

A Seasonal All Age Worship Service

(SAAW005)

Good Friday

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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GOOD FRIDAY

Service Aim:

To enable all ages to engage with the events of Good Friday in a multi-sensory way.

Notes:

There are a lot of different parts to this service and so the comments during each section need to be kept short. As written the service takes approximately an hour.

The service is built around a number of objects in a paper bag, which each worshipper is given on the way in. It therefore requires planning and preparing well ahead of time.

Biblical Reference(s):

Matthew 5:13a, 27:1-2, 11-26, 27-31, 32-43, 45-49, 50-54, Luke 23:34a, 39-43, John 19:25-27

Outline of Service:

- On the door: People given bags for the service
- Welcome: Introduce the theme
- Opening Prayer:
- Opening song(s): Song(s) to draw people into worship (See Appendix 1)
- Part 1: Jesus before Pilate. Barabbas released, Jesus sentenced to death
- Reading, Film clip, Comment and Activity
- Part 2: Jesus the King
- Story-tell Reading, Comment and Activity
- Song: A song of Worship (See Appendix 1)
- Part 3: The Crucifixion
- Dramatized Reading, Comment, and Activity
- Part 4: *"Father forgive them"*
- Dramatized Reading, Comment, Activity, Comment and Activity
- Song: A song about the cross (See Appendix 1)
- Part 5: *"Woman, here is your son,"*
- Story-tell Reading, Comment and Activity
- Part 6: *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"*
- Reading, Comment and Activity
- Part 7: *"It is finished!"*
- Reading, Comment and Activity
- Song: A song responding to God's invitation to know Him (See Appendix 1)
- Part 8: Go into the world
- Film song, Comment and Activity

Prayer:

Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

.....

Before the service:

Before the service takes place white paper bags containing the various items needed during the service are prepared. Each member of the congregation ie, both adults and children, will need a filled bag. Stuck on the outside of the paper bag is a cross sticker saying: "Good Friday". (The template of the cross sticker can be found in Appendix 2.) The white paper bags are sealed with a tiny sticker at the top of them.

Details of where to purchase the white paper bags and the stickers and all the various items needed for inside the bag are shown below:

- 1) White paper bag: One small paper bag (approximately 7"x9"x3.5") is needed for each person. These can be bought online at ebay¹. Simply put "White kraft paper carrier bags takeaway food" into the search button and a number of options will come up.
- 2) Stickers for bags: One tiny sticker (to seal the bags) and one larger sticker (with the cross picture on it) is needed for each bag. A variety of "Avery labels" can be purchased on Amazon².
- 3) A piece of chain: One piece of thin linked chain approximately 10cm long is needed for each bag. You can purchase reels of 2mm link chain on Amazon or ebay as well as local DIY stores and then just chop it up.
- 4) Purple crowns: One tiny purple paper crown is needed for each bag. These can be purchased in packets of 100 from Etsy (see <https://www.etsy.com/uk/> and put into the search bar: "Paper crown confetti Purple crowns")
- 5) Large nail: One large nail, approximately 150cm long is needed for each bag. These can be purchased from a DIY store eg. Screwfix
- 6) Red circle of card: One red card circle is needed for each bag. You can either cut out these red card circles yourself (diameter approximately 6cm) or you can purchase the red card circles on ebay. Simply put "Red Card Circles Cut Outs" into the search button and a couple of options will come up.
- 7) Wool: One 30cm length of white wool is needed for each bag. You can buy the white wool on ebay.

¹ www.ebay.co.uk

² www.amazon.co.uk

Simply put “white double knitting wool” into the search button and a number of options will come up.

- 8) Pencil: One pencil is needed for each bag.
- 9) Piece of A6 paper: One small piece of white paper (eg A6) is needed for each bag.
- 10) Bread in foil: One small piece of bread (approximately 4cm square) wrapped up in tin foil is needed for each bag.
- 11) Invitation card: One 6”x4” invitation card is needed for each bag (inside an envelope). A template for this can be found in Appendix 3.
- 12) Envelope: One C6 white envelope is needed for each bag. These can be purchased on Amazon.
- 12) Salt sachet: One small salt sachet is needed for each bag. These can be purchased on Amazon.

On the door:

As people arrive they are presented with a white paper bag.

Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the Good Friday service and explain that the service will focus on Jesus during the last hours of his life, through readings, film, songs and various activities. Invite people to leave the things in the bags they have been given until the relevant part of the service.

Opening Prayer:

You may choose to open the service with:

- an informal prayer
- the Collect for Good Friday³
- or the following prayer that the congregation could say together:

**Lord Jesus,
We have gathered together on this Good Friday to seek you.
Open our eyes afresh to see what you went through for us,
Melt our hearts with your love that we might love you more.
Give us grace to lay down our lives for the sake of others,
For the glory of your name. Amen.**

Opening Songs:

Song(s) to draw people into worship as per Appendix 1

Part 1: Jesus before Pilate. Barabbas released. Jesus sentenced to death.

Reading:

Begin by reading Matthew 27:1-2 from a modern version of the Bible. Follow this immediately with the film clip.

³ The Collect for Good Friday can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/41156/tspashw.pdf>

Film Clip:

The film clip⁴ comes from “The Gospel according to Matthew.” Play the clip from 3:57:11 – 4:01:00. The clip covers Jesus before Pilate, which can be found in Matthew 27:11-26. The clip ends with Barabbas being released, before the flogging of Jesus. This film version of Scripture is a word for word dramatization from the New International Version of the Bible.

Comment:

The film clip is followed by a comment to include something like:

Barabbas was in prison for murder,

- chained up,
- waiting to die for the crimes he committed.

Then one day everything changed for Barabbas.....

- A prison guard came to his cell, undid his chains, & told him that he was free to go
- Another man, Jesus would be crucified instead of him.

I wonder how Barabbas felt on the day of his pardon;

- disbelief, joy, thankful?

We, like Barabbas are in chains;

- not chained up by metal chains but chained by the invisible chains of the wrong things that we have done.
- We, like Barabbas cannot set ourselves free from these chains.

However, at the cross everything changed for us too.

- Jesus willingly gave up his freedom, so that like Barabbas, we can be set free.....
- Set free from the chains of sin,
- Set free from the punishment our sins deserve and
- Set free to live life to the full.

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and find the piece of chain. Encourage them to hold the chain in their hands and look at it for a few seconds in silence. Then say something like:

Feel how hard the chain is in your hand..... PAUSE

- Imagine being bound up by something much bigger and stronger than this.....*(you might like to show a large chain at this point as a visual aid)*
- Bound up by something that takes away your freedom. PAUSE

Imagine Jesus coming now and removing that chain that has bound you up.....

- How would you feel? PAUSE

When we confess our sins to Jesus, he comes and removes the chains that bind us up...

- Let's thank Jesus now as we hold our chains and pray together.

⁴ The film clip can be found on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKv5N6SRDqU> Alternatively you can purchase “The Gospel according to Matthew” DVD on Amazon - it is the 2010 version with Richard Kiley.

Lord Jesus thank you that you willingly gave up your freedom,
 so that we can be set free from the chains of our sins.
 Thank you that you were bound so that we can be set free.
 Thank you for your incredible love. Amen.

Part 2: Jesus the King

Story-tell Reading:

This section begins with story-telling Matthew 27:27-31 by a Roman soldier. This can be found in Appendix 4. You could add to the drama by the soldier dressing up.

Comment:

The story-telling is followed by a comment to include something like:

Jesus – the King of Kings and Lord of Lords stood before many different people before he was crucified.

- Some people lied about him,
- Others got angry at the words he spoke and accused him of blasphemy.

Still others called for his death,

- Whilst others disowned him.

The soldiers chose to mock him,

- clothing him in a scarlet robe and placing a crown of thorns upon his head,
- bowing before him, saying, “Hail King of the Jews”,
- followed by hitting him on his head again and again.

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and take out the purple card crown and hold it in their hands. Then say something like:

As you look at the crown in your hand, ask yourself the question:

- “How do I treat Jesus the King?” PAUSE

Do I really know Him and believe the truth about him?

- Do I get angry with him when life doesn't go my way?
- Do I want Him out of my life because it gets rather uncomfortable with him around?
- Do I disown Him?
- Do I mock Him by the things I say and do?
- Or do I worship Him and obey Him as my King? PAUSE

Song:

A song of Worship as per Appendix 1

Part 3: The Crucifixion

Dramatized Reading:

This section begins with a dramatized reading, taken from Matthew 27:32-43, which can be found in Appendix 5.

Comment:

The reading is followed by a comment to include something like:

When we read that Jesus was crucified....the word can trip lightly off our tongues.

- The reality was that as Cicero said, it was “*the most cruel and hideous of tortures*”

Jesus was stripped and tied to a whipping post,

- where he was flogged with four or five thongs of leather into which were interwoven bone and lead, resulting in terrible wounds.
- He had a crown of thorns thrust upon his head....and if you have ever pricked your finger with a rose thorn, you will understand how painful that alone would have been.

He was beaten around the head and face with sticks and then forced to carry his heavy cross bar through the streets of Jerusalem.

- When he reached the crucifixion site, he was once again stripped and laid on the cross, where six inch nails were driven into his wrists and his ankles.
- The cross was then lifted up and dropped into the socket in the ground.

Jesus hung in intense heat with unbearable thirst for six hours

- in unthinkable physical pain
- while the life slowly drained away from him.

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and take out the large nail. Then say something like:

Take the nail and press it gently into one of your wrists.....until it begins to prick you

- Feel the sharp pointPAUSE
- Imagine that nail going all the way through your wrist and pinning you to a piece of rough wood....PAUSE
- Could you bear that pain for someone who hated you or ignored you? PAUSE

The nails that went through Jesus' wrists were much thicker.....

- Imagine what He went through for you.....
- That is how much He loves you. PAUSE

Part 4: “*Father forgive them*”

Dramatized Reading:

This section begins with a dramatized reading, taken from Luke 23:34a, 39-43, which can be found in Appendix 6.

Comment:

The reading is followed by a comment to include something like:

As Jesus hung in indescribable agony he prayed, “Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing”

- I wonder who Jesus had in mind as he prayed those amazing selfless words

There were so many people who had sinned against him....

- Those who plotted and lied to have him arrested.
- The soldiers who have just hammered his body onto the cross.
- Others who had mocked him, spat at him, beaten him.
- Still others who had lined the streets calling for his death
- And even close friends who had run away or denied him.

But it's not simply the soldiers, the chief priests and the first century Jews who needed Jesus' forgiveness,

- Like the robbers crucified alongside him, we too stand among those who need his forgiveness.

Our sin, as much as those others on that first Good Friday, is the reason that Jesus hangs there.

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and take out the red blood droplet (red circle) and the pencil. Say something like:

Let's take a moment of quiet and allow God to show us some of the things that we have done wrong.

- As he shows you those things, write them on your blood droplet.
- Once you have done that take your blood droplet and pin it to the cross, with the words facing into the cross.

As people begin to take their red droplets to the cross, you might like to play the song, "At the cross" (Chris Tomlin)⁵

Once everyone has taken their red blood droplet and pinned it to the cross:

- Remind people of God's promise in 1 John 1:9 and that if they have confessed their sins, then God has forgiven them.
- As a visual reminder that they are forgiven, invite people to take out the piece of white wool from their bags and to tie it around their wrists.

Comment:

Move on to say something like:

Having been forgiven so much, Jesus calls us to forgive those who have sinned against us.

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and take out the piece of white paper and the pencil. Say something like:

Who do you need to forgive? Let's take a moment and allow God to show us.

- As people come to your mind, write their names on your piece of paper and what they have done. PAUSE
- Now choose to set your heart on forgiving them. PAUSE

Invite people to pray something like:

**Lord Jesus, thank you for forgiving us for all of our sins.
We choose to forgive those who have sinned against us.
Please heal us from the hurts that they have caused us. Amen.**

Invite people to rip the list of names up as a sign of their forgiveness, and put the bits back into their bags!

Song:

A song about the cross as per Appendix 1

Part 5: "Woman, here is your son"

Story-tell Reading:

This section begins with story-telling John 19:25-27 by Mary the mother of Jesus. This can be found in Appendix 7. You could add to the drama by Mary dressing up.

Comment:

The story-telling is followed by a comment to include something like:

How terrible for Mary to watch the degrading, shameful, tortuously painful death of her eldest son Jesus.

⁵ This can be found on YouTube at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ONVG8DaREA>

As Jesus sees his mother's suffering from the cross,

- He reaches out to her in her need with his heart full of compassion.
- He knows that she will need providing for now that he is about to die,
- and so he arranges for her to be looked after by his disciple John.
- What love, what kindness

On the cross, not only did Jesus provide for His mother's practical needs,

- but He also provided for our greatest needs of all.

His death has provided a way for us to be forgiven and brought into God's household,

- where as His children, we are loved, accepted and provided for,
- with a secure future.

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and take out the piece bread wrapped up in tinfoil. Say something like:

As you eat the bread, in your hearts, thank Jesus that he has provided for your greatest needs.

- He is the "Bread of life" PAUSE

Part 6: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Reading:

This section begins with reading Matthew 27:45-49 from a modern version of the bible.

Comment:

The reading is followed by a comment to include something like:

For the last three hours that Jesus hung on the cross the Bible tells us that "*darkness came over the land*"

- This darkness was symbolic of the sin that Jesus was carrying for us,
- cutting him off from fellowship with His Father.
- In His anguish Jesus cries out, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*"

We have little realisation of the horror of sin. We are so used to it.

- The farm hand who has spent all day in the pig sty doesn't notice the terrible smell that clings to his clothes and which causes other people to keep away from him.
- We are so used to living in a sinful world that we forget that our God is holy and that our sin creates a barrier between us and him.

Activity:

Invite people to shut their eyes then say something like:

Take a moment to sit in the darkness.....

- Imagine being completely cut off from the people you love the most.....PAUSE
- Imagine how painful that would be.
- On the cross, Jesus was cut off from His Father while he was carrying your sin and my sin.
- What do you want to say to Him? PAUSE

End with a simple prayer like:

Lord, help us never forget the cost of sin to you.

Give us a hatred of sin and help us to say "no" when tempted to give in to it.

Thank you for your great love for us. Amen.

Part 7: “It is finished!”

Reading:

This section begins with reading Matthew 27:50-54 from a modern version of the bible. You might like to add a sound effect⁶ for the earth shaking and the rocks splitting (verse 51).

Comment:

The reading is followed by a comment to include something like:

Just before Jesus died He cried out in a loud voice, “*It is finished*” (John 19:30),

- At the same time the curtain of the temple that kept the presence of God separate from man was ripped in two, from top to bottom.

- Now because of Jesus’ death there is access into God’s presence

We are able to have a relationship with our Heavenly Father as the barrier of our sin has been dealt with.

- It is finished!

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and to take out the pencil and the white envelope that contains the invitation. Invite people to open the envelope, take out the invitation and read it. Say something like:

Would you like to write your name on the dotted line of your invitation card?

- Each one of us is personally invited by Father God to become a member of His family because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross.
- At the bottom of your invitation are four letters: R.S.V.P, meaning please reply.

Have you replied to Father God yet?

- Have you said: “Yes please, I would love to be a part of your family, and I will trust Jesus to take away my sin so that I can join?”
- If you have said “Yes”, let this invitation card be a prompt to thank God for His goodness to you.

If you have said: “No thanks,” do you want to think again?

- Jesus went through agony so that you might receive this amazing invitation.
- Don’t put off replying for too long! PAUSE

Song:

A song responding to God’s invitation to know Him as per Appendix 1

Part 8: Go into the world

Film Song:

This section begins with a film song⁷ called “Remember me.”

Comment:

The film song is followed by a comment to include something like:

As we prepare to leave the church today, having spent time with Jesus at the cross,

- having seen the extent of His love,
- we go into the world to do the things Jesus calls us to do,
- and to share the wonderful news of His great love.

Remember Jesus has called us to be the salt of the earth. (Matthew 5:13a)

- Salt gives flavour.....salt stops things going off.

⁶ You can find “earthquake” sound effects on YouTube at www.youtube.com

⁷ The film song “Remember me” can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhFBX5ZSySo>

We are to go out and flavour the world around us with love,

- serving the people we know and meet in the same sacrificial way Jesus has shown us.

Activity:

Invite people to open their paper bags and to take out the little packet of salt. Say something like:

This packet of salt is a reminder to you to be like Jesus in the world,

- As you hold your packet of salt think about who Jesus is asking you to serve....
- at home, at school, at college, at work.....PAUSE
- What is Jesus asking you to do? PAUSE

Prayer:

End the service with a prayer.

- You could use John Wesley's Covenant Prayer⁸, or
- You could use something like the following:

Lord Jesus as we leave this place,

Keep our hearts burning with gratitude and love, for all that you have given to us.

Enable us to walk in humble obedience with you.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

⁸ The Covenant prayer can be found at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wesley_Covenant_Prayer

Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) Song(s) to draw people into worship as per Appendix 1. Ideas include:

- How deep the Father's love for us (Stuart Townend © 1995 Thankyou Music)
- Jesus Christ I think upon your sacrifice (Matt Redman © 1995 Thankyou Music)
- There is a green hill far away (Cecil Alexander)
- Who O Lord could save themselves (Matt Redman & Jonas Myrin © 2009 Thankyou Music)

ii) A song of Worship. Ideas include:

- I will worship (David Ruis © 1991 Shade Tree Music / Maranatha! Music)
- Jesus, we enthrone you (Paul Kyle © 1980 Thankyou Music)
- King of Kings, majesty (Jarrod Cooper © 1996 Sovereign Lifestyle Music)
- Love the Lord with all your heart (Nick & Becky Drake © 2011 Thankyou Music)

iii) A song about the cross. Ideas include:

- For God so loved the world (John Hardwick © John Hardwick)
- Glory be to Jesus (Edward Caswall)
- God so loved that He gave (Ben Cantelon © 2010 Thankyou Music)
- He was pierced for our transgressions (Maggi Dawn © 1987 Thankyou Music)
- It's your blood (Michael Christ © 1985 Mercy/Vineyard)
- Oh to see the dawn (Keith Getty & Stuart Townend © 2005 Thankyou Music)
- To see the King of heaven fall (Keith Getty & Stuart Townend © 2009 Thankyou Music)
- What can wash away my sin (Robert Lowry Arr. Beth Croft © 2010 Thankyou Music)
- Your blood speaks a better word (Matt Redman © 2004 Thankyou Music)

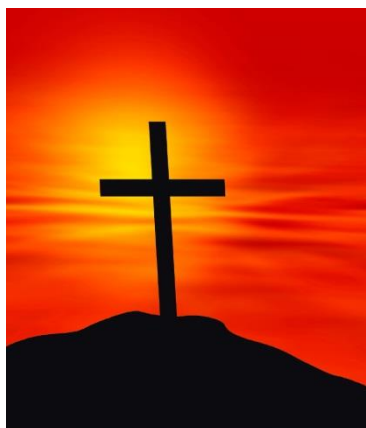
iv) A song responding to God's invitation to know Him. Ideas include:

- Beneath the cross of Jesus (Keith & Kristyn Getty © 2005 Thankyou Music)
- Here is love vast as the ocean (including the new verse 3) (Robert Lowry)
- I will offer up my life (Matt Redman © 1994 Thankyou Music)
- Jesus you endured my pain (Phil Wickham (2009 Seems Like Music & Phil Wickham Music)
- When I survey the wondrous cross (Isaac Watts)

Appendix 2 – Cross “Stickers” for bags

Make stickers using “Avery” labels L7166 (Shipping labels 99,1 x 93,1 white) with the image and words below.

Good Friday



Appendix 3 – “Invitation Card” Template



His Majesty, the King of Kings is pleased to personally invite:

.....

to become a member of His family and receive His richest blessings.

All sin has been dealt with by Jesus. Righteousness provided.

R.S.V.P (1John 3:1)



His Majesty, the King of Kings is pleased to personally invite:

.....

to become a member of His family and receive His richest blessings.

All sin has been dealt with by Jesus. Righteousness provided.

R.S.V.P (1John 3:1)

Appendix 4 – Story-telling Matthew 27:27-31 by a Roman soldier

Cast: Roman Soldier

Props: Soldier's armour, red piece of material, crown of thorns, large stick

.....
Enter Roman Soldier who marches up the centre of the church and stands at the front carrying the red piece of material, the crown of thorns and a large stick.

Good morning.....my name is Ignatius and I was one of Pilate's centurions.
 I will never forget the day me and my men punished the man they called Jesus.

Pilate told us to take Jesus outside and give him a good flogging.....
 Apparently he had made some claims about being a king. Now you don't say things like that with Pilate around.

After the flogging which left Jesus bruised and bleeding, we stripped him and put this scarlet robe on him. *(Hold up the red piece of material)*

One of my men thought it would be a laugh to give Jesus a crown, so he twisted together a crown of thorns and thrust it on his head..... *(Show the crown of thorns)*

We all mocked Jesus, taking it in turns to kneel before him and say, "Hail, king of the Jews"
 The men all got a bit carried away and started hitting him around the head with a large stick *(Show the large stick)* and spitting on him.

All the time this went on Jesus said nothing.....he didn't curse us or swear at us. He simply accepted what we did to him.....he was so different from other men we had punished.

"*Enough*" I shouted to my men..... "*Put his own clothes back on him*"
 I then led Jesus away to crucify him.

Exit the soldier.

Appendix 5 – Dramatized Bible reading

Matthew 27:32-43

Cast: Narrator, Insulter 1, Insulter 2, Chief Priest, Teacher of law, elder
(I suggest that the narrator speaks from the front of church and that the various other speaking parts are spoken by members of the congregation sited in various parts of the church. At the appropriate time they stand up and speak out their words loudly)

.....

Narrator: As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross.

They came to a place called Golgotha, which means “the place of the skull.” There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it.

When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. And sitting down, they kept watch over him there.

Above his head they placed the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.

Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying:

Insulter 1: You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself!

Insulter 2: Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!

Narrator: In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him.

Chief Priest: He saved others, but he can't save himself!

Teacher: He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.

Elder: He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, “I am the Son of God.”

Appendix 6 – Dramatized Bible reading Luke 23:34a, 39-43

Cast: Narrator, Robber 1, Robber 2
(I suggest that the narrator speaks from the centre front of church and that the two robbers stand either side of him)

.....

Narrator: Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him:

Robber 1: Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!

Narrator: But the other criminal rebuked him.

Robber 2: Don't you fear God, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Narrator: Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

Appendix 7 – Story-telling John 19:25-27 by Mary, the mother of Jesus

Cast: Mary the mother of Jesus

Props: Mary is dressed in a long dress with a shawl wrapped around her head

.....
Enter Mary who stands in the centre of church

Good morning.....my name is Mary and I was Jesus' mother.

I will never forget the day that they crucified my eldest son Jesus.....what a terrible and unforgettable day that was.

Simeon was right when he told me, when Jesus was a few days old, that a *“sword would pierce my own soul.”*

Mary my sister and Mary my friend came with me to Golgotha. We stood at a little distance from Jesus' cross to be with Him as he hung there.

I could barely see Jesus through my tears but suddenly I heard Jesus speaking to me. He said, *“Woman, here is your son”*.

I turned around and there was John standing just behind me....he held me in his arms as I wept.

Jesus then spoke again and said, *“Here is your mother.”* I knew he was speaking to John. Even from the cross Jesus was thinking about me, His mother and I thought that I had gone to support him.

After Jesus had died, John took me into his home and looked after me.