

## SERMON 847

Holy Monday

April 14, 2014

941st Week as Priest

767th Week at St Dunstan's

32nd Week at Epiphany-Tallassee

## HIDING AND WAITING

*Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

After the triumphal entry into the holy city, we suffered an almost immediate collapse of all our hopes and dreams. You know what occurred; it has been a nightmarish week of Christ's last teachings, our Passover supper, his arrest in the garden, the inquisition before the chief priest and Sanhedrin, the trial before the Roman procurator, and our Lord's crucifixion.

I have been hiding away in the upper room with the rest of my friends—we, the so-called disciples of Jesus. We fled when our Lord was arrested, and we have heard they are looking for his followers today.

Over a simple meal of bread and wine, left from our seder, we began talking of the Master's teachings. Isaiah was his favorite of the prophets, and he quoted often from what he called "the Servant Songs." Matthew, who knows the sacred stories better than the rest of

us combined, remembered the first of the songs, and he gave us what he thought was the best midrash:

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him.

We heard the voice like thunder at his baptism at the Jordan River. We *heard* these same words, I promise you.

He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench.

The women said that our Lord did not cry out at his execution. He was beaten and scourged, but he did not break. He was so brave, they said.

I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

Jesus spoke many times of his calling from God, whom he called Father, that he would be the fulfillment of the Covenant made with our Father Abraham and his descendants.

He said many times that our work was to care for the poor, to heal the sick, to visit those in prison. As my brothers and I recall these words of his, and as we talk about the ancient prophecies of Isaiah, I am somehow more encouraged. Perhaps we will stand firm when the Roman soldiers find us and break down the door. Perhaps we will not break under the torture. Lord, give me strength not to deny Jesus again. Give me his strength and his courage, that I might die with him.