

# Lenten Reflections 2018

The Seven Last Words of Jesus



## The Seven Last Words of Jesus—Week 3: “Woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother.”

**By Sister Letty de los Santos**

### **Meditation**

The third word of Jesus from the cross is a word about human community, of which all of us are part. It has a quality of human compassion and love: “Woman, behold your son. Son, behold your mother.”

I can imagine that it was a mother’s love that brought Mary to the cross that Friday afternoon. Where else would she be? As difficult as it was and as much as it must have pained her, Mary was there for one reason. She loved her son. In a way, his cross was her cross.

In spite of the darkness of the hour, the agony and mockery, Jesus’ concern is for his loved ones. He shows us that relationships that are part of human community are relationships that matter. He shows us that we are called to care for one another and all God’s creation. He shows us a vision for the church and the world that is crucial for our witness.

### **Reflection**

From the cross, Jesus teaches us a truth which Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy, also understood. She took the risk to heed the word of God and responded to it with sacrificial acts of love. But in another sense, there is nothing safer or more rewarding than to



hear the word of God, because Jesus said that those who hear and do the word of God are his mother, brothers and sisters.

The third word of Jesus is a powerful reminder that we are part of a much larger family, a global family, a family so desperately in need of love. All of us belong to one another. Catherine McAuley on her deathbed was thinking of her sisters in Mercy. The words she uttered during her last hour were to “get a good cup of tea ... when I am gone, and to comfort one another, but God will comfort them.”

Everyone is interconnected. If there are walls of division such as poverty, racism and other issues, these need to be dismantled to no longer disgrace our Earth. Our internationality and interculturality is God’s work, and it is the beating heart of peacemaking.

### **Invitation**

Imagine that Jesus was speaking not only to his mother and his beloved disciple; he was also speaking to you, to me, to all of us. Do his words make us feel proud? Do they make us feel humble? Jesus gave us the command to take care of one another. He asks us to fulfill this mission which he entrusted to us. Let us embrace his gift and challenge to us.

*Art by Sister Genemarie Beegan*