

# Jesus is Crucified and Forsaken (Mark 15:33-39)

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**Guidelines:** Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts.

**Ignatian Meditation Process:** Ignatius chose this Gospel reading for Week 3 of *The Spiritual Exercises*. Read the introduction and then "Ask for the grace". Then quietly read the passage by using your imagination to enter into the story, sensing and feeling what's going on. Don't analyze the passage or seek insights — *experience yourself as a character in the story*. After the second reading have a "colloquy" (short, personal conversation) with the Lord. You can use the prompts and questions at the bottom to guide your prayer time and journaling (and sharing with others).

**Introduction:** Mark's portrait of Jesus being crucified is stark. At midday the sky becomes black for three hours. Jesus is suffering alone. He cries out loudly, reciting the opening of Psalm 22: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Then his breath expires and the curtain of the Temple is ripped open, opening the holy place. The Roman soldier who crucified Jesus is won over by the Lord's mercy and love for his enemies and exclaims that Jesus is the Son of God!

**Ask For the Grace:** Jesus, my Lord and Savior, I ask for the grace I desire: To sorrow with you, to be broken with you, to cry with you, and to suffer internally with you — doing this with gratitude for the great suffering you endured to obtain God's mercy for me.

## **Imagine Yourself in the Gospel: Mark 15 (MSG)**

33-34 At noon the sky became extremely dark. The darkness lasted three hours. At three o'clock, Jesus groaned out of the depths, crying loudly, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

35-36 Some of the bystanders who heard him said, "Listen, he's calling for Elijah." Someone ran off, soaked a sponge in sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down."

37-39 But Jesus, with a loud cry, gave his last breath. At that moment the Temple curtain ripped right down the middle. When the Roman captain standing guard in front of him saw that he had quit breathing, he said, "This has to be the Son of God!"

**1st Reading:** Visualize yourself in the Gospel story. Don't seek intellectual insights — stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with or are you a bystander?

**2nd Reading:** Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?