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Lessons for March 2010

Lessons for March 7th, 2010 – Third Sunday in Lent

First Lesson – Isaiah 55:1-9

1 Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. **2** Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. **3** Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. **4** See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. **5** See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. **6** Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; **7** let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. **8** For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. **9** For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. (NRSV)

Psalm 63:1-38

1 O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
3 Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
4 So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.
5 My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,

and my mouth praises you with joyful lips
6 when I think of you on my bed,
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
7 for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
8 My soul clings to you;
your right hand upholds me. (NRSV)

Second Lesson – 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

1 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, **2** and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, **3** and all ate the same spiritual food, **4** and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. **5** Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness. **6** Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. **7** Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." **8** We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. **9** We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. **10** And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **11** These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. **12** So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. **13** No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it. (NRSV)

The Gospel – Luke 13:1-9

1 At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. **2** He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? **3** No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. **4** Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? **5** No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did." **6** Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. **7** So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find

none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' **8** He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. **9** If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'" (NRSV)

Lessons for March 14th, 2010 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

First Lesson – Joshua 5:9-12

⁹ The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal to this day. ¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year. (NRSV)

Psalm 32

- ¹ Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.
- ² Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.
- ³ While I kept silence, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
- ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. *Selah*
- ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity;
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the guilt
of my sin. *Selah*
- ⁶ Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.
- ⁷ You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. *Selah*
- ⁸ I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
- ⁹ Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you.
- ¹⁰ Many are the torments of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.
- ¹¹ Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

Second Lesson – 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. **17** So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! **18** All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; **19** that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. **20** So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (NRSV)

The Gospel – Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

1 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. **2** And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." **3** So he told them this parable: Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. **13** A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. **14** When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. **15** So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. **16** He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. **17** But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! **18** I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" **20** So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. **21** Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' **22** But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23** And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; **24** for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate. **25** "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. **26** He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. **27** He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your

father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.'

28 Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. **29** But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. **30** But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' **31** Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. **32** But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'" (NRSV)

Lessons for March 21, 2010 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

First Lesson – Isaiah 43:16-21

16 Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, **17** who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: **18** Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. **19** I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. **20** The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, **21** the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise. (NRSV)

Psalm 126

1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."
3 The LORD has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.
4 Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
5 May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
6 Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves. (NRSV)

Second Lesson – Philippians 3:4b-14

4b If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: **5** circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; **6** as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. **7** Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. **8** More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. **10** I want to know Christ and

the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, **11** if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. **12** Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. **13** Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. (NRSV)

The Gospel – John 12:1-8

1 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. **2** There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. **3** Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. **4** But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, **5** "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" **6** (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) **7** Jesus said, "**Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. 8 You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.**" (NRSV)

Lessons for March 28th, 2010 – Palm Sunday

First Lesson – Isaiah 50:4-9a

4 The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens— wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. **5** The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. **6** I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. **7** The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; **8** he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. **9** It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? (NRSV)

Psalm 31:9-16

9 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;
my eye wastes away from grief, my soul and body also.
10 For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing;
my strength fails because of my misery, and my bones waste away.
11 I am the scorn of all my adversaries, a horror to my neighbors, an object of dread to my acquaintances;
those who see me in the street flee from me.
12 I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;
I have become like a broken vessel.
13 For I hear the whispering of many— terror all around!— as they scheme together against me,
as they plot to take my life.
14 But I trust in you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my God."
15 My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.
16 Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love. (NRSV)

Second Lesson – Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, **7** but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And

being found in human form, **8** he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. **9** Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NRSV)

The Gospel – Luke 22:14-23:56

14 When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. **15** He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; **16** for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." **17** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; **18** for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." **19** Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **20** And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. **21** But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. **22** For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" **23** Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this. **56** Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." NRSV)

or; Luke 23: 1-49

1 Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus before Pilate. **2** They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king." **3** Then Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered, "You say so." **4** Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for an accusation against this man." **5** But they were insistent and said, "He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place." **6** When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. **7** And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. **8** When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. **9** He questioned him at some length, but Jesus gave him no answer. **10** The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. **11** Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him

back to Pilate. **12** That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies. **13** Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, **14** and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. **15** Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. **16** I will therefore have him flogged and release him." **18** Then they all shouted out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" **19** (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) **20** Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; **21** but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" **22** A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." **23** But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. **24** So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. **25** He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished. **26** As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. **27** A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. **28** But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. **29** For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' **30** Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' **31** For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?" **32** Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. **33** When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. **34** [Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. **35** And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" **36** The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, **37** and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" **38** There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." **39** One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" **40** But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? **41** And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." **42** Then he said, "Jesus, remember

me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³ He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." ⁴⁴ It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵ while the sun's light failed; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. ⁴⁷ When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." ⁴⁸ And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. ⁴⁹ But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. (NRSV)

Lessons for March 29, 2010 – Monday in Holy Week

First Lesson – Isaiah 42:1-9

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. **2** He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; **3** a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. **4** He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching. **5** Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: **6** I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, **7** to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. **8** I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. **9** See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them. (NRSV)

Psalm 36:5-11

- 5** Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.
- 6** Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.
- 7** How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
- 8** They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
- 9** For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.
- 10** O continue your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your salvation to the upright of heart!
- 11** Do not let the foot of the arrogant tread on me,
or the hand of the wicked drive me away.

Second Lesson – Hebrews 9:11-15

11 But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), **12** he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. **13** For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies

those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, **14** how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God! (NRSV)

The Gospel – John 12:1-11

1 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. **2** There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. **3** Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. **4** But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, **5** "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" **6** (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) **7** Jesus said, "**Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. 8 You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.**" **9** When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. **10** So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, **11** since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus. (NRSV)

Lessons for March 30, 2010 – Tuesday in Holy Week

First Lesson – Isaiah 49:1-7

1 Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away! The LORD called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me. **2** He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away. **3** And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified." **4** But I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the LORD, and my reward with my God." **5** And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and my God has become my strength— **6** he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." **7** Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, "Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you." (NRSV)

Psalm 71:1-14

- 1** In you, O LORD, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
- 2** In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;
incline your ear to me and save me.
- 3** Be to me a rock of refuge,
a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.
- 4** Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.
- 5** For you, O Lord, are my hope,
my trust, O LORD, from my youth.
- 6** Upon you I have leaned from my birth;
it was you who took me from my mother's womb. My praise is continually
of you.
- 7** I have been like a portent to many,
but you are my strong refuge.
- 8** My mouth is filled with your praise,
and with your glory all day long.
- 9** Do not cast me off in the time of old age;

- do not forsake me when my strength is spent.
- 10** For my enemies speak concerning me,
and those who watch for my life consult together.
- 11** They say, "Pursue and seize that person whom God has forsaken,
for there is no one to deliver."
- 12** O God, do not be far from me;
O my God, make haste to help me!
- 13** Let my accusers be put to shame and consumed;
let those who seek to hurt me be covered with scorn and disgrace.
- 14** But I will hope continually,
and will praise you yet more and more. (NRSV)

Second Lesson – 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. **19** For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."
20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? **21** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. **22** For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, **23** but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, **24** but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. **26** Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. **27** But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; **28** God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, **29** so that no one might boast in the presence of God. **30** He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, **31** in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (NRSV)

The Gospel – John 12:20-36

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks.
21 They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." **22** Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. **23** Jesus answered them, "**The hour has come for the Son of**

Man to be glorified. **24** Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. **25** Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. **26** Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor. **27** "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. **28** Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." **29** The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." **30** Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. **31** Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. **32** And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." **33** He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. **34** The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" **35** Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. **36** While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light." (NRSV)

Lessons for March 31, 2010 – Wednesday in Holy Week

First Lesson – Isaiah 50:4-9a

4 The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens— wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. **5** The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. **6** I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. **7** The Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; **8** he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. **9** It is the Lord God who helps me; who will declare me guilty? (NRSV)

Psalm 70

1 Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.
O LORD, make haste to help me!
2 Let those be put to shame and confusion who seek my life.
Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire to hurt me.
3 Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!"
turn back because of their shame.
4 Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you.
Let those who love your salvation say evermore, "God is great!"
5 But I am poor and needy; hasten to me, O God!
You are my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay! (NRSV)

Second Lesson – Hebrews 12:1-3

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, **2** looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. **3** Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart. (NRSV)

The Gospel – John 13:21-32

21 After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "**Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.**" **22** The disciples looked at one another, uncertain

of whom he was speaking. **23** One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; **24** Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. **25** So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" **26** Jesus answered, "**It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.**" So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. **27** After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "**Do quickly what you are going to do.**" **28** Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. **29** Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. **30** So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night. **31** When he had gone out, Jesus said, "**Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. 32 If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.**" (NRSV)

THE LESSONS FOR HOLY WEEK CONTINUE IN APRIL'S LESSONS

