

# The First Sorrowful Mystery ~ The Agony in the Garden



*The Agony in the Garden - El Greco*

*Our Father Who art in heaven...*

It is Thursday night and Jesus has gone to the garden to pray. He knows there are jealous enemies who want him out of the way. *Look!* Jesus sees the torches as they come across the valley to arrest him. But at the back of the garden there is a gate where he could have escaped. But Jesus stays; he knows what he must do.

*Hail Mary full of grace...*

Peter, James and John are the closest friends of Jesus. He has asked them to pray with him. They say *yes*, but then they fall asleep, leaving him alone. In El Greco's painting I can see them tucked in the cave, sound asleep.

*Hail Mary full of grace...*



Deep inside Jesus knows all about the world's sins: all about the hatred, all about death and how unfair people can be. His sweat changes to blood, but an angel comes to give him strength. He is leaning on heaven. *I can lean on heaven too.*

*Hail Mary full of grace...*

It is the Passover time remembering when God freed the ancient Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt. God led them through the desert after passing through the Red Sea, the water piled up on the left and right. Now Jesus will die on the cross for love of a sinful world, and we will pass with him from darkness to light.

*Hail Mary full of grace...*



At Passover the moon is full and bright, and so I can see by the moonlight that Jesus is struggling and sad. What would I have said to Jesus if I had been there and we could see each other face to face?

*Hail Mary full of grace...*

Judas has told the soldiers they will find Jesus in the garden where the olive trees grow. They paid Judas thirty silver coins for that information. Judas had acted like a friend, but he really wasn't, was he?

*Hail Mary full of grace...*

The guards asked Judas, "*How will we know which man is Jesus, so we can arrest him?*" Judas answered, "*I'll give him a kiss on the cheek, that's how you'll know.*" A kiss is a sign of great love, and Judas sadly turned it into a sign of *betrayal* (that's turning against a friend). Jesus calls Judas, *friend*. Jesus calls me *friend* too.

*Hail Mary full of grace...*

As the soldiers arrest Jesus they tie his hands and treat him very badly. But Jesus remains gentle. He understands what will happen next. He already has forgiveness in his heart. He understands that forgiveness can be very difficult. He asks that we at least try.

*Hail Mary full of grace...*

The three apostles became frightened and ran away. Later that same night Peter even acted like he never heard of Jesus when a girl said to him, "*Hey, I've seen you with Jesus of Nazareth.*" And Peter answered, "*I don't even know who you are talking about.*"

*Hail Mary full of grace...*



This is the *Garden of Olives* today. It is a very beautiful and peaceful place. Some of the olive trees there are over 2000 years old. Maybe the big tree in the middle is the one under which Jesus prayed. I can imagine praying with Jesus on the night of his suffering.

*Hail Mary full of grace...*

*Glory be to the Father...*