

Wednesday of Holy Week

Readings: Isaiah 50:4–9a

Hebrews 12:1–3

Jesus foretells his betrayal;

John 13:21–32



Jesus is sharing a meal with the disciples when he reveals that he is to be betrayed. We can imagine the looks bouncing around the room as the group immediately tries to work out who it is. No one dared speak, until Simon Peter (usually the first to open his mouth!) nudges the man beside him...

‘One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him;... he asked him, “Lord, who is it?” Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.”’



Why didn't Jesus directly accuse Judas, face to face, there and then? Why hand him a piece of bread and whisper privately to the beloved disciple beside him? Was there a risk that the others would have tried to dissuade him, prevent or slow down the inevitable? The beloved disciple was clearly trusted by Jesus. Judas, on the other hand, was not... and yet still Jesus washed his feet and shared a meal with him. He did not object or defend himself, but trusted entirely in the truth that would be our salvation.

Points for reflection

We have so much to learn from Jesus' behaviour. We, too, will have been betrayed in our lives, treated unjustly, talked about, the subject of gossip. It hurts, and that pain can linger.

How do we respond to those who hurt us?

How could, or should we respond?

What prevents us from acting with dignity, empathy and ultimately forgiveness?

Take a piece of bread and a small bowl with a little oil or melted butter in. Remember the times when you've felt betrayed, and pray as you feel able for healing and peace, for all involved. Dip your bread into the bowl and remember that we have hurt others, and they have hurt us, often unintentionally. Eat and know that – through Christ – we can forgive and be forgiven.

◆ God of mercy, we acknowledge that we are all sinners. We turn from the wrong that we have thought and said and done, and are mindful of all that we have failed to do. For the sake of Jesus, who died for us, forgive us all that is past, and help us to live each day in the light of Christ our Lord. Amen.