

We all have imagination. Imagination allows us to go places and to do things that might otherwise be impossible. Today we are going to use imagination to help us pray. (Pause.)

Now before we begin, find a position that feels most comfortable to you. (Pause.) If you like, close your eyes. (Pause.) Now relax your entire body—your neck . . . your shoulders . . . your arms . . . your legs. (Pause.) Feel all the tension flowing out of your body, into the air and away. (Pause.) Now be very still and listen to the rhythm of your breathing. Listen. (Pause.) Feel your breath go in and out, in and out, in and out. (Pause.) Now let's begin. (Pause.)

In your imagination see yourself walking through Jerusalem. (Pause.) It's the afternoon but it is very cloudy...so dark, it looks like night time. (Pause.) The streets are strangely empty and quiet and you wonder where everyone is. (Pause.) Then, in the distance, you see a crowd of people gathered at the foot of a hill. On the hill you see three crosses. You slowly walk toward them. (Pause.)

Feel the wind kicking up the dust from the road and blowing it into your face. (Pause.) Feel an occasional rain drop fall on your head. (Pause.) As you get closer, you see that there are 3 men on the crosses. One of them is Jesus. (Pause.)

You see a small crowd of people standing at the foot of the cross, crying. (Pause.) You see Roman Soldiers standing around, talking and laughing, and making fun of Jesus. (Pause.)

You stand next to some of the people who are crying. You know that one of them is Mary, Jesus' mother. (Pause.)

You hear Jesus say, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they're doing." (Pause.)

You realize that Jesus didn't do anything to deserve to die like this. And yet, he was still able to forgive the people who punished him so severely. (Pause.)

You think that these people don't deserve his forgiveness and yet Jesus is giving it anyway. Then you realize that Jesus' forgiveness is meant for all of us even though we've done nothing to deserve it either. (Pause.)

You realize that Jesus is showing such great love...the greatest love that anyone can show, by dying for others. (Pause.)

You look up at Jesus and your eyes meet. Even now, he seems filled with gentleness.

What do you want to say to him? (Pause.)

What does Jesus say to you? (Pause.)

Take a moment to thank Jesus for being your redeemer. (Pause.)

Thank him for his forgiveness. (Pause.)

Ask Jesus to help you to forgive others as he has done. (Pause.)

Go with Jesus now deep down into your heart. Just rest in his love. Words are no longer needed. Be still together. Know how much he cares for you, love you, forgives you...redeems you. (Pause.)

You recognize that it's time to go now. You hear one of the criminals next to Jesus making fun of him. But the other one says, "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your Kingdom." (Pause.) You hear Jesus reply, "I assure you, this day, you will be with me in heaven." (Pause.)

As you prepare to walk away, say these same words that the criminal said, "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom."

[play recording of *Jesus, Remember Me*]

Gradually bring yourself back to the room. (Pause.) Straighten up. (Pause.) Stretch. (Pause.) Plant your feet firmly on the floor. (Pause.) Look all around you. (Pause.) Everyone's here. We're all back.