

Stations of the Cross

Sculpture by Christine Bailey

On Sunday, April 7, 1974, the *Florida Times-Union* published an article about Christine Bailey's sculptures of the Stations of the Cross. These sculptures were gifted to St. John's Cathedral by her son Jerome McLean. During her lifetime, the untaught sculptor loaned her religious figures to churches.

The article stated that Christine had a "simple, inclusive attitude about faith." She thought her sculptures should find a place in what was then Hemming Park, "so that people going to work might see them and know Christ."

The Georgia woman said she had found God in a cotton patch as she picked, listening to stories of Jesus from an older woman working alongside her.

"It's that kind of placid strength – the kind the farmer and the Christian have – that Christine gouged, whittled, and scraped of the faces of her Christ in native wood." Using her mother's worn-down pen knife, a rasp, shards of glass, and the simplest tools, she managed to increase the number of her sculptures even as her eyesight diminished.

Viewers saw Christine's face reflected in her works and, in an earlier work of a small angel, some saw the face of her son Jerry. Lychee and mimosa were among the wood she used for her creations.

St. John's Cathedral is grateful to be the recipient of this remarkable woman's faith.