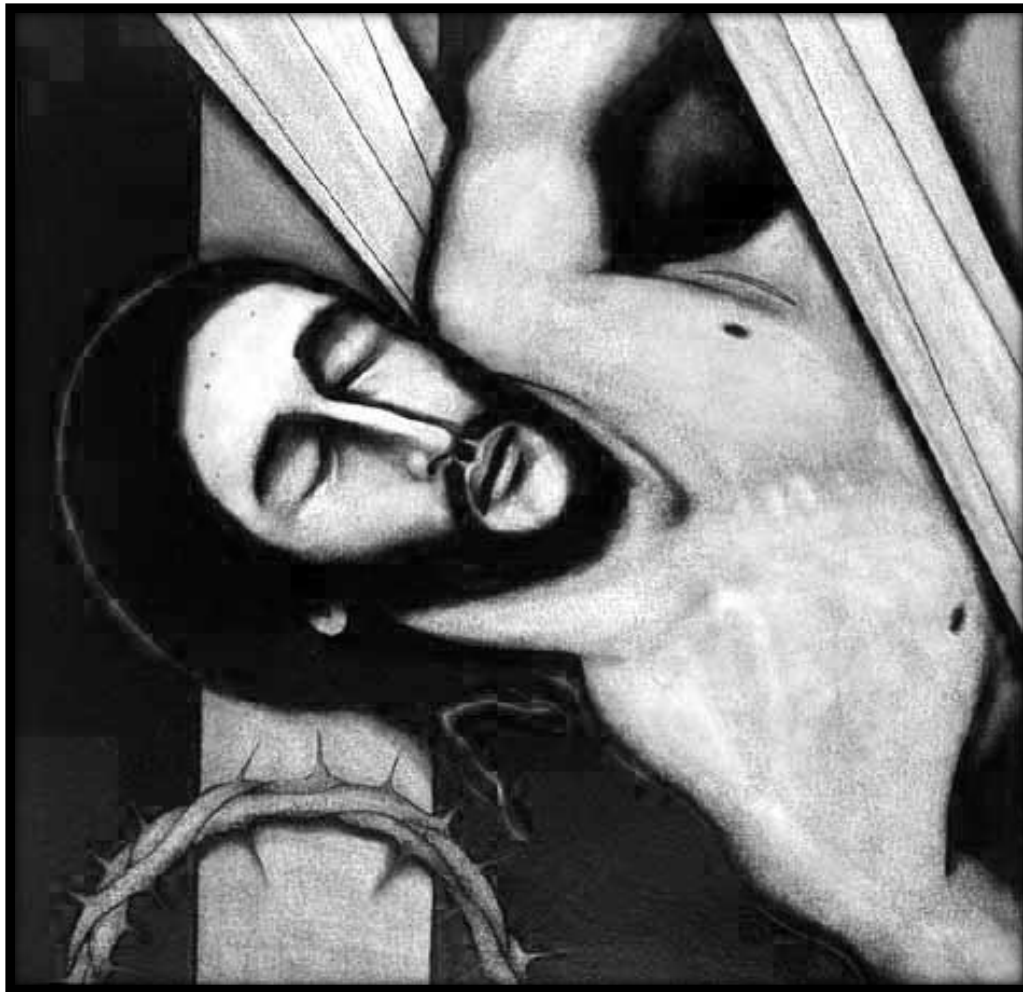
(Please pause and bow.)

Leader: Merciful Savior and loving friend, in your final act of surrender you breathed forth your spirit into your Father's hands. By this ultimate commitment to the Father's loving care, deliver us from despair and help us die in hope and in full confidence in your precious blood poured out for us. Blessed be your gracious caring, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the bitter passion of our Lord Jesus Christ bring us to the joys of Paradise.

All: Amen



Silent Departure

*Please **remain silent** until you have left the Church property.*

Adapted from "A Catholic Gook of Hours and Other Devotions" by William G Storey, reflection offered by Loyola Press, Scripture quotations are from New Revised Version Bible, © 1989.

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Our Triduum liturgies continue:

Good Friday

3:00 pm Scriptural Stations of the Cross with our neighbors from Cokes Chapel UMC

7:00 pm Celebration of the Lord's Passion

Holy Saturday

8:30 pm Easter Vigil Mass -- Celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation