
PRAYER SERVICE FIVE

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Theme: “You shall be with me”

OPENING HYMN

OPENING PRAYER

Leader : Almighty and ever-living God, you have created us to enjoy eternal life of joy and happiness. Even when sin entered into our lives, you restored us to fit into your original plan through the redeeming power of Jesus your Son. As we pray for **N...**, lift our hearts and minds to look forward always to the joys you have prepared for us in heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All : **Amen.**

THE WORD OF GOD

Luke 23:32-43

Leader : Now they were also leading out two others, criminals, to be executed with Jesus.

When they reached the place called The Skull, there they crucified him and the two criminals, one on his right, the other

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on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.” Then, they cast lots to share out his clothing.

The people stayed there watching. As for the leaders, they jeered at him with the words, “He saved others, let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.” The soldiers mocked him too, coming up to him, offering him vinegar, and saying, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.” Above him there was an inscription: “This is the King of the Jews.”

One of the criminals hanging there abused him: “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us as well.” But the other spoke up and rebuked him, “You got no fear of God at all?” he said, “but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He answered him, “In truth, I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.” **(PAUSE)**

REFLECTION

Leader : Jesus stands out as the great sign of HOPE to the whole world. The whole of creation was in a state of utter helplessness and hopelessness as the result of SIN: Yet, how beautifully and confidently Jesus interceded before his Father on behalf of the fallen world: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' To those who have repented, there is a promise of bright future – eternal life of joy with God. This is what the repentant thief received: 'This day, you will be with me in paradise.' Yes, there is a HOPE, LIFE, and JOY awaiting all those who die in Christ. (PAUSE)

INTERCESSIONS

Response : **Christ, our hope and life, be with us.**

- That the Good News of God's forgiving love may bring about true conversion of hearts. We pray to the Lord.
- That we may be effective messengers of joy and hope to others. We pray to the Lord.

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- That our faithful departed brothers and sisters be granted the eternal joy and peace of heaven. We pray to the Lord.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Presider : God, our heavenly Father, we have offered to you this prayer of praise and petition in a spirit of Christian faith and charity. May the promise of paradise you made to the repentant thief be ours too when our earthly life is ended. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All : **Amen.**

CONCLUDING HYMN