

I PRAY...I PONDER

by Lia M. Goens



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I Pray ... I Ponder

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Lenten monologs from Mary's heart,
plus a Tenebrae Service

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PRODUCTION NOTES

Mary's journals are simple, yet effective to produce. There is a journal entry for every Sunday in Lent, plus a Tenebrae service for Good Friday and an Easter Sunday reading. All entries are designed to be read, but each may be memorized or memorized in part. One middle-aged female is needed to play Mary. Her costume consists of typical biblical garments. Mary can read from anywhere in the sanctuary or move around.

She will need as props a journal and writing tool. The journal should be made of parchment paper. The edges may be burned to give them an older appearance. Non-fusible interfacing (available at fabric stores) or any heavy paper may be stained with tea and used in place of parchment. When Church of the Saviour presented Mary and her journals, each journal entry was taped onto a piece (or pieces) of parchment paper. Extra long paper will allow the longer entries to fit on just one page, which is helpful to the performer. Parchment papers could be bound together like a book, or each piece of parchment may be rolled up. Mary should use a thick writing utensil that looks like a stylus or reed pen. Make an inkwell of clay to hold the pen. Optional is a lantern of some kind or a candle. (Please note additional props needed for the Good Friday service.)

Any kind of rustic table and chair or bench may be used for Mary's writing table.

Most journal entries for any given service can be divided with Scripture readings or hymns in between. For instance, for the 4th Sunday in Lent, a soloist sang a hymn between Mary's reflection on Salome and her second entry on Mary Magdalene. Both readings were followed by a sacred dance with dancers symbolizing each of the three women.

Some journal entries are longer than others, but all take only a few minutes of reading except during Holy Week. Good Friday could easily be a total service unto itself.

At Church of the Saviour, the woman playing Mary read all entries but the Good Friday and Easter ones, which she memorized and acted. Each reading was done dramatically, (Think readers theatre) however, with Mary sitting, kneeling, standing or pacing as seemed appropriate for the mood of the entry that week.

Very important:

Dramatic readings require multiple rehearsals just as memorized dialogue. Indeed, parts of the readings should be memorized so that Mary is not staring down at the script all the time.

For introduction to Tenebrae service.

The readings in this service are much more effective if the narrator does not read the speaker intro such as, “he said” or “Pilate asked” or “the crowd shouted.” Quoted lines would be spoken like dialogue in a play. For clarity, though, some speakers will require an introduction.

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Honored and Rejected

THEME: Jesus begins his ministry.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 4:14-15

(MARY enters with candle, journal, and pen. She sits at the table, finishing the last of her journal entry.)

MARY: *(To congregation)* Writing in my journal helps me to express my feelings, work out conflicts, and gain a better perspective on the events of my life. When things fall apart around me, I can go to my journal and find comfort. Like now. *(MARY reads from journal.)*

I have not seen Jesus for months, but I hear about him constantly. It has been only three years since he appeared, haggard and thin, out of the wilderness to begin his ministry, and now he has twelve devoted disciples and thousands of followers. His deeds are known throughout Galilee and as far away as Jerusalem. Sometimes I'm proud of his accomplishments. Other times, I am simply amazed.

But the hardest thing to deal with is the gossip. I guess you'd call it gossip. People here in Nazareth are naturally trying to understand just who Jesus actually is and what his ministry is all about. And everyone seems to be in a constant state of contradiction. My neighbors mock him or they admire him. They criticize him to my face and blame me for his upbringing, or they come to me with sincere questions, wanting me to explain why he healed a sinful man or insulted a Pharisee. As if I knew! Sometimes they'll repeat one of my son's lessons and ask me to explain what he meant. People advise me to disown him because he is so hopelessly troublesome, while others worship him as a great prophet. Jesus is a famous man, and like all famous men, some people love him and some

1 hate him. Now I'm finding this is true for myself as well:
 2 I am loved and hated, praised and blamed, honored and
 3 rejected, just as he is.

4 When Jesus was born, I felt we were entering a
 5 journey into the unknown — he and I together. This
 6 journey has been full of surprises — some delightful, some
 7 not so good. At the beginning of his ministry, there was
 8 no clear end in sight, and now I see with even less clarity
 9 what's in store for him — and me. We were chosen by our
 10 God — Jesus and I — a great honor, a great responsibility.
 11 But all along I have asked, "What does it all mean? Where
 12 is he going?"

13 I'm still asking. (*MARY blows out candle and exits.*)

14 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** "Be Still, My Soul"

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SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Love That Looks Inside

THEME: Jesus knows people from the inside and responds to them accordingly.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: John 4:5-26 (the woman at the well in Samaria); Matthew 19:16-22 (the rich, young ruler).

(MARY enters with candle, journal, and pen. She sits at the table, finishing the last of her journal entry. There is a pause, then she reads what she has written.)

MARY: *(Reading)* John and I had a nice, long talk last night. He is unquestionably my favorite of Jesus' disciples. He's sensitive and loving, plus he keeps me informed about the activities of the ministry. Most men don't have time for any woman, but John cares about me.

Sometimes, though, John joins with so many others in expecting me to understand things about my son that bewilder him. Last night he pleaded with me to explain why Jesus reacts to people almost the opposite of the way you think he should react. For example, it seems my son turned away Matthias, a highly respected officer of the temple and a good man, who came to him for an answer to a simple question: "What must I do to obtain eternal life?" Apparently Jesus insulted him. First he implied that Matthias didn't follow the Ten Commandments. Then he told him to give away all his worldly possessions and his position at the temple in order to become nothing more than a student. "I don't understand it!" John yelled, demonstrating that famous temper.

And then John told me the story of the woman Jesus met at a well in Samaria. She was an adulteress, looked down on by the Samaritan people themselves. Considering that all Samaritans have bad reputations, she must have been very evil indeed. Not only did Jesus violate a very

1 strict taboo by talking with her, he did it in broad daylight,
 2 in public, and even accepted water from her! I don't
 3 understand what he was doing in Samaria in the first
 4 place. Nobody comes home from Judea that way.
 5 Everyone comes north and then east of the Jordan. It's
 6 just another example of Jesus going out of his way to
 7 associate with wicked people. When she spoke to him, he
 8 should have turned away so as not to even see her face,
 9 but he not only looked at her, he answered her questions
 10 and offered her forgiveness. Later the disciples heard that
 11 Jesus actually admitted to this sinful woman that he was
 12 the Messiah.

13 John looked at me and asked, "Why does he tell the
 14 most unlikely people that he is a Messiah, yet withhold
 15 the truth from our most important religious leaders?" It
 16 was then I realized he actually expected me to answer his
 17 question. I understand how Jesus performs miracles, for
 18 he is the Messiah, but often his conduct puzzles me as
 19 much as anyone. I could only tell to John what I have
 20 figured out for myself. I think Jesus reacts to peoples'
 21 needs according to what is in their hearts. John and I see
 22 the surface things: how rich or poor people are, how smart
 23 or foolish, how weak or strong, how respectable or
 24 unclean; but Jesus knows people from the inside, and it
 25 is that he responds to. (*MARY blows out candle and exits.*)

26 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** "I Sought the Lord"

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

A Prophet Despised

THEME: Jesus, the prophet, was not recognized among his own people.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 4:16-31

(MARY enters running, haphazardly carrying her journal, candle, and pen, and sits at the table. She is visibly disturbed. She intermittently writes, reads, and pauses with her head in her hands, trying to compose herself.)

MARY: *(Reading with emotion)* They tried to kill him. Our people, right here in Nazareth. My hand shakes so violently I'm not sure I can write this legibly, but I must. For my other children, for our friends. They need to know what has happened so that maybe they can one day understand.

He was teaching in the synagogue, and the Pharisees kept interrupting to remind everybody that this man who spoke with such knowledge and authority was merely a carpenter's son. An ordinary man with a mother, brothers, and sisters right here in town. Same old thing they always say when he comes home; but this time, Jesus reminded them about Elijah and how he had to help widows and heal lepers in places other than where he lived because his own people didn't believe in him. "A prophet is never accepted in his home town," Jesus announced, putting them in their place. This so angered the officials that they dragged him out of the synagogue and through town. Andrew hurried to tell me. I ran. Oh, God, how I ran, but by the time I arrived on the scene, the shouting mob was dragging my son to the top of the cliff outside of town. They were going to push him to his death!

I climbed that hill frantically, thinking, "They won't push him over if I'm there. They can't kill a man with his

1 mother clinging to him." But when I reached the top, I
 2 couldn't get to him. He was at the edge of the cliff and
 3 there must have been one hundred people between me
 4 and him. I screamed, "No! Wait!" But I was so out of breath,
 5 it came out little more than a whisper. I collapsed, with
 6 my chest on fire and pains shooting up my legs. I thought
 7 I was about to die too. Nobody paid any attention to me.
 8 The mob screamed names at Jesus. Some yelled, "Push
 9 him off! Push him off!" It was a nightmare. They were
 10 going to kill my son, and I could do nothing. Nothing.
 11 Burying my head in my arms, I cried and cried, the screams
 12 in the background a hellish torment.

13 And then, suddenly, everything got quiet. I looked
 14 up. Like the Red Sea parted for Moses, the crowd was
 15 separating, leaving him a path. Jesus calmly strode
 16 through. Looking neither left nor right, he just walked
 17 away, his disciples following one by one until they all
 18 disappeared. Jesus didn't need his mother. He had saved
 19 himself. And he will save others. (*MARY blows out her candle*
 20 *and exits.*)

21 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** "Thou Hidden Source of Calm Repose"

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Watching From the Outside

THEME: Envy. Mary sees how much others are able to do for her son and feels she lacks the means to make a difference.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Luke 8:19-21; Luke 8:2-3

(MARY enters with her candle, journal, and pen. She sits at the table, finishing her journal entry. She pauses, then reads what she has written.)

MARY: *(Reading)* Over and over I hear my cousin Elizabeth exclaiming with such joy and certainty, “Blessed art thou among women; blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.” I did feel blessed then, so many years ago, but I don’t feel blessed now. I feel scorned and utterly useless.

I find myself envying all the women who contribute to Jesus’ ministry, especially John’s mother. As the wife of a wealthy fish merchant, Salome can accomplish anything. Whether it’s a meal for the thirteen, overnight accommodations, or finances to pay for both, Salome makes the necessary arrangements. Servants take care of household responsibilities, which allows her to follow Jesus. She is present when he teaches. She sees firsthand the miracle of his healing. She can speak to him of her problems and receive his direction and comfort. And most painful of all, she can offer him a mother’s care.

Sometimes the hardest thing to bear is the way James and John need her as well as each other. They would never turn their mother away. The whole family works together in harmony for the good of Jesus’ ministry, while I am sent home to listen to my other children criticize Jesus and blame me for his behavior. I am so alone. I can no longer contribute anything worthwhile to Jesus’ life.

(MARY remains seated and writes in her journal as the hymn is sung.)

1 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"

2 *(After the hymn, MARY puts down her pen and reads from her*
3 *journal again.)*

4 **MARY:** *(Reading)* Mary Magdalene! How I envy her place in
5 my son's life; yet not so long ago, she was far more isolated
6 than I. Until Jesus came along, no one would go anywhere
7 near her. Scaly red patches blotched her ghastly white
8 skin. Lice infested her filthy, tangled hair. Though she
9 came from a family of some means, she wore ragged, foul-
10 smelling clothes.

11 No one knew what to expect from Mary in those days.
12 She might wander barefoot in the hills for hours, weeping
13 pitifully, or sit mute and blind as a stone for days on end.
14 She might dash madly through town, laughing wildly, then
15 suddenly shriek and lash furiously at anyone who came
16 near her. She cut her arms and legs with sharp rocks, then
17 watched idly with satisfaction when the blood flowed.
18 What horror that poor woman must have been suffering
19 to prefer physical pain to the torment in her mind!

20 And then Jesus healed her tortured soul. With a
21 gentle touch, my son gave her peace, and from that
22 moment, Mary Magdalene was his. Today she tirelessly
23 supports the ministry with a devotion to Jesus that is
24 almost angelic. Though young and beautiful now that her
25 health has returned, she displays no interest in any way
26 of life other than to serve Jesus.

27 I am envious of Mary: of her youth and vitality, of
28 her beauty, of her relationship with my son. She and
29 Salome are able to do so much for Jesus, while I . . . I can
30 do nothing. How can I serve my son, the Christ, in a way
31 that shows how much I love him? *(MARY blows out her*
32 *candle and exits.)*

33 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** *(With optional liturgical dance)* "More Love
34 to Thee, O Christ"

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FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Challenging the Status Quo

THEME: Antagonizing the religious hierarchy seemed to form the core of Jesus' ministry, and Mary doesn't understand.

(NOTE: Had Jesus healed and taught in a way that respected Jewish law and a mother's code of polite conduct, would anyone have ever heard of Jesus of Nazareth? Is it possible his aim was to expose the hypocrisy that provided an obstacle for the common Jewish man in his relationship to God?)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Matthew 16:21-26; John 9:13-41; Luke 11:37-53

(MARY enters with candle, journal, and pen, and sits at table. She pantomimes writing for a few moments, then lays her pen down and holds her head in her hands. She then reads from her journal.)

MARY: *(Reading)* I am so worried about Jesus, I can't think of anything else. If he keeps on antagonizing the Pharisees, he is surely doomed. And I know in my heart that he won't change. For months and months, he has deliberately provoked those in authority, beginning long ago when he refused to wash his hands at the home of a member of the Sanhedrin. Since he obviously knows the rules about washing hands before eating meat, he had to do this thing deliberately in order to provoke his host. When called to task, he called all the Pharisees present foolish, greedy, and wicked. He said they neglected the poor, and even God himself. He called them unjust. He said they loaded their people down with rules impossible to follow and ignored their pleas for help when they suffered. He accused them of placing obstacles in the way of understanding the law rather than teaching it.

Jesus was a newcomer at that point, an upstart. How dare he say such things to holy people, and right in their

own homes! Even I could understand why his host and their friends would be irate. That was one of the first times my son angered the authorities, and from that time on, they were out to get him. And he knew it!

I just don't understand why he does so much good but so often does it in a way that angers so many people. For instance, he healed a man's hand on the Sabbath in the synagogue. Why didn't he do that healing in the street on a Monday? No, he had the disabled man stand in front of everybody and then asked the Pharisees one of those questions he's always asking that has no safe answer: "Which is lawful on the Sabbath? To do good or to do evil? To save life or to kill?" After that little demonstration, the Pharisees were so furious they began plotting with Herod's people to kill Jesus. John knew about this plot and told me. Jesus had to know too, but it just didn't make any difference to him.

In the latest incident, he restored sight to a blind beggar, again on the Sabbath. But this time, Pharisees investigated the healing, which means they are now trying to destroy Jesus by legal means. Jesus heaped fuel on the blazing fire by telling the investigating Pharisees that they were blind themselves because they were ignorant and stubborn.

The tension builds and builds. John told me earlier this week that Jesus intends to go to Jerusalem for Passover. He must not go. It's far too dangerous. I lay awake nights, thinking I must do something to stop him before it's too late; yet I know I am helpless. John told me Peter tried to stop him and was thoroughly chastised for it. The only thing I can do is go to Jerusalem and stay as close to him as I can. Yet I know that it will not be close enough. Fear encloses my heart like a vise. (*MARY blows out her candle and exits.*)

SUGGESTED HYMN: "Come, Ye Disconsolate"

PALM SUNDAY

A Royal Welcome

THEME: Mary praises Jesus, acknowledges his triumph, and recognizes he does possess a kingdom.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES: Mark 1:45; Mark 2:12; Matthew 20:18; John 20:31; John 4:14; Mark 14:62; Luke 19:10

(MARY enters with journal, pen, candle, and palm branch. She sits at the table and pantomimes writing for a few moments, then pauses to pick up the palm branch and smiles, as though reliving a good memory. She then picks up her journal and reads.)

MARY: *(Reading)* He is amazing, this son of mine — dare I call Jesus my son? Sometimes it actually sounds presumptuous. Sometimes it seems it simply isn't possible that I gave birth to a man of God. He has healed thousands — paralytics, lepers, those with fever — and it hasn't mattered whether they were rich or poor, wise or foolish, important or common. He has cleansed the minds of so many: some, like Mary, so possessed by demons no one would even go near them; some whose anxieties were so subtle, they were recognized by no one else but Jesus. Where godly men have ignored women, Jesus has healed them, forgiven them, taught them, believed in them. He has opened his arms to children and those cast out by everyone else. He has taught people that it is more important to be kind than religious, and that God loves all people who believe in him, and will especially reward those who love their neighbor before anything else. He has astonished thousands with what he says and does, and I am as amazed as they are. My son! Jesus is my son!

I have worried about his health. He works so hard and uses far more energy than anyone realizes when he tends to the sick. He has walked miles and miles practically every day, and has taught in every town he has come to.

1 John said there had to be four thousand or more listeners
2 when he spoke in Bethsaida. I can't imagine it. I am proud
3 that my son is dedicated to spreading God's word to the
4 people.

5 And today, I saw how much he is loved. Hundreds
6 of people lined the roadside and shouted "Hosanna!" They
7 threw garlands in his path and kissed the hem of his robe.
8 They treated him like a king, and truly he does, at last,
9 seem to have a kingdom.

10 I am his mother, and I am so proud of him. He has
11 overcome obstacle after obstacle placed in his path by
12 those who should know better. He entered Jerusalem
13 despite warnings to stay away, despite attempts by his
14 own disciples to hide him. There is danger, he knows, but
15 he has such courage and such love for his people. That is
16 why he came — for them, for his people. I am overcome
17 with love and gratitude for this child of mine. When the
18 angel came to me and told me I would bear this special
19 child, I felt blessed among all women, for I had found
20 honor with our Lord God. This day, 33 years later, I realize
21 how truly blessed I am. (*MARY blows out her candle and*
22 *exits.*)

23 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

GOOD FRIDAY

The Last Words of Christ

(This complete service is based on the ancient Tenebrae, a tradition from the 8th century. It recognizes the death of Christ. The dimly lit sanctuary represents the darkness that fell on the earth during the Crucifixion. The candles symbolize Christ, the Light of the World. Hymns, Scriptures, visual symbols, Mary's reflections, and the extinguishing of the seven candles set the mood for this day of acknowledging the crucifixion of Jesus.)

PARTICIPANTS: Scripture Reader (may be several readers or pastor), Man 1, Woman 1, Mary.

(The seven candles may be arranged in any manner — individually in holders or together in a candelabrum — as long as they are visible to the congregation. The candles should be a dark color. A brass candle snuffer is also needed. You may wish to have a white Christ candle which remains lit throughout the whole service.)

The suggested hymns may be sung by the congregation, the choir, or a soloist.

At the beginning of the service, Scripture from Matthew 27 is read in segments. Please note that the references are not to be read — just the verses. At designated places, symbols are placed on the altar by Man 1 and Woman 1 wearing black robes.)

PROPS NEEDED: Pouch with coins, wash basin and pitcher with towel, whip, crown of thorns, scarlet robe, staff, chalice or sponge or both, nails, dice, self-standing sign reading "INRI, King of the Jews." (Grapevine sold in craft stores for making wreaths works well as a crown of thorns.)

(The service begins in dim light with meditative instrumental music. All seven candles are lit.)

SCRIPTURE READER: When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief

1 priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said, "for I have
2 betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they
3 replied. "That is your responsibility." So Judas threw the
4 money into the temple and left. Then he went away and
5 hanged himself. (*Matthew 27:3-5*) (*MAN 1 tosses pouch onto*
6 *the table in such a way that the coins rattle and slide out.*)

7 Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the
8 governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "Yes,
9 it is as you say," Jesus replied. When he was accused by
10 the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then
11 Pilate asked him, "Don't you hear the testimony they are
12 bringing against you?" But Jesus made no reply, not even
13 to a single charge — to the great amazement of the
14 governor. Now it was the governor's custom at the Feast
15 to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. At that time,
16 they had a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. So when
17 the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "which one
18 do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who
19 is called Christ?" For he knew it was out of envy that they
20 had handed Jesus over to him. While Pilate was sitting on
21 the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't
22 have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have
23 suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."
24 But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd
25 to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed. "Which
26 of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the
27 governor. "Barabbas," they answered. "What shall I do,
28 then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" Pilate asked. They
29 all answered, "Crucify him!" "Why? What crime has he
30 committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder,
31 "Crucify him!" When Pilate saw that he was getting
32 nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took
33 water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am
34 innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your
35 responsibility." (*Matthew 27:11-24*) (*WOMAN 1 places wash*

basin and pitcher with towel neatly on the table, as a servant might place washing utensils for a wealthy person.)

Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified. (*Matthew 27:26*) (*MAN 1 places the whip on the table with firmness, perhaps with one lash in the air first.*)

Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him ... (*Matthew 27:27, 28*) (*WOMAN 1 neatly drapes the scarlet robe on the table.*)

They then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. (*Matthew 27:29*) (*MAN 1 places the crown of thorns near the robe.*)

They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. (*Matthew 27:29-31*) (*WOMAN 1 places the staff on the table.*)

SUGGESTED HYMN: "Go to Dark Gethsemane," verses 1-3 (*MARY enters with candle, journal and pen, and sits at table, writing. She is distraught. She puts her pen down and wipes her eyes, then picks up journal and reads.*)

MARY: (*Reading*) Peter. Andrew. Where were you? John. James. How could you let this happen? But no, it is Pilate. He is to blame. No! No! All of you who stood in the courtyard are to blame. When Pilate washed his hands of responsibility, didn't you wash your hands of it too? Didn't you tell yourself, "I can't do anything. He alone has the power"? "This is not my fault," you said. "This is not my doing," you said. You stood and watched the whip tear apart my boy's back — a whole crowd of you — and you did nothing but moan and wail. Did you think your cries

1 would remove my son's pain? When the soldiers pushed
 2 that crown of thorns on his head and the blood ran down
 3 into his eyes, did you turn away so you wouldn't have to
 4 suffer his humiliation, his pain? Did he not feel it because
 5 you did not? (*MARY remains in place, alternately crying and*
 6 *writing, until it is her turn to speak again.*)

7 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** "Ah, Holy Jesus"

8 **SCRIPTURE READER:** As they were going out, they met a
 9 man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to
 10 carry the cross. They came to a place called Golgotha
 11 (which means The Place of the Skull). (*Matthew 27:32, 33*)
 12 (*MAN 1 places a handful of nails on the table.*)

13 There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with
 14 gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. (*Matthew*
 15 *27:34*) (*WOMAN 1 places a chalice or sponge or both on the table.*)

16 When they had crucified him, they divided up his
 17 clothes by casting lots. (*Matthew 27:35*) (*MAN 1 rolls a pair*
 18 *of dice, then lets them fall on the table.*)

19 Above his head they placed the written charge
 20 against him: "This Is Jesus, the King of the Jews." (*Matthew*
 21 *27:37*) (*WOMAN 1 places sign that reads INRI, King of the*
 22 *Jews" on the table.*)

23 **SUGGESTED HYMN:** "Were You There"

24 **MARY:** (*Reading*) On that long walk to Golgotha, as he
 25 staggered under the weight of the cross, did any of you
 26 push aside the guards and insist on carrying his burden
 27 as he has carried yours? Could you not have fought off
 28 the guards altogether and rescued my son? He was and
 29 is an innocent man. He has committed no crime. On that
 30 basis, you could have freed him. You should have freed
 31 him. You were cowards. One and all. Cowards. John —
 32 you said you loved him. You said you'd do anything for
 33 him. Peter — big, brash Peter, where were you when they
 34 drove nails into my son's wrists? My God, my God, I cannot
 35 bear this pain.



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