

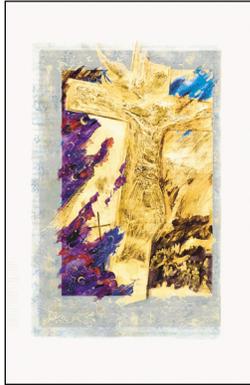


THE SAINT JOHN'S BIBLE

Poster Notes for *The Crucifixion* from *The Saint John's Bible*

Luke 23: 44-49

Artist Donald Jackson



It may come as something of a surprise to some to see an image of the Crucified with such a lavish display of gold. Quite early in the discussions between the CIT and the artists, we decided to reserve gold for theophanies and words of the Lord. It is this idea of God showing Himself in his Divine Love for humanity that the Gospel According to Luke emphasizes.

As the CIT has expressed it: “The three-hour darkness...symbolizes the apocalyptic Day of the Lord. ...The eschaton has arrived with Jesus’ death, and it is universal in scope. When Jesus cries out “Father”... he is linking the crucifixion together with the Transfiguration and the agony, two other places which show divine sonship. This carries over into the next verse where the centurion calls Jesus, “just,” a term in the Wisdom literature that signifies a child of God. The death scene shows Jesus transfigured in glory, and then, glorifies God.”

Donald also sensed a need to relate his imagery to the past, since the crucifix is such a central image in the Christian tradition. In early sketches for the piece, he used the famous Gero Cross for the image of Christ. In this way, he began to link his vision with earlier artists and continue a conversation about the meaning of this central image.

Donald’s final image brings the conversation into the present and is part of current theological discussions. Deep thought is being given to the meaning of the crucifixion in the present theological climate, in which Christians are increasingly challenged to place the faith in dialogue with other religions. Increasingly, theologians are speaking of the Crucifixion in terms of a display of God’s love for humanity and a revelation of the Christ as the true Just One. Donald’s image adds to the visual conversation concerning the meaning of the Crucifixion in the contemporary world with his contrast of pain with the glory of gold.

Nathanael Hauser, OSB

Poster Notes for Carpet Treatments from *The Saint John's Bible*

The page with the multitude of white crosses represent very quiet and gentle designs intending to slow down the reader. They also assist in minimizing the show through of the art works on the opposite sides of the vellum pages. They mark the end of each Gospel, with the next page having the full page, colorful illumination.