

POEMS OF THE PASSION

by Sean Hagle



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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Jesus

Simon Peter

Roman Soldier

Satan

Christian

(May be played by one person or two)

Mary

PRODUCTION NOTES

Poems of the Passion is an easy-to-present collection of poetic readings that gives the director freedom to put together an evening of poetic readings, songs, and drama that fits the church's gifts and available talent. It also allows the various ages in the congregation, such as youth groups and adult groups, to work together. These readings may be done during a church service or in several services in the Lenten weeks leading up to Easter.

When originally performed, the readings were interspersed with appropriate songs. Every church has its favorite Easter songs, and each soloist has a special Easter number that he or she might prefer. When selecting the songs to be performed with these readings, capitalize on the strengths of your choirs and/or ensembles and soloists.

The readers may wear biblical costumes. If your church doesn't own a Roman soldier costume, the reader could dress in army camouflage to suggest military involvement. For the character of Satan, the reader may wear a red choir robe and sunglasses.

There is no need for props or a special set.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. From This Time On**
- 2. Fisher of Men**
- 3. Father, Forgive Them**
- 4. Into Your Hands**
- 5. Master of Deceit**
- 6. Never Say Die**
- 7. A Mother's Sorrow**
- 8. Where Is Your Victory?**

From This Time On

Spoken by Jesus

(JESUS takes his place at the pulpit.)

JESUS: You ask if I'm the Christ. If I tell you, you do not believe.

If I ask you, you do not answer. No answer shall you receive.

You ask me if I'm the Son of God. You're right in saying I am.

What blasphemous words are spoken when the truth I have said?

You say I'm subverting the nation and oppose Caesar's throne.

I say give to Caesar what is his and to the Lord his own.

You ask if I'm the king of the Jews. Yes, it's as you say.

But you find no basis for a charge against this man of faith.

You ask by what authority I do these things, and from whom it was given,

But you can't even tell me if baptism is from John or from heaven.

The Son of Man will be seated from this time on

At the right hand of the Almighty God. *(Jesus exits as*

SIMON PETER enters and takes his place at the podium.)

Fisher of Men

Spoken by Simon Peter

SIMON PETER: I remember the day I saw him by the Sea of Galilee.

I was washing my nets when he walked up to me.

I put my nets in the water and caught a thousand fish.

1 Just because he was there, they jumped into my nets.
 2
 3 I said, "Lord, go away, for I'm a man full of sin."
 4 He said, "Simon, from now on you'll be a fisher of men."
 5
 6 I watched him heal the paralytic, listened as he taught
 7 across the land.
 8 He calmed the storm on the waves and healed a demon-
 9 possessed man.
 10 I saw him feed the five thousand and pray in the
 11 mountains.
 12 To my surprise, I was taken to the clouds during the
 13 transfiguration.
 14
 15 I said, "Lord, go away, for I'm a man full of sin."
 16 He said, "Simon, from now on you'll be a fisher of men."
 17
 18 He asked, "Who do you say I am?" "Christ, Son of God,"
 19 I did say.
 20 He said, "If any man come, let him take up his cross and
 21 follow me."
 22
 23 I said, "Lord, go away, for I'm a man full of sin."
 24 He said, "Simon, from now on you'll be a fisher of men."
 25
 26 I've seen Lazarus raised from the dead. I saw water
 27 turned to wine.
 28 But now in his darkest hour, I, his friend, did deny.
 29 (*SIMON PETER exits as ROMAN SOLDIER enters and steps*
 30 *behind the pulpit.*)
 31
 32 **Father, Forgive Them**
 33 *Spoken by a Roman soldier*
 34
 35 **ROMAN SOLDIER: I watched this man be captured and saw**

1 the betraying friend.
2 I've seen him in so much pain and still ask forgiveness
3 of them.
4
5 He stood before Pilate, solemnly and still.
6 The crowd yelled, "Give us Barabbas and crucify him!"
7 We took him and beat him; we brought out his blood.
8 We made a crown of thorns sit up on his head.
9
10 "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"
11 He screamed for our forgiveness. He cried for me and
12 you.
13 "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"
14 He's proven his love through his dying for you.
15
16 Through the crowd he marched the road of a
17 murderer's fate.
18 He carried the cross upon his back to meet death's date.
19
20 He hung upon the cross, as his followers would weep.
21 They watched him solemnly fall into an eternal sleep.
22 I took a spear and pierced this just man's side.
23 I felt the pain in my heart as through silent tears I
24 cried.
25
26 Father, forgive me, for I know not what I do.
27 I prayed for my forgiveness and my sins against you.
28 Father, forgive me, for I know not what I do.
29 I have murdered the Savior who was sent from you.
30
31 I looked upon his body as the rain began to fall.
32 I said, "Truly, this man was the Son of God!" (ROMAN
33 SOLDIER exits as JESUS enters and stands behind the podium.)
34
35

Into Your Hands

Spoken by Jesus

JESUS: Could I not call a thousand angels

And come down from the cross?

Could I not pass this cup

And forget about the lost?

Could I not call your name

And you would save me?

Could I not be taken down

And forget those who believe?

Into your hands I commit my spirit.

Into your hands I commit my soul.

Take me from this world

And make yours my own. (*JESUS exits as SATAN enters and stands behind the podium.*)

Master of Deceit

Spoken by Satan

SATAN: I took him into the wilderness and tempted him day and night.

I watched him fall on his knees in hunger, with no strength to fight.

He went around performing miracles from the works I had done,

But now in this hour of death, the power of darkness has won.

I entered the heart of Judas, a disciple walking by his side.

I made his most faithful follower turn away and deny.

The high priest would not believe him, much to my

1 delight.
 2 Pilate sent Jesus to the cross. From the mob came his
 3 fright.

4
 5 I've been upon the earth since before time was born.
 6 I've been in the garden twice, with God's creation, then
 7 God's son.
 8 I came in the appearance of a serpent and a servant.
 9 I am the master of deceit, the master of the world.

10
 11 Jesus has now been buried, and there he will ever stay.
 12 My victory has finally been won on this darkened day.
 13 The grave has concealed him. From there he cannot
 14 cheat.
 15 This victor of the world, this master of deceit.

16
 17 What is that sound? What is making my hell quake?
 18 Could this be what he said? Could he rise from the
 19 grave?
 20 There is no possible way the grave can lose its treasure.
 21 The Son of God cannot take away my simple pleasure.

22
 23 Oh no, he is alive! My world is not the same.
 24 Oh no, he is risen! Up from the darkened grave.
 25 Oh no, I am defeated! I have lost the battle again.
 26 Oh no, I'm very weak. This war I cannot win! (SATAN
 27 *exits as CHRISTIAN enters and stands at the podium.*)

28
 29 Never Say Die
 30 *Spoken by a Christian today*

31
 32 CHRISTIAN: The lightning struck, the thunder rolled,
 33 Darkness covered the land below.
 34 Wind in the fields, birds in the trees,
 35 The crown of thorns that bled for me.

1 White snow flying in the winter breeze,
2 From Satan's hand we have been freed.
3 Rain in the sky, like tears falling down,
4 Jesus died the day he wore my crown.
5
6 Never say die! Christ rose from the grave.
7 Never say die! My sins are washed away.
8
9 When I think of my Lord and how he died for me,
10 Dying on the cross so that all could be free,
11 A life full of hardship, but never did he sin.
12 That day at Calvary, the devil couldn't win.
13
14 For thirty pieces of silver, my Savior died.
15 The Romans cursed, and Peter denied.
16 Jesus, the Son of God, was sent to Calvary.
17 From Satan's hands we have been set free.
18
19 The nails in his hands, a spear in his side.
20 The soldiers played games, the followers cried.
21 But they weren't to know what was to be.
22 Jesus would live so the blind might see.
23
24 Never say die! Christ rose from the grave.
25 Never say die! My sins are washed away.
26
27 When you're down in sin, don't run around.
28 Look to Jesus. Stand on his solid ground.
29 You may feel blue; you may want to cry,
30 But don't give up. Don't ever say die.
31
32 The victory was won when Jesus rose from the grave.
33 Now we can stand our ground to fight in Jesus' name,
34 For he conquered death and all of Satan's perils.
35 Greater is he who is in us, than he who is in the world.

(CHRISTIAN exits as MARY enters and stands at the podium.)

A Mother's Sorrow

Spoken by Mary, mother of Jesus

MARY: Thirty-three years of watching him grow

Into this man hanging on the cross,

A night in my mind from many years ago

Keeps me going, believing all is not lost.

A star still burns in the night skies above

To show those who have lost the way.

Who else could hang in all of this love

And still, for people's sins, pray?

A mother's sorrow. The pain in my heart.

No look at tomorrow. No hope on my part.

A mother's sorrow, seeing my son die.

This life of goodness dying before my eyes.

The boys of Bethlehem under two were slain

Because of my son's appearance on earth.

What can the Pharisees hope to gain

By killing the baby of the prophetic birth?

Angels again proclaim him on high,

Praising him and uplifting his soul.

Do I dare allow myself to cry,

Or shall all my fears and emotions hold?

A mother's sorrow. The pain in my heart.

No look at tomorrow. No hope on my part.

A mother's sorrow, seeing my son die.

This life of goodness dying before my eyes.

1 Simeon was so proud to see him that day.
 2 His eyes knew they had seen salvation.
 3 Jesus was the one for whom he'd prayed.
 4 It was marvelous to see his reaction.

5
 6 The moon gives hope to generations to come
 7 Of a promise of another day in glory,
 8 Where the sun never seems to hide or run
 9 From darkness nor from morning.

10
 11 A mother's sorrow. The pain in my heart.
 12 No look at tomorrow. No hope on my part.
 13 A mother's sorrow, seeing my son die.
 14 This life of goodness dying before my eyes.

15
 16 Under my wing I took this God-given child
 17 To raise as God himself would.
 18 Now he mounts on glorious wings so mild
 19 To do, for all men, what he should.

20
 21 Gifts I have kept to cherish his life,
 22 To keep forever in my heart's home.
 23 Why must he die with all our strife?
 24 Will he really go, leaving me alone?

25
 26 He looks at John and me with heartfelt love.
 27 Alas, he speaks with words barely muttered,
 28 To me he says, "Dear woman, here is your son,"
 29 And to his beloved John, "Here is your mother." (*MARY*
 30 *exits as CHRISTIAN enters and stands at the podium.*)

31
 32 Where Is Your Victory?
 33 *Spoken by a Christian today*

34
 35 CHRISTIAN: Death, where is your victory? Where is your



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P.O. Box 248 - Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-844-841-6387 - Fax (319) 368-8011

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