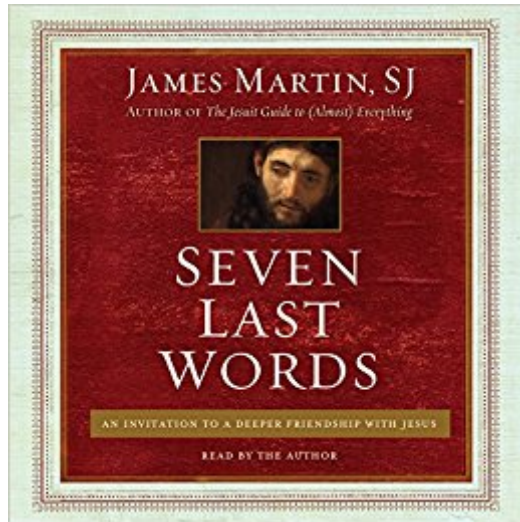


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Seven Last Words: An Invitation To A Deeper Friendship With Jesus



Synopsis

Father James Martin offers a portrait of Jesus that uses his last words on the cross to reveal how deeply he understood our predicaments, what it means to be fully human, and why we can turn to Christ completely in mind, heart, and soul. With the warmth, wisdom, and grace that infuse his works, Father Martin explains why Jesus' crucifixion and death on the cross are an important teaching moment in the Gospels. Jesus' final statements, words that are deeply cherished by his followers, exemplify the depth of his suffering but also provide a key to his empathy and why we can connect with him so deeply.

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Customer Reviews

“This insight alone makes this book worth reading: Jesus endured suffering, so he understands ours. There is nothing more isolating than suffering, everyone's suffering is largely incommunicable. Thus, in seeking to shoulder the sufferings of others we must pray to be able to hear the muffled cry.” (Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking*)

“As I sat in the cathedral on Good Friday, I listened to Father Martin's reflections on the Lord's Seven Last Words, grateful for the spiritual renewal he was bringing to the faithful assembled in prayer on this most solemn day of the Church year.” (Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York)

“Spiritually rewarding and uplifting.” (Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York)

A short but powerful work.” (Publishers Weekly)

“An inspiring, spirit-strengthening resource for anyone

bearing the weight of their own or another's suffering. "James Martin's compassion breathes through this book." (Joyce Rupp, author of *Fly While You Still Have Wings*) "Tremendous... very moving." (The Leaven) "Martin's book keeps coming back to the central point: Yes, Christians believe Jesus is divine-but, because he also was human, Jesus's compassion is deeper than we may expect. . . . Readers will walk away feeling hopeful-and feeling a renewed commitment to help others in our world." (Read the Spirit) "When you struggle in the spiritual life, when you wonder where God is, when you pray in doubt and darkness, and even when you are close to despair, you are praying to someone who is fully human and fully divine, someone who understands you fully." (America Magazine) "Martin invites the reader to inhabit the gospels; to live out the Passion in the privacy of the mind. He knows how to render the familiar-yet-strange events of Good Friday in such a way that the reader does not so much relate to Jesus's experience as taste it." (The Tablet) "Based on a series of reflections he delivered on Good Friday, 2015, in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, Fr. Martin preserves the sense of discursive intimacy with which he conducted the talks, while offering the reader the chance to engage the traditional Lenten exercise of prayerful meditation." (Vatican Radio) "Father James Martin is one of the most brilliant philosophical minds of our times. His prolific career as a writer has brought to us the insight and awareness of service to others along with the need to incorporate Joy into our lives." (OM Times) "The renowned Jesuit, James Martin, offers reflections on Christ's last words and refers to the type of 'radical forgiveness' Christ showed on the cross. It is very powerful, but very rare. Yet when we see it, we recognize it, he says." (Crux) "Wisdom is sprinkled throughout." (Stuart Dunn) "One of the most important religious voices in the country." (Religion News Service) --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

New York Times bestselling author James Martin, SJ, offers a vivid and compelling portrait of Jesus based on the Messiah's dramatic last words on the cross. Father Martin shows how deeply Jesus understands our struggles and why we can turn to him completely—in mind, heart, and soul. Based on Martin's homilies at New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral on Good Friday 2015, each meditation reflects on one of the seven traditional sayings: "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" "Woman, here is your son. . . . Here is

your mother. "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." "I am thirsty." "It is finished." "With the warmth, wisdom, and grace that infuse all of his writings, Father Martin explains why Jesus's words from the cross are so important for the life of the believer. For Jesus's final statements show how deeply Jesus understands our human struggles and why we can turn to him completely, sharing all our hopes and fears with him.

Jesus Understands You From the New York Times bestselling and award-winning author James Martin, SJ, comes a series of meditations on the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross, which reveal not only Jesus's love and forgiveness, but also why we can confidently turn to him with our worries, fears, and even doubts.

"Spiritually rewarding and uplifting."

• Cardinal Timothy Dolan, from the Foreword

"This insight alone makes this book worth reading: Jesus endured suffering, so he understands ours."

• Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking*

Praise for James Martin

"A masterful teacher and storyteller."

• Our Sunday Visitor

"Father Martin is a great spiritual teacher."

• Mary Karr, author of *Lit*

"A terrific storyteller . . . wise and entertaining."

• The Chicago Tribune

"Martin is one of our most popular spiritual writers -- and for good reason."

• Commonweal -- This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

I think that for a lot of us, at least at some point in our lives, faith means dutifully going to Church and mindlessly repeating the same prayers, that is without actually paying attention to what we hear or say. Theological treatises tend to be very intricate and keen on details for lay persons to follow. In between these extremes, there are Father Jim's books on Jesus. Not only that they are very nicely written and always with at least a tiny bit of humour, but they are extremely useful in this one thing: opening our eyes and ears and waking us up from the mindless trance so that we actually think, actively think, about Gospels, about our prayers and ultimately about our faith.

Jesus understands. For me, this is the central message of Fr. James Martin, SJ's newest book *SEVEN LAST WORDS: AN INVITATION TO A DEEPER FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS*. Meditating on and praying about each phrase brings me closer to Jesus, who is already reaching out to all of us in our human condition. This book is a great resource for Lent and to read throughout the year when facing emotional and physical pain. I particularly appreciate Fr. Jim's historical interpretation and the way he shows us Jesus's humanity and divinity, including Jesus's ministry of joy. This well-rounded picture of Jesus makes him

more accessible. This book has brought my prayer life to a new level.

This is a brilliant, inspiring and grace-filled book by the extraordinary Catholic writer and priest Fr. James Martin. Based on a sermon he gave on Good Friday 2015 at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, the book succinctly--but with incredible wisdom and perception--explains each of the seven last words (really sentences) of Christ as he hung on the cross. Christians believe that Christ was fully divine AND full human. This little book goes far in explaining this mystery. Christ's humanity, including the agonizing physical suffering of the Crucifixion, his abiding love for his mother, his feelings of abandonment by God and even his thirst on the cross, link him to us in a basic human way. This would be an excellent book to read on Good Friday and can easily be read in a single day (even by not-so-fast readers). Best of all, Fr. Martin writes for everyone--not just Roman Catholics. This book is such a blessing!

I passed this wonderful meditation onto others so that they may enjoy the depth of the spirituality of James Martin, S.J. He brings a depth to these words that gives us an opportunity to delve into the mystery of who Christ is both in his eyes and on our own journey. One of the spiritually brilliant priests in my parish has shared his meditation on Good Friday that kept people in Church praying for another half hour. We are blessed with the guidance of people who have worked hard and enjoyed their relationship with Christ and His people.

Whenever I read one of Father Martin's books, I feel as though we have met for a cup of coffee and are chatting as old friends. Father Martin has a way of making his message personal to the reader and applicable to daily situations. I read *Seven Last Words* for devotionals during Lent; however, it would be appropriate anytime. Father Martin guides the reader to seek deeper meaning from the few phrases that Jesus spoke while dying on the cross. Not only does Father Martin explore the significance of the words as they relate to Jesus's life and final moments, he uses them to teach us how we can have a closer relationship to Christ. The dual aspect of Christ as Divine as well as a human being is emphasized throughout the book, that Christ understands the challenges and trials that we all face as human beings. The book is not lengthy and accessible for wherever you are in your spiritual journey. The message is both inspiring and comforting. I highly recommend this book.

The perfect kickoff to my Lenten goal of reading more to further understand Jesus. So glad that God called James Martin to use his exceptional talent and approachable nature to help inspire others.

Really great read, made me wish I could have heard these sermons live at St. Patrick's.

What a great book! I just finished reading it and I will read it again. It is perfect for Lent or any time of year you need inspiration. It is easy reading and lifts you up so that you understand Jesus is just like us and understands us very well. I love this book and highly recommend it.

Beautiful meditations, sometimes just plain entertaining. Martin can write, for sure. I listened to the audio book, then played a chapter for my Bible study group and they were so enthusiastic that even after Easter we are reading the rest of it together. It's a particularly short book, which is good for a group reading aloud and commenting every few paragraphs. It's very easy to do a chapter in one session. Martin gives good insights as to the seven last statements as recorded in the Gospels -- for instance, in the chapter on "I thirst," he goes into some detail about how Jesus had a body, just like we do: he got colds and stomach aches, splinters, tired feet, etc. He even threw up! This sounds rather indelicate in a review, but Martin has just the right touch and the right tone. I highly recommend it.

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