

Station 8: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

READ

Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals – one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. (Luke 23:32-34)

REFLECT

Jesus, I do not want to see this. Yet I force myself to watch. I hear the sharp crack of hammer against nail and shudder. It sounds so final. Is it over? Did all those wonderful lessons you taught by the seaside mean anything? You spoke of being a light to the world, but it seems that darkness is winning.

How they mock you! You said that you could rebuild the temple in three days and I thought that anyone who can raise the dead surely could deal with broken stones. But it is not the stones in the temple that matter to you, is it? Your greater concern is how we relate to you and to one another. You so want us to know the power of living love. Is love stronger than this evil that now surrounds you?

I want to rage at the injustice of this. The cruelty of the Romans. The hypocrisy of the High Priest and religious leaders. The cowardice of the disciples. The treachery of Judas. The fickleness of the crowds. Do they not remember that you spoke of loving one another, of bearing the burdens of others, even of loving our enemies? They should know better, they should have listened and learned.

And yet, would I have done differently? Is the guilt just of those who drove the nails and the rest of us are innocent? Or is it human sin that drives the nails? *My sin*. The old American spiritual asks the question, “Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” I want to deny it. I want to pretend that it is someone else’s guilt, someone else’s sin. But *I was there*. Jesus, you are here, dying, because of *my sin*. *I was there*. It was I who drove the nails.

ACTION

Pick up a nail and hold it in your hand. Feel how sharp it is and painful it must have been for Jesus. Each sin is as sharp as a nail and yet we are forgiven. As you hold the nail reflect on how you are forgiven and think – is there anyone you need to forgive?