

## **The Good Friday story is recorded in Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 22,23, and John 18,19.**

Father God, this day of remembrance seems to be passing in much the same way as past days since we've been asked to remain sheltered. You created a beautiful world for our homes this side of Heaven. Outside our window, today, your sun is shining in the blue sky, and gentle breezes carry a chill and not quite as much pollen. The birds are singing, and green leaves on trees and blades of grass are changing the winter brown landscape to spring green. Flowers are blooming, and bees and the first few butterflies are already busy. Because you're our God of ordered details and arrangements, today this pandemic world reflects the perfect sequences of your plan. We are thankful that, in all things and in all seasons, you are dependable and your timing is perfect.

Father, we are grateful for all that's beautiful about this day, even in knowing that long ago in Jerusalem, your Son and our Lord Jesus suffered so much humiliation, pain, and death at the hands of the very people on Earth he came to redeem from sin. Each of the Gospel accounts retell his story of sacrifice and redemption. The willing sacrifice was his alone, but redemption belongs to all who choose to believe the undeniable fulfillment of your Old Testament prophecies. Thank you, Merciful and Gracious God, for your plan to save us from our sinful choices. Thank you, Jesus, for your unconditional love, your humble obedience, and our eternal salvation.

We trust you and your presence in this pandemic battle, an enemy like none we've ever know. You've heard our prayers so many times these past weeks, and though many have succumbed to complications of this vicious virus, fewer new infections and hospitalizations are being reported in some places. Bring healing and wellness to all our nation, God. We acknowledge not only your supernatural power over this infectious, viral enemy, but also all your blessings sustaining your people:

- Your intervention in the hearts, minds and bodies of all the hospital workers, doctors and nurses.
- You're working in our first responders, those doing medical transports, all law enforcement, and our postal workers.
- Protect our military courageously on active duty helping here in our country and serving at duty stations around the world.
- You're helping the farmers and food production industry keep food on our tables. We lift up prayers asking that all who grow and raise our food will find help to harvest and a market for the fruits of their labors.
- Surely the grocery, pharmacy, banking, restaurant take out, laundry and dry cleaning, and childcare workers are thankfully praising you for continued employment and protections from exposure .
- The truckers, delivery truck drivers, and gas station employees are depending on your protected for safe travel and abundant fuel. All who load the trucks and deliver the fuel are in your care.
- You're helping educators prepare online instruction without their classroom files and resources while parents and guardians who've become teachers at home depend on you for patience, wisdom, and time management.
- You've given many who own and work in our nation's production industry creativity, initiative, and a willingness to make changes that now supply even more protective and sanitizing products and equipment.
- You've given those who can sew, those who can cook, and those with 3D printers a volunteer spirit to make and deliver much needed protection to healthcare and first responding workers. Thank you for kind offers from those less susceptible to severe virus infection to go purchase and then deliver to the high risk population their groceries and medicine.
- Our elected, appointed leaders, and clergy depend on your wisdom and guidance in decisions and worship at home services. Their boldness to speak to the nation every day and especially this Good Friday glorifies your majesty and gives encouragement to all believers in our nation. We pray that all Americans will receive the messages they deliver.

All these and so many more of your people are receiving the abundance of your provisions and protection every day and night. We thank you, God, for your Spirit in the people you love. In these difficult days and on this, the darkest day of the Christian year when our Savior gave up his life for our eternal lives, we acknowledge that you are the light in the darkness filling the minds and bodies of your people with power and strength. The unconditional and compassionate love of our Lord fills your children and is being shared in the most beautiful image of the Body of Christ working with and for each other.

We are grateful for all your blessings, Gracious God.

Your greatest gift to humanity was freely given in suffering sacrifice on the cross. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world.

Have mercy on us and give us your peace.

In Jesus's Name we pray. Amen.