

'SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS'

Reflection 1

In His agony on the cross, Jesus looks for a reason to forgive His executioners. **'Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.'** (Luke 23:32-4) 'Jesus shows forth, here, a divine generosity which is surprising, and so very consoling. It is as if the Lord wants to go further than we could ever go to excuse us.'

'Nonetheless, Jesus looks into our hearts to find sorrow for our sins, or at least the beginnings of it.' He calls us to repentance; to recognise our sins, to admit to them and to tell him we are sorry. We can be comforted in knowing that 'a humble and contrite heart, he will not spurn.' 'If you and I truly want forgiveness, if our sorrow is real, what is it that stops us from knowing that we have been forgiven? Is it our failure to believe in His love for us?' We need 'never for one moment doubt God's forgiveness. It is the faithful companion of our sorrow.'

In His response to the repentant thief, we again see the readiness of Jesus to forgive and to comfort: **'Indeed, I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.'** (Luke: 23:39-43) This man had lived a life of crime and yet was granted, 'there and then, the vision of God, the endless happiness of ecstatic love, and this right at the end of his life.' 'To each one of us, unless, of course, we choose otherwise, God will one day say: **'Today you will be with me in paradise.'**'

Prayer

Father, I am sorry. Forgive me.

I have failed you, let you down. I have hurt you.

Through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross

Forgive me, heal me, restore me.

Amen.



'Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.'

(Luke 23:32-4)

'Indeed, I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.'

(Luke: 23:39-43)

With reference to, and with quotations from 'Seven Last Words' by Cardinal Basil Hume.