

Compassionate Christ

Painting a portrait of our Savior that would be universally meaningful and that would convey His ultimate compassion, has been my desire as long as I can remember. A friend of mine shared a scene from a film that I found especially touching and inspiring.

Jesus, as a grown man, sees his mother, Mary, sitting in a softly lit room. He kneels at her feet looking up into her eyes as he once did when he was young. In essence, he tries to find the right words to say as his mind is reminiscent of the many experiences they have shared as mother and son. He then tells her, "My time has come and is at hand." Mary questions what he means to which he responds, "On the morrow they come for me." Through her concerned expression she reminds him, "Oh Jesus, you have the power to save yourself." Then with the most tender feelings, considering the magnitude of His Atonement which is soon to commence, he says, "Mother, it is for this purpose I have come into the world."

A realization overcomes Mary and she wonders if this may be the last time she will see him alive. As tears fill her eyes she reaches out one last time to stroke her son's hair and to gaze upon him as she once did when he was a child. His compassion toward his mother, as well as every soul in the world, radiates from his countenance as he willingly fulfills the purpose of his life.

In the original portrait, every eye color in the world is painted into Christ's eyes. I included blue, green, hazel, amber, brown, black etc. so that every viewer could see his or her own eyes reflected in the Savior's eyes, that they might feel his very personal love and compassion for each individual on Earth.

As I was painting this piece, I thought of all the relatives and ancestors who have gone before me. The Compassionate Christ was completed a month after my father passed away and my 9 year old twin daughter had passed away several years earlier. I like to believe these loved ones helped to influence this painting of our Savior.

He is real. He lives. His arms are open wide to encircle and embrace us as we experience the love of a very caring and Compassionate Christ.