

## THE CROSS

### INTRO

- If you could witness any moment in history (without being in danger!), what would it be and why?

We continue in our Lenten series, The Cross, which is about encounters with Jesus, the cross and the transformation it can bring.

### READ

Matthew 27:50-54

Luke 23:44-47

### REFLECT

The centurion was a professional soldier used to death, yet something about Jesus moved him. He wasn't a disciple. He wasn't a priest. He didn't know the Scriptures by heart. He was a Roman soldier — a man trained to kill. And yet... he was the *first* to say it out loud: "Surely this man was the Son of God."

*Qu: What differences were there between the centurion and the religious leaders of that time? Why might the outsider be the one who sees the truth?*

*Qu: What aspects of Jesus' death might have touched the centurion so deeply?*

*Qu: Is there a moment when God reached you in an unexpected way?*

### RESPOND

God often speaks through the darkness and earthquakes in our lives—not to destroy us, but to awaken us to His presence and draw us nearer to the cross. Like the centurion, let the shaking stir something in your soul — not anxiety, worry or fear, but awe and openness to God.

*Qu: What in your life feels like a "shaking"—a moment of crisis, loss, or change? How could that be a space where God is revealing something?*

## THE ROMAN CENTURION

*Qu: How might we recognize Jesus more clearly in moments of weakness or pain rather than strength and success?*

The centurion made a bold confession.

*Qu: Is there a place where you feel called to speak your faith more openly?*

Spend time this week reading on or more of the gospel accounts of the events from Palm Sunday to Easter.

### PRAY

The centurion wasn't looking for faith. But he watched, he listened, and he responded. May we do the same—with eyes open, hearts soft, and voices ready to declare, "Surely this man was the Son of God."

- Pray for clarity in the midst of darkness.
- Pray for boldness to speak the truth of your faith when the opportunity arises.
- Pray for one another—that we would be present to each other's needs, carry one another's burdens, and encourage each other to see Jesus more clearly, even in the hardest places.