

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Mar 27th 2013

“Lord, in your great love...”

Tired and weary after a long day of preparation Jesus and his family of disciples gather to share a meal. Eating as one is customary for this family. They are a unique group. Each specifically invited to be a member. For three years they have travelled together, worked, prayed and played together. Intimate relationships have formed among them. Some ties are stronger than others. But at this point they have each other's backs. Jesus is the focal point of their relationships. He is their teacher, their Rabbi. This night, this family gathering is different.

It happens in the best of families – a meal spoiled. The atmosphere holds threat of a storm while discord percolates just below the surface of pleasant conversation. Then it happens. Something is said or done that tilts the scales. Accusations and denials spew forth. Arguments ensue. Someone is hurt, offended. Feelings of betrayal, shame and apprehension fill the air. Relationships crack, crumble.

This is the scene in today's gospel reading. We hear of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. Judas has sold Jesus for “...thirty pieces of silver...” Jesus knows. Now his brothers know. This is not the beginning of the end for Jesus. It is the beginning of the culmination of Jesus' life's passion.

We hear of greed that leads to betrayal, denial born of regret, broken relationships in the midst of anger, and later to additional denial fueled by fear, abandonment brought on by distrust and doubt. This family's relationships are faltering.

The story is well known. It is told in the veiled whisper of their scriptures. Scriptures well known by this family. “...The Lord is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; ... I shall not be put to shame...” (Isaiah) “For your sake I bear insult...zeal for your house consumes me...For the Lord hears the poor and his own who are in bonds he spurns not.” “I become an outcast to my brothers...Insult has broken by heart” yet “For your sake I bear insult...”(Psalm 69).

Jesus is not undone by the cowardly acts of his brothers, his sisters. Rather, this is to be the final outpouring of his love, his passion, for all. Jesus' Passion is Love. That's it. An 'it' so profoundly

simple it is simply profound. Jesus loves not in spite of, but because of. His life's passion – his love for us, for me, is magnified in the coming events. It is Jesus' Passion, his Love that leads to his death and resurrection.

Jesus loves me – all of me, fully clothed in my humanity. For Jesus the intimacy of our relationship is worth it all. All of whatever it may be. As we, his brothers and sisters run in fear and doubt, Jesus weeps out of love - for me. As we, his brothers and sisters deny him, Jesus reaches out, to me, to the crowds on his way to his death. As we, his brothers and sisters fade away, Jesus blesses me from the cross.

Jesus's Passion, his love, leads to his death and resurrection. Jesus' Passion, his love, leads me through his resurrection to Love.

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