

The Passion of the Lord

James A. Noel and Matthew V. Johnson, eds. *The Passion of the Lord*. James A. Noel, *Were You There* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 41-42.

James A. Noel, "Were You There," *The Passion of the Lord*, ed. James A. Noel and Matthew V. Johnson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005),

James Noel is Professor at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

Noel states: The painting I made for this book's cover is my attempt to capture this idea visually.....In my painting Mary's gesture beneath the cross and her central placement in the painting implies that she is lifting up her arms in grief over the cruel and violent deaths suffered by all three figures – not just Jesus. All three of the crucified are her boys, and because of her love for these boys – her sons – she also is undergoing crucifixion. Mary's gesture expresses her wish to take all her boys down from the cross or to die in their place.

The sun will set, and she will be condemned to endure the weight of her grief. During the long days and nights that lie ahead, she will beseechingly lift up her arms to God in the same gesture.