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Prayer

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My Jesus

protect us from those who protect you
defend us from those who defend you
those who protect you from the men in despair who blaspheme your name
the young men similar to you
protect us from those who protect you
because their words ring with the clanking of gold coins
while they auction off your passion, while pitying you
poor our Lord, they say, died a martyr's death
as if you were someone worthy of pity
and maybe you rejoiced in that death
and in leaving this world in which they administer justice

In any case you did not die so they would lament you
your cut up lips even today
refuse vinegar from the cup of their mercy
protect us from those gluttons who belch
while they defend you from the hungry, from the disdained
plundered new proletarians and beggars
whose daughters sell themselves on the streets for ten marks
whose young sons slice their veins from pain
because their future has been stolen from them

Protect us from the looters of people's pain
from the tax evaders
from the pedophiles and perjurers
from the journalistic dog-catchers
who from your pierced insides
and thorny crown make breaking news
from the organizers of the beauty pageants
from the priests of brothels
who with your name silence
the anger of the people who suffer

Maybe your death was salvation for you

and not only for us
Because you wanted to leave this valley of tears
This valley ruled by the law of the strongest
the law of the sword
for centuries
this land no one loves
This land whose bloody rags are sold by her sons
for nothing
You wanted to see the face of your father
Who sold you to the thugs
You left because you didn't want this kind of world

My Jesus
I know you believe more in the ugly words of those who
sweat blood, rather than the flattery of hypocrites
and that you love the Muslims of poor Bosnia
more than the Catholics of rich Rome

and much more the young men and women who imitated you out of their own despair
than the executioners who erected golden altars for you
you were an enemy to the priests and the Pharisees
and a brother to the beggars and the drunks
you rejoiced in life
made wine out of water
so the feast of birth could be celebrated
and not the dance of death

You said "Let the one among you without sin cast the first stone"
Amen.

Translated by Amy Gopp – © 2011 Amy Gopp

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