

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Reflections by Jenny Hawke

10.FORGIVENESS

Crucifixion was one of the most cruel and painful forms of execution ever devised. The victim was nailed to a cross-shaped piece of wood and left to dehydrate or bleed to death as others watched on.

And yet at this point Jesus spoke again to his Father God. This time it wasn't to ask to be rescued. Instead he was praying that the people who crucified him would be forgiven.

Forgiveness is not just a feeling. It's also a choice. We can only really forgive the people who have hurt us. Notice that Jesus asks God to forgive his murderers – as if God is the one who is really being wounded.

Even hardened soldiers must have gone home after a crucifixion, washing the blood from their clothes and thinking about the terrible suffering they had inflicted. I wonder what the soldiers who heard Jesus' prayer were thinking.

'And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Luke 23 v 33-34

In my mind I was thinking forgiveness started with the thief of the cross, then for those who condemned Jesus, but it reached out to the whole of creation. The cross wrapped its arms around the earth in that moment and said there is nothing that you can do to Me that will make Me love you less. And since then, forgiveness is repeated and received with every turning of the earth, with each orbit in this beautiful Galaxy. The cross is still there and the message remains the same. We are forgiven. Again and again. Jenny Hawke

Who needs to hear that you have forgiven them?



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