



WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK (SPY WEDNESDAY)

Today we see Judas plot Jesus' betrayal. He sold his friendship with him for thirty pieces of silver. We might shake our head in disapproval. However, we too, can let our own selfish thoughts and actions disrupt our relationship with God and with each other.

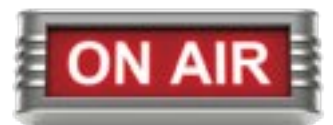
Scripture tells us

'One of the Twelve, the man called Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you prepared to give me if I hand him over to you?' They paid him thirty silver pieces, and from that moment he looked for an opportunity to betray him.' (Matthew 26:14-25)

Deepening our Participation in the Broadcast Celebration

Before the broadcast begins:

- Gather with other members of your household, if you can.
- Place in your sacred space some silver coins and/or a picture of the prodigal son – that perfect image of God's loving forgiveness.
- Light the candle safely.



During the broadcast look out for the following:

- Mass is celebrated as normal today. In some churches a **service of prayer and reconciliation** may be broadcast. Although we might betray God's trust in us, the God Jesus showed us is a forgiving God. There is nothing, no matter how bad, that his love cannot forgive and heal. In these days we are encouraged to **seek forgiveness for our failings** – to be reconciled with God and to be reconciled with each other. In the present circumstances where it may be impossible to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation you might consider celebrating the prayer ritual below.
- In the **Readings** the Prophet Isaiah continues to enlighten us to the sufferings to come. The Psalm takes up the idea of betrayal, isolation and suffering. In the Gospel we see Judas plot with the chief priests against Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.
- At communion time make an **Act of Spiritual Communion**. Invite Jesus to visit your heart, take some time to truly welcome his presence, bring to him the areas of your life where you need forgiveness and healing – the people you need to be reconciled with.

A Prayer Ritual at Home: Reconciling with God and with one another

In your sacred space, place some pieces of silver and a picture of the Prodigal Son – that perfect image of God's living forgiveness (see page 15). This ritual should be celebrated quietly and slowly giving time to reflect on one's life and to open your heart to the forgiving and healing love of God.



Pope Francis' Advice

Recently Pope Francis spoke about what we can do when we cannot go to confession because of the current restrictions. He advised: 'It is very clear: If you cannot find a priest to confess to, speak directly with God, your Father, and tell him the truth. Say, "Lord, I did this, this, this. Forgive me," and ask for pardon with all your heart.' Make an act of contrition, the pope said, and promise God, 'I will go to confession afterward, but forgive me now.' And immediately you will return to a state of grace with God.' (Pope Francis, 20 March 2020)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Examination of Conscience

Let us pause, deep down in the silence of our heart, to examine our conscience

(Pause – and take your time)

How have I failed to love God, failed to do what is right, failed to love others?

Confession of Sin

Using your own words, in the silence of your heart, speak directly to God about your sins.

(Pause – and take your time)

'Lord, I did this ..., this ..., this ... Forgive me!' and ask for pardon with all your heart.

Act of Contrition

Then say: O my God, I thank you for loving me, I am sorry for all my sins, help me to live like Jesus and not to sin again. Amen.

Commitment to Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Dear Lord, I firmly amend, once I can, to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but good Lord forgive me now. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless us and keep us; The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us; The Lord turn his face toward us and give us his peace both now and forever. Amen.

Sign of the Cross...

To do

Think of three good things in your life and thank God for them. Make a random act of kindness for someone in your house or elsewhere. Pray an online Stations of the Cross. Practice reconciliation where there are disagreements. Read the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) or view it told in a YouTube clip. Access one of the Gospels and read the account of Jesus' death on the cross.

