**Daily Homily: You Are My Servant, a Light to the Nations**

**Tuesday of Holy Week**

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Isaiah 49:1-6
Psalm 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15 and 17
John 13:21-33, 36-38

The first song of the Servant of the Lord prophesies that Jesus will bring salvation and justice to the world. He will mediate a New Covenant that extends to the whole world. The second song of the Suffering Servant, proclaimed in today's first reading, continues many of the themes of the first song, yet adds three things.

First, the Suffering Servant is not just chosen by God, but is called by God from birth and given his name while still his mother's womb. The Son of God, in whom the Father is well-pleased, becomes flesh and dwells among us. His mission of justice is accomplished through the Incarnation in Mary's womb. For thirty years Jesus is hidden in Nazareth: God made Jesus a sharp-edged sword and concealed him in the shadow of his arm; God made him a polished arrow and hid him in his quiver. This was the way that the Father chose to manifest his eternal glory.

Second, this way to glory passes through the humility and apparent failure of the Cross. The Servant thinks to himself that he toiled in vain, and that he spent his strength for nothing. Jesus, however, did not die in vain. He trusts completely in the Lord and is rewarded for his obedience. Not only is he raised from the dead, but he merits salvation for all God's children.

Third, God reveals the universal mission of the Servant. It is too little for the Servant to restore the tribes of Israel. His saving mission will reach tot he ends of the earth. He will be a light to the nations. We know that Jesus himself understood that his public ministry was first directed to lost tribes of Israel and to Judah. After his Ascension, Jesus sends out his disciples to all nations. We, as Jesus' disciples, share in the mission of the Suffering Servant and bring his light and his salvation to the ends of the earth.

In the Gospel, when Judas leaves the upper room to hand over Jesus to the chief priests, Jesus speaks of three glorifying actions. First, Jesus reveals that he is glorified in his passion and death. This is the glory of the Cross. His fidelity and his merciful love are worthy of praise and honor. Second, God is glorified in Jesus. Through the Cross, Jesus draws all men to himself and into the true worship of the heavenly Father. The New Covenant enables the worship of the Father in Spirit and in truth. Third, God the Father will glorify Jesus through the resurrection from the death. God will glorify him "at once" on the third day and lift him up to heaven to be seated at his right hand in power and in glory.

Jesus explains this mystery to the apostles, "his children". He says: "I will be with you only a little while longer". In less than a day he will be crucified on the Cross. Then he says: "Where I go you cannot come". Jesus will descend to the dead to release those who awaited the opening of the gates of heaven. As well, Jesus will rise from the dead and ascend to the Father. Finally, Jesus says: "Where I am going, you will follow later". The apostles will follow Jesus in his ministry, in his death and in his resurrection. They will go out to all nations and baptize them; they will be martyred for their faith; and they will rise with Jesus to new life.