

# Pierced for Our Transgressions: The Final Word at Golgotha

Bible Verses Referenced: John 19:28-37, Hebrews 4, Psalm 22, Exodus 12, Isaiah 53

All who sleep in the earth bow down in worship All who go down to the dust fall before him My soul shall live for him My descendants shall serve him They shall be known as the Lord's forever They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn The saving deeds that He has done Hebrews 4 through 16, 5, 7 through 9, a reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.

Therefore, let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death. And he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he had suffered.

And having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. The Word of the Lord.

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John. Jesus went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

Now Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place because Jesus often met there with His disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked him, "Whom are you looking for?" They answered. Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again, he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken.

I did not lose a single one of those you gave me. Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?" So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him.

First, they took him to Anas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people. Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. But Peter was standing outside at the gate.

So the other disciple, who was known to the High Priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said. "I am not." Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temples where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them. They know what I said.

When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered. "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" Then Anice sent him to be bound to Caiaphas, the high priest. Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him.

"You are not also one of the disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." One of the slaves of the High Priest, the relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" Again, Peter denied it. And at that moment, the cock crowed. Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning.

They themselves did not enter the headquarters so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." This was to fulfill what Jesus said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus answered. "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered. "My kingdom is not from this world.

If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him. "So you are a king?" Jesus answered. "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.

Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?" After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him, but you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?" They shouted in reply.

Not just man, but Barabbas was a bandit. Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head. And they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him saying, "Hail, king of the Jews." And striking him on the face, Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.

Pilate said to them, "Here is the man." When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him, crucify him." Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him. I find no case against him." The Jews answered him. We have a law, and according to that law, he ought to be ought to die because he has claimed to be the son of man, of God.

Now, when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have the power to release you and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him. "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above.

Therefore, the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on, Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out. If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor. When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at the place called the Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew, Gabbata.

Now, it was the day of the preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your king." They cried out. Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priest answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus and carrying the cross by himself. He went out to what is called the place of the skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross.

It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Many of the Jews read this inscription because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.

Then the chief priest of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write the king of the Jews, but this man said, I am the king of the Jews." Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier.

They also took his tunic. Now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the Scripture says. They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots. And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, married the wife of Clopus 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.

After this, 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. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his Spirit.

Since it was the day of preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the Sabbath, especially because that Sabbath was the day of great solemnity.

So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with them. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once, blood and water came out. He who saw this is testified so that you also may believe.

His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth. These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled. None of his bones shall be broken. And again, another passage of Scripture that says, "They will look upon the one whom they have pierced." After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus.

Pilate gave him permission, so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about 100 pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden, there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.

And so because it was the Jewish day of the preparation and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. Heavenly Father, we ask that You would pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us as we contemplate the incredible, gracious act of sending Your Son Jesus into this world out of Your love in order that all who believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

May we gaze upon the cross tonight and contemplate its significance and leave transfigured and transformed by mysteriously gazing into its glory. May the preaching of Your Word be Your Word for the sake and glory of Your Son, Jesus. In His name, we pray. Amen. I would like to reflect with you on the last part of that Passion reading.

Since it was the day of preparation, and so the bodies would remain on the cross on the Sabbath, for the Sabbath was a high day. The Jews asked Pilate that their legs might not be broken, or might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came, broke the legs of the first, the other who had been crucified with them. But when they came to Jesus, they saw that He was already dead, and they did not break His legs.

John would, as our gospel writer, find tremendous significance in that moment of the day of preparation, the breaking of the legs of the crucified. There were three men being crucified. Two of them had their legs

broken. One was not. And then the sword piercing the side of Jesus and seeing water and blood come out.

John, in that moment, he stops in his narrative and he adds a parenthetical statement that I'm testifying to you about something that is true. And then he references two passages of Scripture, one that is both found in the Psalms and in the book of Exodus, and then another one from Zechariah chapter 12. What was the significance of all of this that really got John's attention?

Well, first of all, John was the only of the 12 disciples that remained at the foot of the cross. He, for some reason, was known to the high priest and was able to be the eyewitness of all of these things. And he was able to get Peter into the room to hear some of the trial, but he was the one that with the women was there at the foot of the cross to see all of these things and to ponder them and reflect on them, and especially for the rest of his life.

And he draws the significance of this day of preparation. So what was that about, the day of preparation? Well, it was a preparation for the festival of the Passover. This was the high and holy day for the Jewish people. Maybe the second most holy day would be Rosh Hashan of the Day of Atonement.

But this was the day that commemorated the great narrative for the Israelites, where they were in bondage in Egypt for 450 years under the cruel tyranny of Pharaoh, and God raised up the deliverer Moses, who famously said, "Let my people go." And of course, Pharaoh's heart was hardened. And he would relent, and then he would change his mind and have a hard heart towards the Israelites.

And so God sent a series of plagues to happen to the Israelites at the hand of Moses and Moses' staff. And so there was like the plague of snakes and the plague of blood where the river Nile turned to blood, and the plague of gnats, and the plague of frogs, and the plague of boils, where the people of Egypt got skin problems.

And all of these plagues would at first tell Pharaoh that Moses was more powerful than him, and God was more powerful than him. And Pharaoh would say, OK, OK, OK, uncle, uncle. I'll let the people go. But then he would relent. And so the final and great plague was the plague of the Passover. And it required preparation on the part of the Israelites because what the Lord said through Moses is that the angel of death was going to pass over Egypt.

And so as the angel of death passes over Egypt, the firstborn child of every household and the firstborn of the livestock would be struck down by the angel of death in judgment. Now, because the Israelites were sinners, just like the Egyptians, they needed to protect themselves from this judgment. And so the Lord provided a gracious mercy.

And what they were called to do by way of preparation was to prepare a lamb that was without spot or blemish, as perfect as you could find. And you were to sacrifice and kill that lamb. Each household, each Jewish household, would kill the lamb. They would consume the meat and they would take the blood of the lamb and they would spread it on the doorpost and the mantle of their doors as a sign of their redemption by the Lord.

And so that was their preparation. They would also prepare unleavened bread and some other things, bitter herbs. And they were essentially making themselves ready to be delivered from the hands and the tyranny of Pharaoh into the great salvation that would lead to the Red Sea and the parting of the waters, the wandering of the wilderness, and the entrance into the promised land.

And so this festival, the Passover, and the day of preparing that Passover was, in the words of the text, a very solemn and holy day to the Jews. And so they knew that they needed to get ready. And they also believed strongly that in their holy city, it would be very inappropriate to have these insurrectionists dying on a cross on the Passover Day.

So they went and colluded again with Pilate. This is a very interesting scene where normally the Jewish leaders and the Roman authorities did not get along about anything. But in this case, you have them all conspiring against the Holy One of God. Every ruling authority at the time would ultimately reject the rightful king and ruler of the world, God in the flesh.

And so the Jewish leaders say to Pilate, which he allows them, "Would you have your soldiers go out and break the legs of the men that are dying on the cross." Now, why would He ask them to do that? Well, crucifixion was a very torturous and gruesome way to die. You had nails that were placed into your arms and into your feet. And as you were hanging there, it was excruciating pain.

And so you would pull yourself up in order to get a breath. And then the pain would be so powerful in your hands and in your feet that you would fall back and let yourself down. And when you did that, you would collapse your diaphragm and you couldn't breathe. And so you would need to take another breath, and you would have to muscle up your energy to pull yourself back up again in order to take that breath.

And it literally would take over a 24-hour period, in many cases, for someone to die of crucifixion, a very slow, slow, painful, torturous death by asphyxiation, actually. You literally would get to the place where you were so weak from the exhaustion of the pain that you could no longer pull yourself up to take that last breath and you would give it up.

Well, a mercy, actually, would be to have your legs broken so that you could just go ahead and collapse on your diaphragm and not take a breath. And that's what the Jews had asked the Roman authorities to do. Let's go ahead and quickly have these men die. So the soldiers comply, they go and break the legs of two of the men. And when they come to Jesus, they find that He had already breathed His last, as we just read.

And in that moment, they decide that just to make sure they thrust a Roman spear into his side. And as John is looking at all of this take place, one of the things that he sees is the separation of Jesus' clot and serum and coming out of his side, which is actually a modern medical thing that has been recognized as a person who is dead. It was good evidence that he was dead at that time.

And the blood and the water flows out of the hole in his side. It's that moment that John has the Old Testament scriptures flooding into his mind or in his recollection of that day, where he says, "This was very significant, these two things." And he quotes these two passages of Scripture about them not breaking his bones, and they looked upon the one who was pierced.

The first passage about not breaking his bones comes to us either from Psalm 34, which is the famous Psalm that says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good." And it talks about an afflicted one who the Lord delivers without having his bones broken. But in John's mind, I think it connects more to the Passover.

Because as the very night that there were Jews all over the city of Jerusalem, making preparations for the Passover. In other words, they were finding those limbs without spot or blemish. And they were making the proper meals and the unleavened bread, and they were spreading the blood on their doorpost as a symbolic remembrance of that event.

There was Christ, our Passover sacrificed for us. And when you go back into the Exodus reading where the Israelites are commanded to prepare the Passover, you read these words: "The Passover lamb shall be eaten in one house. You shall not take any of the flesh outside of the house." In other words, you had to consume the whole lamb as a family.

And then you had this line, "And you shall not break any of its bones." When John, this devout Jewish young man, saw that they didn't break his bones, he perhaps recalled the words of John the Baptist, who pointed to Jesus at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." Here was the true Passover Lamb being sacrificed for us, for our sins, for our forgiveness.

And when the angel of death passed over the land, those who have spread the blood of Jesus Christ upon the doorpost and the mantle of their hearts will not face judgment but receive eternal life. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to the end that all who believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John also had in his mind a second prophecy from the Old Testament that comes from the book of Zechariah, which if you have read and heard the prophecies that we read over Holy Week over the course of your life, you probably are very familiar with Isaiah 53, which we read a lot during this time.

In Psalm 22, we do it a couple of times during Holy Week where there are clear prophecies of a suffering servant who will be pierced for our transgressions and our iniquities will be laid on him. But one of the other very important prophetic books that points to the coming of the Messiah and the suffering savior is the book of Zechariah. And we read about it here on Good Friday in this passage.

They will look upon the one whom they have pierced. And also, really, the story begins on Palm Sunday. And one of the things that you might want to do is actually go back and just take a look at that prophetic book, because there's so many prophecies that have to do with the very end of Jesus' life and his passion. It's there that you would find about the Lord coming in the form of a shepherd.

He says of the religious leaders of the time and the current rulers in Zechariah's day that they are all bad shepherds and they have harassed and abused the sheep in their power. And so what the Lord says is, I will come and shepherd my people. I will be their king. And then it's kind of paradoxical, but it sounds like he's coming in person, like a human being.

And then he talks about this human king who will come riding into the holy city of Jerusalem, not on a war chariot, but humble on a donkey with a cult. And he will be a shepherd king who will shepherd his people, though as he comes into the city, he will be rejected. He will have in his hands two staffs, one that is called favor and the other one that is called unity.

But because his shepherding of his people will be rejected, he will break the shaft of favor and break the shaft of unity. And this king, this shepherd, will ultimately be killed by those who he has come to lead. And in the moment that he is pierced is what the prophet says.

They will look upon the one whom they have pierced, and they will realize that they have killed me, says the Lord. The death of God in the flesh.

And in that moment, there will be a tremendous wailing that will happen all through the city of Jerusalem as people realize what they have done and conspiring against their king and their Messiah.

But then you come to this incredible prophecy that on that day there shall be a fountain opened up for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. It will be a fountain to cleanse them from their sin and their uncleanness. And they pierced His side and outflowed blood and water.

John reflecting on perhaps this very moment later in a letter that he wrote to the church would say that these three things, the blood, the water and the Spirit all testify to Jesus Christ. That these are the three that testify the Spirit, the water, and the blood. They all agree.

And if we receive the testimony of men, well, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God that He is born concerning His Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in Himself. Whoever does not believe in God has made him a liar because He has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning His Son. His legs were not broken because He was the Passover lamb who takes away the sins of the world.

And they will look upon the one whom they have pierced and see the fountain of God's mercy and grace flowing out of His side. And they will wail for their sins and what they have done to God who has come to love them and to show forth His grace and His mercy and lead His people.

Those who believe the testimony of John and of the water and the blood and the Spirit will know that they know that they know that they are children of God. John writes these things so that you who believe in the name of the Son of God may know that you have eternal life.

In a moment, we're going to have a wooden cross come into this space and you will be given an opportunity to reflect in prayer at the foot of the cross. And what I want to encourage you to do is, before you leave tonight, just come and lay it down at the foot.

Maybe there's something that over the course of this Lenten season has been stirred up in your life or in your heart, maybe some bitterness or unforgiveness, some grief or wound or trauma that you've been

through, something that you're angry about but you can't just seem to get over it or that you're really hurt and wounded about that you would love to give to God.

Or perhaps it's an idol, something that has been captivating your attention and holding on to your heart's desires, and you would like to finally, once and for all, give that to the Lord. There are two boxes up here that if you would like to maybe even write these things down and put them on a piece of paper and put them in the box as a symbolic and tangible way of giving these to the Lord and laying them at the foot of the cross.

But know this: Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast. And second, look upon the one who was pierced and recognize that out of his side flowed abundant grace and mercy to cleanse you from all your sins and all uncleanness.

Dear people of God, our heavenly Father sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

That all who believed in Him might be delivered from the power of sin and death and become heirs with Him of everlasting life. We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs. Let us pray for the Holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world, for its unity in witness and service for all bishops and other ministers and for the people whom they serve.

For our bishops and all the people of this diocese, for all Christians in this community, and for those about to be baptized, that God will confirm His church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace. Almighty and everlasting God, by whose spirit, the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified.

Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before you for all members of Your Holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry, they may truly and devoutly serve you. Through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, for those in authority and among them.

For Donald, the President of the United States, for the Congress and the Supreme Court, for the members and representatives of the United Nations, and for all who serve the common good, that by God's help, they may seek justice and truth and live in peace and Concord.

Almighty God, Kindle, we pray, in every heart, the true love of peace And guide with your wisdom those who take counsel to the nations of the earth that in tranquility your dominion may increase until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind, for the hungry and the homeless, the destitute, and the oppressed, for the sick, the wounded, and the crippled, for those in loneliness, fear, and anguish. For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair.

For the sorrowful and bereaved, for prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger, that God and His mercy will comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of His love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs. Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer.

Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find Your mercy present with them in all their afflictions and give them, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of Him who suffered for us. Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Let us pray for all who have not received the gospel of Christ, for those who have never heard the Word of salvation, for those who have lost their faith, for those hardened by sin or indifference, for the contemptuous and the scornful, for those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and persecutors of His disciples, for those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others, that God will open their hearts to the truth and lead them to faith and obedience.

Merciful God, Creator of all the peoples of the earth and lover of souls, Have compassion on all who do not know you as you are revealed in Your Son, Jesus Christ. Let your gospel be preached with grace and power to those who have not heard it.

Turn the hearts of those who resist it and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray, that there may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Let us commit ourselves to God and pray for the grace of a holy life that with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord and receive the crown of life in the Day of Resurrection.

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light, look favorably on your whole church, that wonderful and sacred mystery. By the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation. Let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up and things which have grown old are being made new And that all things are being brought to their perfection by Him through whom all things were made.

Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen. Amen.

We glory in Your cross, O Lord. May God be merciful to us and bless us. Show us the light of His countenance and come to us. Let the peoples praise You, O God, let all the peoples praise You.

We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You. If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.

O Saviour of the world, who by thy cross in precious blood has redeemed us.

Now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say, "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.

Before we have our concluding prayer, I want to just remind you that this is a moment where you can come and touch the cross. The reality of Jesus' love for you and grace is as hard as the wood of these boards up here. And He loves you very much and bring your burdens and your challenges and difficulties and lay them here in prayer.

And if you want to put something in these boxes, as the person who just brought this cross-up just did, don't let him be the only one. One of the things that I had a parishioner at another church that we did this for, and he said it would be my luck that the note would come out of the box and follow me.

Corey Timbome says, "When the Lord buries your sins in the depths of the sea, he puts up a sign that says, "No fishing." So lay it at the foot of the cross and bring your things here and allow the Lord to deal with you as He would and set you free as the Lord did for the Israelites in the Exodus. Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray You to set Your Passion, cross, and death between Your judgment and our souls. Now in the hour of our death, give mercy and grace to the living. Pardon and rest to the dead.

To Your Holy Church, peace and Concord, and to us sinners, everlasting life and glory. For with the Father and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign one God, now and forever. Amen.