

Good Friday

April 10, 2020



**“Listen: Hearing That Still, Small Voice
and Finding Your Own”**

Adapted by Pastor Gina from © Dr. Marcia McFee, www.worshipdesignstudio.com/series
“The Worship Design Studio with Dr. Marcia McFee”

To begin....

In the season of Lent, we “turn” or “re-orient” ourselves toward the Holy. What we pay attention to is what we are formed by. Today we turn our attention to the suffering of the world, the sacrifice of the one who risked his life for the least and the oppressed. We turn our attention so that we might become persons who follow in the way of Jesus, working to bring love and justice to humanity and this earth.

Come and rest, come and listen, lay the fullness of your lives before our Maker.

When a community is under threat, when tragedy strikes, when fear seems close, we humans need to be together. It is what the disciples and followers of Jesus did that last week of his life. Tensions were high. While we may not be on the verge of crucifixion as Jesus was at that moment, we may feel that in today’s world, we face threats to goodness, to love, to humanity’s ability to move into hope. We also recognize that many in this world do face very real violence and oppression and death.

Unrest can also take root in one’s very being... it may come from a traumatic event in one’s life and history. We gather as community to hold space for pain, and to hold the hope of healing. Let us spend this time connecting with God, with the depths of our true selves and with each other.

Come and rest, come and listen, there is a wisdom deep within that calls us closer.

You are invited to sit quietly in the silence without any expectation of what you “ought” to be thinking. Don’t worry about extraneous sounds—simply let them float into and out of your attention. And if you find it difficult to settle your thoughts, contemplate the following:

Along the journey there must be moments...

to stop...

to question...

to wonder...

Why?

I. Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

“Let this pass from me...”

We pray and work for those who live in fear of persecution

Matthew 26: 36-41: *Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane. He said to the disciples, “Stay here while I go and pray over there.” When he took Peter and Zebedee’s two sons, he began to feel sad and anxious. Then he said to them, “I’m very sad. It’s as if I’m dying. Stay here and keep alert with me.” Then he went a short distance farther and fell on his face and prayed, “Abba, if it’s possible, take this cup of suffering away from me. However—not what I want but what you want.” He came back to the disciples and found them sleeping. He said to Peter, “Couldn’t you stay alert one hour with me? Stay alert and pray so that you won’t give in to temptation. The spirit is eager, but the flesh is weak.”*

I. Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane

Have you ever just wished that the situation you are in or the pain you feel could simply be lifted from you like waking from a bad dream?

Jesus knows this pain.

At this station we pray for those who live in fear of persecution for who they are or for the stands they take on the side of the oppressed.

And we find the Jesus who felt afraid and alone and yet offered himself for a higher purpose.

JESUS MAFA is a response to the New Testament readings from the Lectionary by a Christian community in Cameroon, Africa. Each of the readings were selected and adapted to dramatic interpretation by the community members. Photographs of their interpretations were made, and these were then transcribed to paintings. (1973)



II. Jesus is betrayed by Judas

“Betrayed with a kiss...”

We pray for the strength of forgiveness

Mark 14: 43-50 Suddenly, while Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, came with a mob carrying swords and clubs. They had been sent by the chief priests, legal experts, and elders. His betrayer had given them a sign: “Arrest the man I kiss, and take him away under guard.” As soon as he got there, Judas said to Jesus, “Rabbi!” Then he kissed him. Then they came and grabbed Jesus and arrested him. One of the bystanders drew a sword and struck the high priest’s slave and cut off his ear. Jesus responded, “Have you come with swords and clubs to arrest me, like an outlaw? Day after day, I was with you, teaching in the temple, but you didn’t arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.” And all his disciples left him and ran away.

II. Jesus is betrayed by Judas

The sting of difficult relationships is something most of us have experienced.

Perhaps as children, trust was betrayed by an adult who did not care for us as we needed or perhaps as adults, family or spousal relationships crumbled under the weight of addiction or illness or resentment.

At this station, we pray for the ability to forgive and move on. We find here the Jesus who knew of the betrayal and who broke bread with Judas anyway.

In the Passion Façade of the Sagrada Familia Temple we find a cryptogram. It's about one of the most popular motives of this façade, decorated by Josep M. Subirachs.

This enigmatic square of 16 numbers allows you to make more than 310 different combinations summing the numbers of four different quads, always with the same result: 33, the age of Christ the moment he died -which is the most important fact of the Passion-. Summing the numbers in columns, rows, diagonals, summing the extremes...

Gaudí was not very clear about what the sculpture covering of the Passion Façade should look like. When Subirachs accepted the assignment (1987), one of the conditions he posed is that he could apply his personal style, in order to create no confusion with the original work of Gaudí and to continue his own artistic career.

Subirachs' cryptogram is based on the cryptogram made by the German Renascent painter and geometric Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) in 1514 in the engraving "Melancolia I".

His numbers sum 34, an even number, much more difficult to obtain. You can see that, while in the cryptogram of Subirachs two numbers are repeated, the one of Dürer contains the numbers 1 until 16 without repetitions.

Another curiosity: the numbers 14 and 15 in the center quads of the row below indicate the year of construction of this magic square."
(1987)

<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54320>



III. Jesus is condemned to death by the Sanhedrin

“sentenced by the religious authorities...”

We mourn for those who have been harmed by religious authorities and institutions and work for change

Luke 22: 66-71 *“As morning came, the elders of the people, both chief priests and legal experts, came together, and Jesus was brought before their council. They said, “If you are the Christ, tell us!” He answered, “If I tell you, you won’t believe. And if I ask you a question, you won’t answer. But from now on, the Human One will be seated on the right side of the power of God.” They all said, “Are you God’s Son, then?” He replied, “You say that I am.” Then they said, “Why do we need further testimony? We’ve heard it from his own lips.”*

III. Jesus is condemned to death by the Sanhedrin

Perhaps church has always felt like a welcoming and safe space for you.

But there are many in this world who have been harmed as they were cast out, denied the right to become religious leaders, ostracized and judged or “sentenced” for who they are.

There are also those who have been the victims of religious and clergy abuse.

At this station we pray for the victims of the world, especially when the violence was done in the name of God and we find the Jesus whose death was caught up in the entangled political and religious climate of his day.

"...when his (Tissot) carefully researched collection of 350 watercolors depicting the life of Jesus was first published as a book in 1896, it found a large and enthusiastic audience. No one who had followed his previous career could have anticipated that this painter of urban life in Paris and London would undertake the project of painting virtually every event in the Gospels.

The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ project took nearly ten years to complete. When it was done, it chronicled the entire life of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament in a series of 350 watercolors. To research the project Tissot traveled to Egypt, Syria, and Palestine in 1886-87, and again in 1890.

While in the Holy Land he closely observed the landscape, the vegetation, the architecture, and the manner of dress, and filled sketchbooks with what he saw. He talked with rabbis and studied Talmudic literature as well as theological and historical volumes. He believed that there was still a remaining "aura" in the places where the Gospel events took place, and he spoke of having mystical experiences that added to his careful research. What he wanted to create was something as close as possible to an eyewitness account of the life of Jesus." [from Terry Glaspey's "75 Masterpieces Every Christian Should Know"]

(between 1886-1894)

Tissot, James Jacques Joseph, 1836-1902



<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55286>

IV. Jesus is denied by Peter

“I do not know him”

We confess our own denial - and pray for forgiveness

Matthew 26: 69-75 : *Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant woman came and said to him, “You were also with Jesus the Galilean.” But he denied it in front of all of them, saying, “I don’t know what you are talking about.” When he went over to the gate, another woman saw him and said to those who were there, “This man was with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.” With a solemn pledge, he denied it again, saying, “I don’t know the man.” A short time later those standing there came and said to Peter, “You must be one of them. The way you talk gives you away.” Then he cursed and swore, “I don’t know the man!” At that very moment the rooster crowed. Peter remembered Jesus’ words, “Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times.” And Peter went out and cried uncontrollably.*

IV. Jesus is denied by Peter

Denial is a powerful coping mechanism when faced with pain that is too difficult to accept.

In our weakness and despair, we sometimes turn to denial in order to cope—in order to survive.

At this station we find the Jesus who knows that we are human and will have moments of denial when circumstances feel impossible. And we ask for forgiveness for the times we might have turned our backs on our friends.

"Jesus offers the crowd (us) a layered and complicated choice, one that is as complex as his own dualistic nature. The first option is self-denial, a heavy burden, and a lost—but saved—life. The second is gaining the whole world, but forfeiting life. It's easy for a seasoned Christian to take this choice for granted. This choice that Jesus calls us into may even seem like a no brainer, but in this moment, Jesus teaches of the terrors that will befall him and invites the crowd to knowingly face that path alongside him. If we're honest, it is extremely difficult to reject the tempting power and wealth this world has to offer and allow our life to take the shape of good news for all.

The choice isn't an obvious one. One side looks like an opulent pile of riches, a crown, and endless power, while the other looks like tattered and worn hands with new life blooming out of wounds, work, burdens and relationships. This choice may seem like a distant decision made long ago, but it's a decision to be made every single day, one moment at a time. In working for and with the downtrodden, poor, orphaned, widowed, ostracized, and oppressed, we will find ourselves."

Lauren is an artist, graphic designer, and theologian. She studied Media Design at Middle Tennessee State University, worked as a wetlands advocate in Southern Louisiana, and attended Columbia Theological Seminary to piece together her passions for artistic expression, design, and Creation Care. (2018)



V. Jesus is judged by Pilate

“I wash my hands of him...”

We pray for those in government who make decisions that affect lives and vow to let our voices be heard

Matthew 27: 11-14; 22-24 *Jesus was brought before [Pilate], the governor. The governor said, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus replied, “That’s what you say.” But he didn’t answer when the chief priests and elders accused him. Then Pilate said, “Don’t you hear the testimony they bring against you?” But he didn’t answer, not even a single word. So the governor was greatly amazed... Pilate said [to the crowds], “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Crucify him!” But he said, “Why? What wrong has he done?” They shouted even louder, “Crucify him!” Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere and that a riot was starting. So he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. “I’m innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It’s your problem.”*

V. Jesus is judged by Pilate

So many people around the world suffer under governments who have washed their hands of the plight of the poor.

Money for the weapons of war outweigh money for education, for public assistance, for food and shelter, for at-risk youth, for safety of all the world's citizens.

At this station, we pray for those in government who make decisions that affect people's lives and we find the Jesus whose witness on behalf of the oppressed got him killed.

“What is truth?” Christ and Pilate

Ge, N. N. (Nikolaï Nikolaevich), 1831-1894

<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55296>



VI. Jesus is scourged and crowned with thorns

“They slapped him...”

We mourn for those who are victims of abuse

John 19: 1-3 *Then Pilate had Jesus taken and whipped. The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe. Over and over they went up to him and said, “Greetings, king of the Jews!” And they slapped him in the face.*

VI. Jesus is scourged and crowned with thorns

Unimaginable numbers of people are victims of abuse.

Whether physical, sexual, emotional or verbal, the scars are the same and last a lifetime.

At this station we pray for healing for those who have endured violence inflicted on body, mind and spirit and find the Jesus who knew this pain yet also knows the depth of pain inside perpetrators that drive them to commit atrocities.



Crown of Thorns

Easter, 2007

West Pier,

Brighton, Great
Britain

VII. Jesus carries His cross

“Come to me, all who are weary and carry burdens”

We pray for those who carry heavy burdens

John 19: 15-17 *The soldiers took Jesus prisoner. Carrying his cross by himself, he went out to a place called Skull Place (in Aramaic, Golgotha).*

VII. Jesus carries His cross

The Roman techniques of death by crucifixion were notoriously brutal.

Beyond the actual excruciating physical pain, the humiliation of bearing the instrument of death through the streets on the way to the execution was meant to prolong and intensify the suffering.

As we find the Jesus who carried the burden of his cross to Golgotha, we remember his earlier words that if we would only come to him, he would carry our burdens. We pray for all those who carry heavy burdens and ask God to give them rest.



1963, Albert Chavaz Stained Glass, at *Vercorin*, Switzerland

<https://artandtheology.org/tag/albert-chavaz/>

VIII. Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene

“They put the cross on his back...”

We give thanks for those who help in time of need

Luke 23: 26 *As they led Jesus away, they grabbed Simon,*

a man from Cyrene, who was coming in from the countryside.

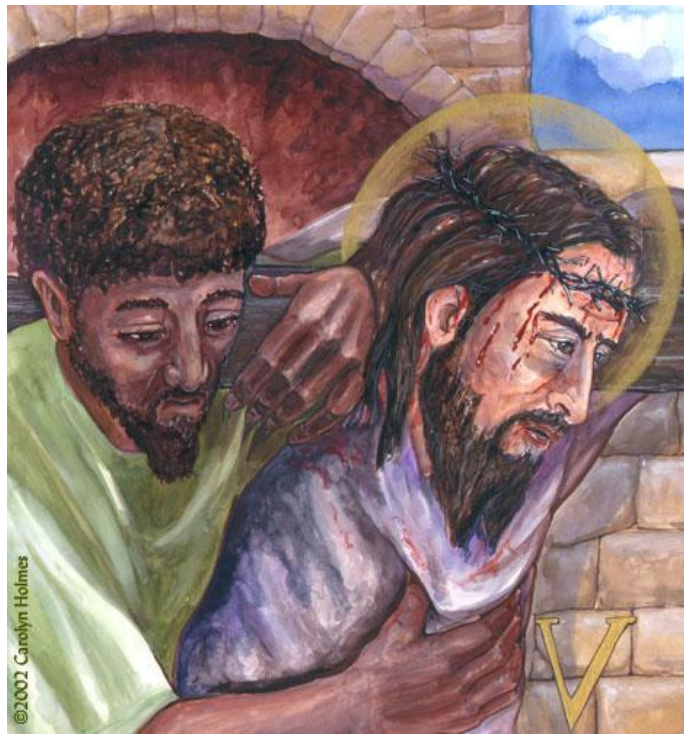
They put the cross on his back and made him carry it behind Jesus.

VIII. Jesus is helped by Simon of Cyrene

The bravery and compassion of those who rush to help in times of great need is something to experience.

First responders, neighbors, friends and strangers rush to assist in crises in ways that restore our faith in humanity.

At this station we find the Jesus whose burden was lightened by one who bore the weight of his cross for a while. And we pray for all those who come to help in time of need and ask God for the strength to put ourselves in that place whenever we have the opportunity.



Carolyn Holmes, 2002

<https://ccatuga.org/stations-of-the-cross>

IX. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

“we will never leave your side”

We give thanks for those who keep vigil with the suffering

Luke 23: 27-31 *A huge crowd of people followed Jesus, including women, who were mourning and wailing for him. Jesus turned to the women and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, don’t cry for me. Rather, cry for yourselves and your children. The time will come when they will say, ‘Happy are those who are unable to become pregnant, the wombs that never gave birth, and the breasts that never nursed a child.’ Then they will say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ If they do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?”*

IX. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Expressions of grief and mourning are much more demonstrative in some cultures than others.

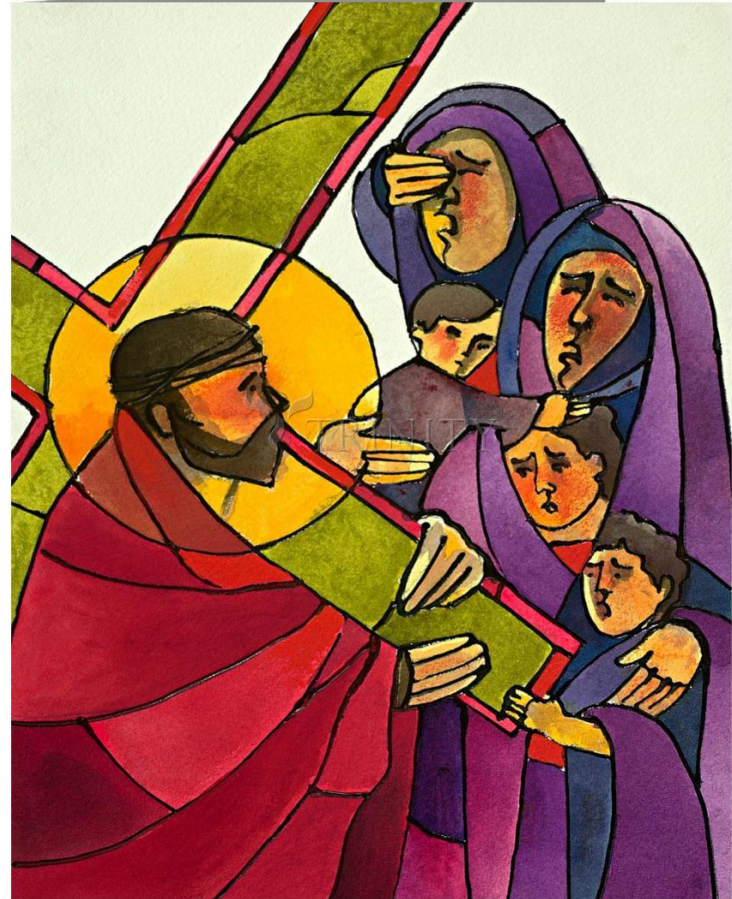
The women whose weeping and wailing accompanied Jesus' march to the cross offered him an opportunity for his own lament and despair.

At this station, we find the Jesus who proclaims his sorrow about the state of the world and its people and we pray for all those humanitarians and activists who walk alongside, keep vigil with, keep proclaiming and keep before us the suffering of the world.

*Stations of the Cross:
The Women of
Jerusalem*

Brother Mickey McGrath

[http://www.bromickeymcgrath.com/
about/](http://www.bromickeymcgrath.com/about/)



X. Jesus is crucified

“Nails in his hands and feet”

We mourn those who are tortured and murdered for their political stands

Mark 15: 22-24

They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means Skull Place. They tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh, but he didn't take it. They crucified him. They divided up his clothes, drawing lots for them to determine who would take what.

X. Jesus is crucified

Roman crucifixion was used as a way of terrorizing the people whose lands they occupied and was most often the preferred method for making a statement about political insurgents.

And so death was not the main goal, but rather prolonged and lingering suffering. Hanging from nails through the hands and feet would ensure a slow death and make sure those who witnessed were frightened and intimidated into submission to the Roman state.

At this station we find the Jesus whose body was tortured to death and pray for all political prisoners who are unjustly detained, tortured and murdered.

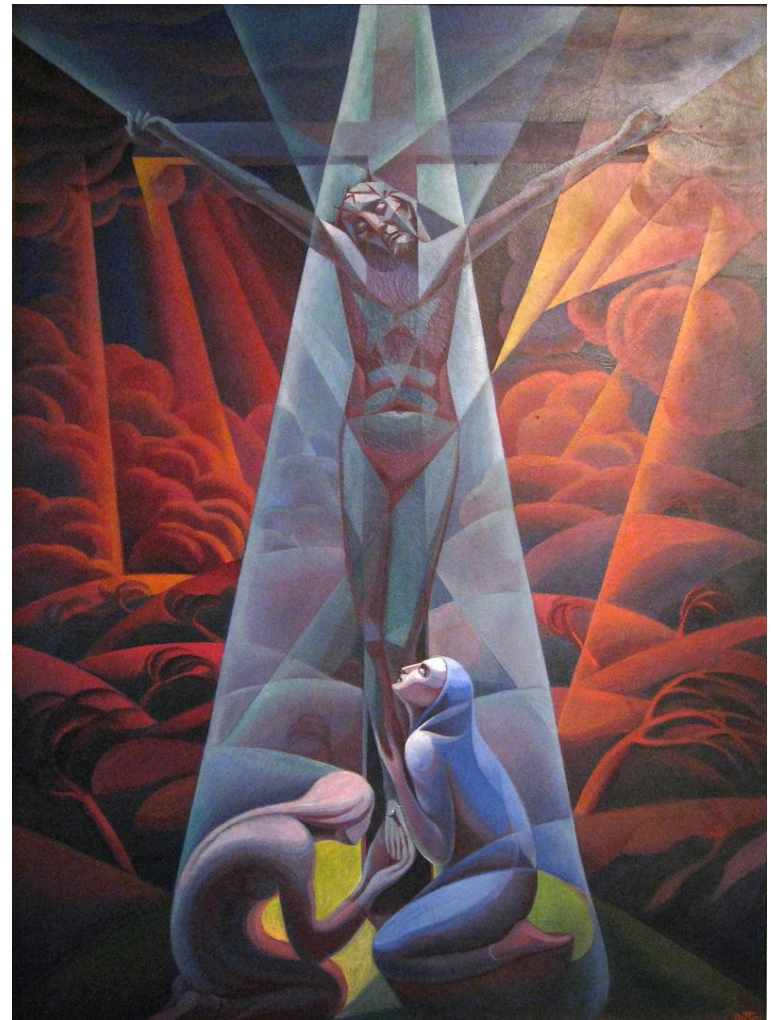
Crucifixion is distinguished by the fluidity of the bodies of the women weeping at the foot of the cross. These appear to be painful extensions of the very body of Christ, all saturated with an unearthly light that constitutes the dominant character of the painting. (1927)

Dottori, Gerardo, 1884-1977

Vatican Museum, Vatican City

<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=573>

56



XI. Jesus promises the good thief

“You will be with me in paradise”

We give thanks for the promise of redemption at any moment

Luke 23: 39-43 *One of the criminals hanging next to Jesus insulted him: “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!” Responding, the other criminal spoke harshly to him, “Don’t you fear God, seeing that you’ve also been sentenced to die? We are rightly condemned, for we are receiving the appropriate sentence for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”*

Jesus replied, “I assure you that today you will be with me in paradise.”

XI. Jesus promises the good thief

The conversation from the cross between three persons facing their own deaths ranged from denial to acceptance.

We all do this when faced with grief... we want to be saved from the pain, we barter with God, we get angry and vengeful and then accept the inevitable.

At this station we find the Jesus that is with us, no matter who we are or where we are on the journey, Jesus is with us and promises redemption at any moment.



Christ and the Good Thief by Nikolai Ge,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolai_Ge

XII. Jesus is on the cross with his mother and disciple below

“Behold, your mother”

We give thanks for those who become family in the absence of family

John 19: 25-27 *Jesus’ mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene stood near the cross. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that time on, this disciple took her into his home.*

XII. Jesus is on the cross with his mother and disciple below

Jesus knows his absence will be felt by many, but perhaps no greater than the absence his mother will feel.

The band of disciples has become family and this commissioning of his closest disciple to take his place as her son is repeated over and over again throughout humanity when a dying loved one says, “take care of them.”

At this station we find the Jesus who loves deeply and invites us to care especially for those who have no family. We pray a prayer of thanksgiving for those who have become chosen family to us.

Mama's Boy

by Laura James

b. 1971-

www.laurajamesart.com



XIII. Jesus dies on the cross

“It is finished”

We remember and mourn those we have lost

Luke 23: 44-46 *It was now about noon, and darkness covered the whole earth until about three o'clock, while the sun stopped shining. Then the curtain in the sanctuary tore down the middle. Crying out in a loud voice, Jesus said, “Abba, into your hands I entrust my life.” After he said this, he breathed for the last time.*

XIII. Jesus dies on the cross

At this station, we find the Jesus whose final breath was accompanied by the ultimate letting go into God... “I give you my Spirit.”

At the time of Jesus, breath was considered to be life and spirit. When someone gives their last breath, we are aware that the life has gone out of the body that was only home to their spirit on this earth.

For those that are left behind, it is difficult to accept that all is finished. God's last words in the human form of Jesus were that the Spirit was returning to the Creator. We lift up the names of those we have lost and give thanks that God holds them even now.

The Macklin Bible is an enormous physical specimen of book art, comprising seven volumes two feet in height and over 130 pounds in weight. It is the apogee of the art of British copper-plate engraving, involving both painters and engravers. These renowned artists often selected scripture texts that featured women, who were the nurturers of religious education for the family in late 18th century England.

(1791)

Cosway, Richard, 1740-1821

Sharp, William, 1749-1824

<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54053>



XIV. Jesus is placed in the tomb

“Laid him in the tomb”

We rest in the dark night of the soul

Matthew 27:57-61 *That evening a man named Joseph came. He was a rich man from Arimathea who had become a disciple of Jesus. He came to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate gave him permission to take it. Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had carved out of the rock. After he rolled a large stone at the door of the tomb, he went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting in front of the tomb.*

XIV. Jesus is placed in the tomb

Prayer

God of Suffering, God of Sacrificial Love, God of Redeeming Grace, there are no more words, for it is finished.

And while we know the rest of the story,

we pause this night to stay in the abyss where there is no light.

We listen for new life to be born in us out of the womb and tomb of darkness. Be with us, we pray, through the night of letting go.

In the design, it seems that in the full submission of Jesus' spirit, the Father and the Holy Spirit are also present in taking the ghost from his body. There is full cooperation and teamwork in freeing the Word from Jesus' body. The picture seems to take the scripture a step further in that the weight of the world's sin also seems to be with the freeing of Jesus' ghost. Perhaps this is when Jesus descends to the dead, and preaches to the souls being held captive. The stirring of the colors can symbolize not only breaking free, but also re-creation. Jesus is giving up the ghost but he is passing on the "new humanity." Jesus willing became the sacrificial lamb so that humanity could have a chance to be reconstituted. Jesus humbled himself even unto death, so that we could be a new creation. Jesus committed his ghost so that humanity could be filled with the Holy Ghost. Jesus died so that we might live. Olusola Tribble

In the design, it seems that in the full submission of Jesus' spirit, the Father and the Holy Spirit are also present in taking the ghost from his body. There is full cooperation and teamwork in freeing the Word from Jesus' body. The picture seems to take the scripture a step further in that the weight of the world's sin also seems to be with the freeing of Jesus' ghost. Perhaps this is when Jesus descends to the dead, and preaches to the souls being held captive.

The stirring of the colors can symbolize not only breaking free, but also re-creation. Jesus is giving up the ghost but he is passing on the "new humanity." Jesus willing became the sacrificial lamb so that humanity could have a chance to be reconstituted. Jesus humbled himself even unto death, so that we could be a new creation. Jesus committed his ghost so that humanity could be filled with the Holy Ghost. Jesus died so that we might live. -- Olusola Tribble

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit", Felipe Venancio, 2007

<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54141>



**We will meet again, at the empty tomb, on
Sunday morning, Easter morning.**

Peace be with you.