

# Wednesday

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Matthew 26:1-6 Wednesday was 'spy day'! And 'spoiling' day! All at once!

In his reflection on Monday, Klippies suggested that you are participating in the mission of Jesus. Being participants in the mission of Jesus is not only rosy. It can take you on roller-coaster rides between agony and awe, every day.

The first three scenes of Matthew 26 provide insight into the complexities, betrayals, surprises and disappointments that might accompany this journey. It also provides insight into what we all know so well: the dark side of the human soul.

## Scene 1 (verses 1-5): Conspiring

In the first scene, it is not the Emperor but the religious leaders, coming together to make plans to get rid of Jesus. His commitment to the poor and to acts of justice, meant overthrowing the temple as they knew it, and they would have none of that. Instead, they had to kill him. They were strategic about it, because they knew his popularity among the masses. He could not be arrested on the day of festivities, because it might cause an uproar. It had to be done quietly.

In doing the mission of Jesus, in solidarity with the poor and those ostracized by society, watch your back! Some might not be happy with the hospitality you give to strangers. Others might want to criminalize you and those with you. Therefore: Be wise, be gentle, be vigilant! Right now, someone might be conspiring against the small and beautiful communities that jumped up since last week.

## Scene 2 (verses 6-13): Anointing

Whilst the conspiring happened, guess where Jesus was chilling? In the house of Simon the leper, the unclean one, in those times. Could Jesus not just for once stay safe, and not hang with Simon? Jesus could not, because these were his friends who gave him courage for the journey. Whilst there, in came a woman with expensive oil, which she poured over Jesus. This was her way of honouring Jesus, of ministering to his well-being, of showing him hospitality, of giving him courage for the dark journey ahead.

May you in these days experience the love of Simon and the anointing of the woman. May you find yourself afresh in this community of frail, beautiful human beings. Whilst his disciples got annoyed with the woman, Jesus surrendered. May you find courage in surrendering to those God has placed you with. Enjoy how God's grace will spoil you today!

## Scene 3 (verses 14-16): Betraying

One of his closest companions were Judas. Whilst the woman spoiled him and Simon received him, Judas went off, in spite of his intimate relationship with Jesus, to check with the chief priests how they would compensate him, in exchange for handing over Jesus. Our betrayals on the road of journeying with Jesus and the poor will not only come from faraway ones or obvious foes. Our deepest pain might be dealt by our closest companions and comrades.

Jesus knew this but it did not derail him. He stayed steadfast in his mission, finding courage in sharing meals with his friends, in surrendering to grace, in being in step with the mission of God. Nothing and nobody could detract him. May you not be derailed on this 'Spy Day' when some conspire and connive. May you, instead, find your strength in the spoiling of God's grace.

## Prayer

God of truth; gives us discernment today as we are surrounded by many voices; gives us boldness to resist those forces wanting to derail us; give us wisdom to act in ways that will honour you.

God of mercy, make us grateful for every new beginning; open for every gift of grace; mindful of your gentle Spirit among us, on this day.

Hold us in your mercy and truth.

Amen