



## Holy Wednesday

### Thirty silver pieces

*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. (Mt 26:14-15)*

The betrayal of God in exchange for unjust money... How often this story is repeated! How often people sell themselves at the price of money, of honour, of disorderly pleasures, of power!

They gave Judas thirty pieces of silver, aware that this money was stained with blood. And that blood was not "only" the blood of a man, which would be bad enough; it was the blood of the Son of God, the blood that was to redeem them, the blood of the Lamb, shed for the world! That was the price that the chief priests paid the traitor.

And what about Judas: *"Alas for that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Better for that man if he had never been born!"* (Mt 26:24)

What a tragic end! And how far-reaching are these words of Jesus!

Thirty silver pieces...

Have we perhaps ever felt the fear that we too might be capable of denying or even betraying the Lord? Is it possible that betrayal or denial can dwell in the depths of our hearts, and that these come to light in certain circumstances?

We must never feel too sure of ourselves! Even within us dwell shadows that must be redeemed by the Lord. A priest once said that people should reject sin down to the level of their unconscious.

How can we protect ourselves from denial or betrayal?

In the pure heart of the Virgin Mary we can find refuge; in a trusting relationship with the Lord, as Saint John had; in the sincere effort to perceive the movements and feelings of our heart, bringing before God all that is dark, self-centred, proud and vain. We can

unveil before the Lord our misery and implore Him that we never deny or betray Him. We must overcome all false self-confidence; only in the Lord and in His strength will we be able to withstand the hardest trials; only in Him will we avoid succumbing to our inner corruption and giving in to the seductions that come to us from without!

The Lord allows temptations, in order to strengthen His own. Perhaps He begins by allowing small proofs of faithfulness, so that we will be armed and prepared when bigger ones come.

With God's help, let us this Holy Week strip ourselves of all that smacks of denial and betrayal within us, and let us deepen our love for Jesus day by day. In this way, we will be armed and well equipped in the Lord, beyond what we could achieve with our good will and our own efforts.