

In Psalm 56:8 David says he expects that God is gathering all of his tears (and ours?) in a bottle. Why? Unless he's looking for the Lord to restore to his children every good thing we were robbed of, or never possessed, or squandered away; in other words, every sad thing we have cried over. This is why we can laugh now, even in our grief, and know that we're not just whistling in the dark.

—Ron Lutjens

# Old Orchard Church

## Fourth Sunday in Lent

April 3, 2011 — 10:15-11:50 a.m.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

**He was despised  
and rejected by men,  
a man of sorrows,  
and familiar with suffering.**

**Like one from whom  
men hide their faces  
he was despised,  
and we esteemed him not.**

—Isaiah 53:3

## Celebrating Jesus as Son of Man: Man of Sorrows

A Man of Sorrows,  
Familiar with suffering,  
my Lord Jesus Christ:

Today I bring my sadness,  
The achings of my heart;  
I lay them on you, my Savior,  
since before I was born you knew me,  
and carried every one of my sorrows  
to the cross with you.

There, in your pain,  
You took from my grief  
The power to has to ruin me.

O fill my fragile soul with confidence, even joy,  
as I worship you,  
and glimpse again by faith the Coming Day,  
when sorrow and sighing will flee away,  
because gladness and joy will have overtaken us forever.



### Today's Scripture

**Old Testament Lesson:** Isaiah 53  
**Gospel Reading:** John 12:20-36

### Prelude to the Cross

"Intimacy in a Meal with God"  
Luke 22: 14-23

*Ron Lutjens, senior pastor, preaching*

## He Carried Our Griefs

All the sadness in the world sometimes comes close to putting us under. Whether it's world headlines, or local disasters or just the painful detail from our own personal situations, it often feels like it's too much to take. Sadness is everywhere.

But as Christians we can find our load lightened, and even laugh, because we know that Christ cut the soul out of our sadness when he died. He **carried our sorrows**, as Isaiah put it in chapter 53; he carried them to the cross. He **bore our griefs** to the place of Death, that there they might die.

Yet who of us, even if we are resting in the finished work of Christ, does not still know deep sadness? Even in the best of times there can be an abiding sorrow underlining our fragile lives, one that a few thrown-around Bible verses will not chase away.

Though the problems of other believers so often dwarf our own, each of us carries around a wounded heart. And sometimes our sadness goes so deep we feel we can hardly make anybody understand it.

But what we celebrate today on this 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent, the Lord's Day, is that Jesus understands our sadness — every last bit of it, whatever it is, however deep it goes. He is the Man of Sorrows. He made your sorrows to be his sorrows. So the Scripture says about God, **In all their affliction, he was afflicted** (Isaiah 63:9). God, in Christ, is our Sympathy. But Christ is more to us than sympathy — however desperately we need sympathy — if we're to carry on and not lose our confidence in the goodness of God. We need as well someone to defeat — in our lives and in the world — the brokenness that keeps breeding sorrow upon sorrow. And Christ did that for us when he died: he gutted sorrow of its power to destroy us, however much it bruises our souls, and sometimes even our bodies. By carrying all our griefs to the cross he not only taught us that every last one of them is to be taken seriously; he also reassured us that no part of our created human glory can be taken from us for good. All our sadness and sorrows and griefs were gathered up into that one Greatest Grief when Jesus cried out in his anguish, "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" our destruction as the guilty ones under the righteous wrath of God in the cruel murder of Jesus, the pure and perfect man. And the Father's handing over of his Son to an awful murder was nothing less than the destruction of all we are as sinners under the righteous wrath of God, we who as rebels against our Creator have brought so much grief upon the world.

But having gone under with Christ in his death, by faith, we emerge with him on the other side, the side of his resurrection—which is life and pure goodness forever, and therefore laughter. It is really because of the work of the Man of Sorrows at the cross that the psalmist, David, can kick back, as it were, and exclaim:

**Weeping may last for the night,  
But joy comes in the morning.** (Psalm 30:5)

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