

Sermon for Wednesday of Holy Week, 'Spy Wednesday,' Year C, 2007
4.iv.07, 7:00 p.m., Holy Eucharist (spoken)
Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 70, Hebrews 12:1-3, John 13:21-32

J. J. !

Grace to you and peace from Him Who is and Who
was and Who is to come! ✠ Amen.

**So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went
out. And it was night.**

--John 13:30

Saint John the Apostle and his school of Gospel-writers
despise him as, in hindsight, a greedy, hypocritical
traitor. No Christian will ever name a son after him.
To be a Judas is to be a two-faced traitor who sells his
friends out for personal gain. By contrast, Saint Francis
prayed for him every day, regarding Judas Iscariot as
"the most abandoned soul in purgatory." Personally, I
like to think that, after His crucifixion and death, when

Our Lord entered the realms of death and evil to declare God's victory over Satan, Judas would have been the very first of those sad souls whom the Crucified would have embraced, that He would have sought Judas out without delay, inviting him to come back to the Kingdom and to enter the Heavenly Church. For whom would He speak to first among the male Disciples after His rising, whom but Peter, Peter, who had not betrayed Him but who had denied Him three times. "Do you love me, Peter?" He would ask Him three times, once for each denial, until the Big Fisherman wept for sorrow and for joy.

Next to Peter, we are given more of a glimpse into the feelings and personality of Judas than of any other member of the Twelve. He is a

passionate follower of Jesus, but at some point his attention shifts from Jesus and the Kingdom of God. He preaches to what is likely to become of both Jesus and His disciples, the Twelve especially, if Jesus continues on His collision course with the Temple authorities and with Rome. And somewhere there, in that shift from faith to fear, the Evil One seizes this Disciple as the instrument with which to destroy what God is doing. Both men look each other in the eye at the Last Supper. Both men know what is about to be done. Judas leaves Jesus and the circle of the Twelve and does that deed.

John says that he did, and John seems to stress that "it was night." Why? Here is a thought about that. What is it we enter when we turn away

from Christ, and when we turn away from the community of His Disciples, from the Table of His fellowship? We enter 'night,' a darkness in which we cannot see properly, a life in which we must simply grope our way along. There, in that turning away, in that entrance into the night of the soul, we may become disoriented, comfortable with our blurred vision, and with not being able to be seen clearly, with a life of concealment. There, where we neither see properly nor seek the light of Christ, a vacuum in our hearts and minds may open up, and that vacuum will likely be filled with the spirit of fear, envy and despair, the unholy spirits that drove Judas to betray the life of His Master and to take his own life.

But remember that Christ is God's light, shining in the darkness of our world. If and when you find yourself in a dark place, a place in which you no longer know how to walk forward, remember that the Light of Christ is searching for you. Others have known such darkness and have been found by the light, the Augustinian monk, Martin Luther, and the Carmelite monk, John of the Cross, to name but two.

Only, do not remain in the darkness long. Just as Christ Our Lord looked into the eyes of Judas, knowing what Judas was about to do, so, too, does Christ, the Ruler and Lord of all, see into your heart, already knowing what it is that troubles you, what it is that tempts you, what it is that holds you in the

darkness. Return to Him unashamed, and may His light replace the darkness in us all! ✠ Amen.



Now to Him Who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made of us a Kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion with the Father and the Holy Spirit, both now and forever. ✠ Amen.

