

Spy Wednesday, 8th April, 2020

The Suffering Servant, in this passage from Isaiah, is given an educated tongue, in order that, by the eloquence of his words, the weary may be sustained. Each morning, he hears God's word, and undaunted by shame and spitting, undaunted by the world, carries out God's will, setting his face like flint to the task ahead in disciplined obedience. The Lord will help his servant, therefore, because of this ready obedience, this ability to be disciplined, to follow the will of God, no matter the cost.

And then there's Judas Iscariot. The disciple, with a good head for figures, and money, some might say, he's one who's been educated. He's the one in charge of the purse strings of the community, their bursar if you like. For some perverse reason, however, one which we will never know in this life, Judas Iscariot goes to the Chief Priests. *He* goes to *them*. He is paid for his trouble, and he looks to fulfill the wishes of his new paymasters by seeking out an opportunity to *betray* Jesus. So this day, traditionally, is called SPY WEDNESDAY, because an intimate friend became an enemy spy.

Jesus foresees this event. He the Suffering Servant knows what is to happen, but he has one important thing to do before the end he knows is coming, and that is to institute the Eucharist. So, you notice, he doesn't exactly say where they're going to eat the Passover - it is hidden from the spy, because it is organised in a round-about way, and not disclosed openly; so Judas Iscariot is not able to alert the Temple authorities in time to stop the Last Supper. Instead he will fall back to another default - the Garden, which he is relatively sure Jesus will be in, because he's made it his custom.

Judas had stopped his ears. His words were not to *sustain the weary*, but to kill. He gave up on the Lord's discipline, he gave up on him who is Wisdom. He went instead for a cost benefit analysis over the love of the God who is Love. Every time we act like that, we stand in the place of Judas Iscariot. Every time we say, "what do I get out of it?", we kill love, we let the weary fall by the way. Every time we say, "but how does it benefit me?", we act like Judas, and our ears are not wakened in morning of the Resurrection, but are closed in the sleep of the tomb. Let us ask the Lord to help us be disciplined, to obey him, to let our ears be opened, and our words given to sustain the weary; for, heaven knows, in the current situation, our words of despair will kill souls seeking hope, but our words of encouragement will sustain them. The Suffering Servant sacrifices himself, to bring godly sustenance to the weary, for that is love, and we must do likewise sacrificing our own life and comfort for God and for others.