

## THE FIFTH STOP: JESUS IS CRUCIFIED BETWEEN TWO THIEVES

*"...today you will be with me in Paradise."*



Jesus Looks at the Good Thief  
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(at Abbey of La Grande Trappe)

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." 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."

(Luke 23:39-43)

**Reflect** Here we are side by side, you and I – you the tender unblemished Lamb and I the pettiest of thieves. You have done nothing to deserve death, while I have been a thief all my life. I have not robbed a store or a bank, nor stolen my neighbors' goods. But too often I have robbed others – sometimes even those I love – of joy, of emotional comfort, of satisfaction at a job well-done, of compassion, of assistance, of praise, of peace. How often have I withheld the smallest godly touch and clouded their understanding of your goodness, how often have I hidden from them a glimpse of you?

Yet you love me now, as you always have. And for the simple act of willingness to love you, you give me eternal life with you – in Paradise.

**Pray** **Lord, let my selfish acts and failings fall away like leaves in autumn so that I might emerge into the springtime of Paradise and live always in the fullness of your love. Lord, make me worthy. This I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.**

**Sing** *Jesus, you comfort our souls. Jesus, you comfort our souls.  
Jesus, our love; Jesus, amazing grace.  
Jesus, our God and our all.*