

The Seven Last Words of Christ

Throughout the ages many Christians have meditated on the last words Christ spoken from his cross. These seven brief sayings are collectively referred to as: "The Seven Last Words." This responsive litany is based on the sayings in the order in which they are traditionally read in Catholic services.

Saying One: *Luke 23:33-34*

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

Response: **Father and Mother God,
Forgive me for the wrong I do not know
I am doing.
Mother and Father God,
Help me forgive with the same forgiveness
I seek from you.**

Saying Two: *Luke 23:42-43*

Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Response: **Blessed assurance!
In my darkest hours, O Christ,
Assure me that this too will pass,
and I will one day be with you in Paradise.**

Saying Three: *John 19:26-27*

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

Response: **Loving God, hear my need
for flesh and blood love here and now.
From this time of grief and death
build bonds of kinship among us here.**

Saying Four: *Matthew 27:45-46 (Repeated at Mark 15:33-34)*

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Response: **My God, My God, Listen to my cry, O God.
Now and in the hours of my agony,
do not forsake me, O my God.**

Saying Five: *John 19:28*

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty."

Response: **My God, My God, how I thirst
for the fulfillment of your promises to us
and all creation.
May I never stop thirsting for you.**

Saying Six: *John 19:30*

When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Response: **O God, my spirit aches within me
I am not finished.
I am broken and partial.
May the power of Christ's love,
completely poured out on the cross,
keep my heart raw until it is finished in you.**

Saying Seven: *Luke 23:44-46*

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

Response: **Mother and Father God,
With every breath I exhale,
may I offer all I am to you.
Father and Mother God,
With every breath I take,
fill me with your Spirit.**