

DAY 13: WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

Opening Prayer

Lord God,

we tremble to think that it was one of Jesus' own friends who betrayed him.

One who sat by him, who broke bread with him.

Give us strength, we pray, to walk faithfully with Jesus,

even when the road we walk is rocky

even when the message of the cross seems like foolishness

and even when we feel betrayed.

Give us the grace to endure our troubles,

and reveal to us the glory of your kingdom,

through your son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Scripture Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 70; John 13:21-32

Reflection:

In recent times some Christians have adopted the phrase 'servant leadership' within the church and associated this type of leadership with Jesus. Jesus, therefore, becomes the model of servant leadership. Indeed, Jesus' leadership in the Gospels are worthy to examine and even to imitate. In fact, it was during this Holy Week that Jesus will performed the ultimate servant's act, first by washing the feet of his disciples and then by dying on the cross for us. However, in the Book of Isaiah our attention turns to another servant. This reading from Isaiah compel us to compare (and contrast) Jesus' own final week with the life of an earlier, prophetic servant. This servant does not have a name. In fact, the identity of this servant is greatly debated amongst Christian scholars. The bone of contention here is if it is an individual leader that the prophet speaks about or does the servant represent the nation of Israel? Many scholars do agree that the prophet was speaking about a servant to come in the person of the Messiah. The gospel reading sees Jesus predicting someone from his inner circle to betray him. Then handing Judas the piece of bread dipped into the dish, "*Satan entered into him.*" The last piece of bread, the morsel, is always given to the most loved child and for Jesus to give it to Judas, knowing what he is about to do says a lot about Jesus' love for a sinner. We all have the ability to be like Judas at times and to deny Christ for the sake of our other gods. Judas realised too late that what he was doing would not work and in his sorrow he repented in the only way he knew how.

Concluding Prayer

Eternal God and Father

by whose power we are created

and by whose love we are redeemed:

guide and strengthen us by your Spirit

that we may give ourselves to your service

and live this day in love for you and one another;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all for ever. Amen