

***WALKING THE WAY  
OF SORROWS***

***In-Home Mid-Week Lenten Service  
March 25, 2020***



**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
85 E. Brandt Boulevard  
Landisville, PA**

***United in Christ,  
We are called to love and serve.***

# ***WALKING THE WAY OF SORROWS***

## **Jesus Meets His Afflicted Mother**

### **(as told by Mary of Nazareth)**

#### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Trusting in the promise of God's covenant with us, let us be bold to confess our sin.

*Please take time for reflection and self-examination.*

P: Most faithful God,

**C: we confess that we have failed to be faithful in our promises to you and to walk in the way of Christ. We neglect to serve others; we turn from the good you created in us, and in so doing we allow evil to increase. We look to you for mercy and healing. Strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and guide us in the path of humble service. Amen.**

P: All who turn to God in repentance find their sin forgiven for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Deny yourselves, then take up your cross and follow him.

#### **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

#### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The promise of God is clear. When we return to the Lord, God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. When we return to the Lord with weeping and fasting, God forgives our sin and blesses us with a renewed and deepened relationship with the almighty. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

#### **SCRIPTURE READING**

Luke 2:33-35

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined the falling and the rising of many ... and a sword shall pierce your own soul too."

The Word of the Lord.

## A LENTEN MONOLOGUE (as spoken by Mary of Nazareth)

The crowd finally made way and the soldiers let me through. Even they have mothers, I thought, and maybe, somewhere under the helmets, the memory of a mother still has a place, and under that fancy Roman dress a heart still beats with remembered love. “He is my son,” I cried, “my child; let me through.” And they did.

Jesus was still carrying the cross on his torn back, on the shoulders that used to be so strong before they slashed them with their horrid whip. He stopped and faced me when, mad with grief, I ran through the crowd calling his name. “Yeshua, my child!” He made an effort to push the shameful cross from his back to the side, but as mothers do, I looked at him carefully and saw the wounds, even though he tried to shield me from them. On his back I saw under the torn folds of his cloak how the blood had seeped through and how raw his exposed shoulder looked. He turned so we would be face-to-face.

“And a sword shall pierce your own soul too,” old Simeon had said. Now, reaching out to my son, bloodied and sorrowful as he was on the road to Golgotha, I had a vision of the long-ago presentation visit to the Temple. I saw Simeon’s face of wonder again and heard Anna’s ecstatic joy as the words poured out from their aged throats – “I have seen thy salvation, oh, Lord.” And I saw my own face as I must have been then ... so young, so filled with unspeakable joy ... my arms, with that sweet baby weight in them, filling them ... my arms stretching out to hand my child to Simeon whose old eyes were weeping – “Let thy servant now depart in peace, oh God, for my eyes have seen thy salvation.” And I saw the young girl, the mother I was then, turning to Joseph with such delight and saying to him, “Do you understand what they are saying?” But I was also thinking something else that I would not reveal to him: “*This is my own darling child*, Joseph. Make them stop. Let me enjoy him, please. Tell them not to fill me with foreboding.”

Those young arms of mine were suddenly emptied of the sweet warmth of baby flesh, and there I was, an old woman now, stretching them, to my grown son, the stranger he had become these last few years. “Old Simeon was right, my son,” I whispered when he took my hands and held me in a way that kept me from touching his back, from feeling the blood on the open wounds. He didn’t need to ask what I meant; he always understood me, many times before I opened my mouth. “How often,” he whispered to me alone, “I have longed to keep you from this pain.” And that broke me.

It had taken me so long to understand that he couldn’t be like the others, the children who stayed close by, who belonged to me. I, who heard the angels’ song at his birth, who had

believed in the promises, who had said “Yes” to Gabriel ... I found it so hard to accept his going away on the road that would lead to this ... this walk of sorrows. “I know, son,” I told him now. “I know someone else was calling you all the time. But how I have missed you.”

His eyes were full of sorrow – for me, for the hostile crowd, for his friends, for the whole world. How could we possibly enter into such sorrow? And how could I keep from remembering? That night in Bethlehem was with me, taunting me, the music and the star, the angels and the promise, the hope of salvation. Was I crying them aloud, these memories of early joy? Where is peace, my son, I was crying inside, where is the promised peace?

He looked all around and then back at me. “The peace of God,” he said quietly; “I give it to you, Mother, but not as the world gives it ...” and memories of his words through the years filled my mind. His dreams were always different from ours, his truth eluded us. “Is this the world’s doing then?” I asked him wanting to know now ... urgently ... as if everything depended on it.

He gave my hand one last squeeze. “Because of the Father, I have overcome the world,” he told me, and I heard behind the words the unspoken understanding: “Despite all this, I believed him. I touched his face one last time and then the Romans pulled me away. Even they managed not to be too rough. I was the mother after all. And this prisoner, this torn and bleeding young man, was my son. “I have overcome the world.” How they would laugh if they heard him. But I walked away repeating his words, and everyone who heard me thought I had gone mad.

But now I was sane!

## **PRAYERS**

Let us pray.

For our mothers and our fathers, Lord, we offer thanks.

For those who gave us birth and nurtured us.

For those who have become mothers and father in our journey through life’s many byways.

For strangers who offered us food to nourish our bodies.

For those who, offering their gifts of knowledge, taught us.

For those who shared with us their faith with your mercy.

For all these mother and fathers, we offer of thanks, oh, God.

For Mary, the mother of Jesus.

For the young girl who said, “Yes” to God’s messenger.  
For the mother who had her doubts later, and for the broken who held him as he was dying.

We offer our eternal gratitude to you, Father of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ.  
*Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy. Amen.*

### † **THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD** †

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, and wisdom for life. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness by the power of forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, and the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God, we give you thanks and praise.

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

### **THE LORD’S PRAYER**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

### **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.

Amen.

And now ... go out into the world filled with love for God and one another.



## WALKING THE WAYS OF SORROW

April 1, 2020

Theme: **Jesus is Nailed to the Cross**  
(As seen by the soldier on duty)  
Text: Isaiah 6:10

The theme of this year's Mid-Week Lenten Services has been *Walking the Way of Sorrows*. Each week entered into Christ's journey to the cross based on Katerina Katsarka Whitley's first-person monologues reflecting various stations of the cross.

God has had mercy on us all throughout this Lenten season as we experienced stories that have caused us to feel pain, hope, love, and gratitude so that through the darkness of the crucifixion we may truly recognize the Light of Christ.



April 5

Palm Sunday Breakfast

**Cancelled**

April 5

Palm Sunday Services

April 9

Maundy Thursday

April 10

Good Friday

April 12

Easter Sunday

*Christ is Risen; He is Risen Indeed!*