

MARCH 30 2026 DEACON ROBERT KINGHORN

In the first reading from Isaiah, we hear how Jesus is a servant, whose sacrifice brings God's justice to the world. It reminds me also of a scripture verse, which we'll hear every Good Friday. It said, talking about Jesus: "Like a sapling he grew up, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Ours were the sufferings he bore, and through his wounds, we are healed."

So there you have it. The divine mystery laid bare before us, as we enter Holy Week. "Ours were the sufferings he bore." He is the one who suffers with us. What a consolation for all of those who are asking for help in their prayers. Those who maybe are the ones who are asking for this Mass to be said. Each of us have sorrows. But they are carried with us by Jesus. It is Jesus and us together.

In the Gospel of John, we hear about the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem for Passover. The act of courage this must have been... because he knew the religious leaders were out to get him, and to kill him. And yet he still continued on the journey. And we heard how he stopped at the house of Martha and Mary. And Lazarus. And, in fact, Judas was there as well, who was at that time his friend. But they all seemed to know that he was on his way to death, in Jerusalem when he got there.

So we have here, when we hear that story of what happened, a great lesson in pastoral ministry, I think. Look at the characters. We had Martha there. Martha, who got busy with the meal quickly. That's what she did to welcome people. That's the way she could console people and welcome them.

We also had Mary. And she was the one who sat with Jesus, listened to his pain, and took a position as a servant. She even got the ointment out.

The ointment, that expensive perfume, to wipe his feet and clean his feet, which people often did when they came in off the street. A servant, the lowest person, would wipe their feet. Mary took that position as she listened to the cares of Jesus on his way to what could've been his death.

Then, on the other hand, the other character was Judas. True to himself, he complained about money. It seemed to be all he ever had in his mind, was money. Complaining, "Why didn't we give this to the poor?" "Why didn't we give it away?" Judas was really concerned about the waste of money. Again, showing his character.

You know, there's a saying I remember hearing, many years ago, that God is in our second thoughts. You know when we get moments of temptation, when we've got thoughts that come to our mind, but it's the moment when we hesitate. It's the moment when we hesitate that we have to think, "Why am I doing this?" "Who am I hurting through what I am doing?" "Who am I letting down?" "Is this the right thing to do?" That moment we call our moment of second thoughts.

So I think this was one of the lessons we have. It's a moment that the second thoughts, when you have that time to think: "Do I choose love, or do I choose selfishness in my life?"

So I think this is, as we prepare for Holy Week, one of the messages of Holy Week and of Lent itself. When we have these times when we give something up perhaps. Moments of self-sacrifice, moments of giving to other people, moments of prayers that we do through Lent and Holy Week. Why are we doing them? We're doing them for that moment of second thoughts.

When we're tempted in life, we wonder "Should I do this, or should I not do it?" And then we pause, and we hesitate, and at that moment, we get the courage. We get that courage to do the right thing. Just as each of the

people in this Gospel reading did. They did the right thing. Because Jesus was in their midst.

And Jesus, of course, is always in our midst, listening to us, helping us, being with us. So at these moments in our life, when we stop and pause and have second thoughts about something, we pray to the Lord, that the Lord will continue to help us and guide us, and be with us.