

Drive Out Darkness within Ourselves Tuesday of Holy Week April 11, 2017
8:15 AM Is 49:1-6; **Jn 13:21-33, 36-38** (We must be utterly and totally single-hearted as Jesus was in our commitment to the one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.)

“And it was night.”

This story of Judas is very troubling because Jesus was such a popular, well-known figure, well-known to the chief priests, the Pharisees, the scribes, the crowds; everybody knew who he was. **So what really was Judas’ role?** What did he really do? Well, no one knows. They say, “He handed him over.” Well, how did he do that? He pointed him out to the soldiers, but the soldiers must have known who he was all along. He is the guy that cleaned out the Temple, and these soldiers were the soldiers of the high priesthood and the Temple. They were temple police, not Roman police. So they must have known who he was. So what did Judas do? Told them where he was late at night? Well, **they could have found him. Judas’s role is very hard to pin down.**

John here implies that his role was actually in a way a role of service, in an odd way. He took the devil or Satan out of the cenacle. **Satan entered him, and he left taking away Satan.** That’s a rather odd idea, but it is, I think, what the evangelist is getting at **because then Jesus says, “Now is the Son of Man glorified.”**

So we have to spend some time with these texts and try to puzzle out exactly what roles these various people are playing. By and large, by and large, what they are saying is that the disciples, although they spent all this time with Jesus and, although they are commissioned and appointed and ordained as his workers, coworkers and so on, they are basically helpless and hopeless. **The real drama is between Jesus and Satan, between God and the evil one.** That’s the battle, and people are just standing around wondering what’s happening.

So Judas serves a purpose in taking Satan momentarily on the picture, so that the Son of Man can be glorified. And **the Son of Man is glorified precisely because the Son of Man only cares about the Father and the Father’s glory,** because he has a single-hearted, single-minded devotion to the true God, whose being he shares completely and whose being **he desires to share completely with the human race.** And in fact that is the whole plan, but **it has been**

thwarted for centuries by Satan, who has ways of deceiving, misguiding, confusing, crippling distracting people. **So Judas takes Satan out of the picture momentarily so that the disciples won't be distracted, and they can listen and actually hear.**

So we all need to be aware of **our responsibilities to drive darkness out of our own minds and hearts.** We say, "All are welcome here," which is our policy, and we want everyone to believe that. At the same time, everyone who comes in here is responsible for driving away every form of darkness. No matter what conditions we happen to live under and within, many of which we cannot help and cannot change, nonetheless what we have to desire is to drive all darkness out from within ourselves, **so that the healing and saving power of God can start to work from within us and lead us where we need to go.** Without that, of course we can't know what to do. Without that, we are utterly and totally helpless. So we need to be accepted as we are in our conditions. We need to be completely welcomed, but at the same time we have to be totally ready and willing to **drive out from within ourselves everything that keeps us from God, everything that stands in the way of reconciliation with other people.** Yes, some people are malicious. Yes, some people are sociopathic and they are not going to contribute to any well-being of our own personal lives. But that doesn't ever excuse ourselves from harboring darkness in any form. So that's the other side of it. Yes, we are welcome, but, **yes, we have to be committed to the light, and the light is Christ.** And the light is glorified within us when we choose to drive away darkness. And the light will guide us, and the light is the truth that will free us, and we can go forward. And no one else has the right to judge us. But on the other hand, **we must be utterly and totally single-hearted as Jesus was in our commitment to the one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**