



*Women's Lent by
Candlelight Meditation*

This meditation was written by Mollie Schairer and based on Rev. Paul Schweppe's 2005 Lent sermon series, "The Women of Lent." Theological content was further reviewed by Rev. Joel Gerlach.



ALL THE WOMEN WHO WATCHED JESUS' CRUCIFIXION AND BURIAL

Mark 15: 40-41

Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

Romans 8:28

ALL: And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

HYMN

CLOSING BLESSING

ALL: May the love of the Lord Jesus draw us to himself. May the power of the Lord Jesus make us strong to do his will. May the peace of the Lord Jesus fill our lives. Amen.



OPENING RESPONSIVE PRAYER (from Psalm 119)

LEADER: LORD, please accept the willing praise from our mouths,

GROUP: And teach us your judgments.

LEADER: Deal with your servants according to your mercy,

GROUP: And teach us your statutes.

LEADER: We have inherited your testimonies forever

GROUP: Yes, they are the joy of our hearts. Amen.

OPENING HYMN



EVE, THE FIRST WOMAN

Genesis 3:1-6

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Genesis 3:15

ALL: *I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers, he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*

HYMN



GROUP: *And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

LEADER: His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness.

GROUP: *And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

LEADER: He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death,

GROUP: *And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

LEADER: He poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors.

ALL: *We all like sheep have gone astray, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

HYMN



MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS

RESPONSIVE READING

LEADER: He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground.

GROUP: *And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

LEADER: He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.

GROUP: *And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

LEADER: He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter

GROUP: *And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

LEADER: By oppression and judgment he was taken away, yet who of his generation protested?



MARY, THE SISTER OF MARTHA & LAZARUS

John 12:1-3, Mark 14:4-9

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

"Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."



RESPONSIVE PRAYER

LEADER: Dear Jesus, we too, have heard from you the sweet words of the Gospel that have brought us back to life. As Mary poured out upon you a lavish gift,

GROUP: *So let us now pour out our very lives in service to you.*

LEADER: As Mary offered her gift despite the scorn of others,

GROUP: *So let us continue in our lives of service, undeterred by criticism or ridicule.*

LEADER: As Mary spared no expense to show you love,

GROUP: *So let us never count the cost of living for you. Amen.*

HYMN



PONTIUS PILATE'S WIFE

Matthew 27:19

While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."

HYMN