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11 TUESDAY

Tuesday of HOLY WEEK

Isaiah 49: 1 - 6  
Ps 70: 1-6, 15,17  
John 13: 21-33, 36-38

Besides the human dread and fear Jesus experienced in the garden of Gethsemane at the prospect of His approaching passion, St John's gospel also tells us Jesus was "troubled in spirit" at the Last Supper. It wasn't about His own coming suffering, but about His betrayal by Judas. And that must have been a particularly bitter suffering for Jesus. After all, He'd chosen Judas as one of His special 12 and given him the same apostolic training and preparation as the others. Among them, too, Judas must have been seen as competent, reliable and trustworthy, since the care of their common funds was in his hands. Did Jesus not know what would happen? None of the others suspected anything. So the betrayal must have come as a great shock and upset to them too. In their confusion and fear perhaps that was why they so quickly fled away and abandoned Jesus after His arrest, despite their so recent intimacy with Him at Supper.

Reflecting on Jesus' passion and death, it's mainly His physical sufferings that we think of (notice how overwhelmingly physical is the violence in the film "The Passion of the Christ"). There is so much physical suffering in our world, which Jesus shared in in His own passion. But surely He also shares the suffering of spirit that so many people experience, the psychological suffering of betrayal, misunderstanding, love not responded to, the anxieties and fears that we all know. He was "troubled in spirit": may His grace help us to understand this, and heal our troubled spirits, aware as we are that we too have betrayed Him and not responded adequately to His love

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