

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED AND FORSAKEN

Ignatian Meditation Guides by Bill Gaultiere

Introduction to Ignatian Meditation

In Ignatius' 16th century approach to Scripture instead of analyzing a text, you use your senses to imagine yourself as a character in the story. Then you have a short, personal conversation with the Lord. Each reading is guided by a focus question below. In a group context follow the leader's instructions on what to share and be sure to protect people's confidentiality.

Background to the Text

This Gospel reading in *The Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius is in Week Three which focuses on the passion of Christ. 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 desire the grace 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 Scripture: Mark 15

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!" (MSG).

Prayer / Journaling / Soul Talk Prompts

1. Visualize yourself in the Gospel. 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?
2. 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?