

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Reflections by Jenny Hawke

12. FAMILY

Jesus' mother and aunt were amongst the crowd watching him suffer. For Mary, that Friday brought a Mother's worse nightmare – the loss of her child. Just as every birth happens in the context of a family, so every death affects far more than just the person who dies; family, friends, colleagues and neighbours.

The loss of a family member changes everything. In the middle of his darkest hour, Jesus saw how his death was going to leave his mother and his friends bereft. So he welded them together into a new family.

We can't avoid loss. It's a huge part of family life. But we can open our families to include those who have lost the people closest to them – parents, children, lovers and friends.

'But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.' John 19 v 25-27

The bleakness of the situation is illustrated by the rather muted colours. There is an inevitability about the two heartbroken figures that are directed to each other by Jesus. They stand alone, with a distant doorway behind them since their lives will continue once they leave this terrible cross. They are now family. As we all are. Jenny Hawke

When a family loses a loved one, it can change everything, and can create huge insecurities and life-change. Christians look after one another, even if inconvenienced, because it is the loving thing to do. Are you aware of anyone who you could help adjust to life without someone they have deeply loved and now greatly miss?



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