**LEARNING FOCUS 2: The betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot.**

Temptation comes in many ways, Judas was one of those chosen by Jesus to be his follower. It was his job to be in charge of the money that Jesus and the apostles needed. Judas was not very honest; he was rather weak and thought about himself more than others. When a really big temptation came, he gave in, this is what happened.

*Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went off to the chief priests in order to betray Jesus to them. They were pleased to hear what he had to say and promised to give him money. So, Judas started looking for a good chance to hand Jesus over to them. Mark 14: 10-11*

Here is another reading:

*Then one of the twelve disciples - the one named Judas Iscariot - went to the chief priests and asked, "What will you give me if I betray Jesus to you?"*

*They counted out thirty silver coins and gave them to him.*

*From then on Judas was looking for a good chance to hand Jesus over to them.*

*Matthew 26: 14-16*

Sometimes even our friends let us down and we too sometimes let our friends down. Later on, after Judas had betrayed Jesus, he deeply regretted it. He took the money back to the chief priests and threw it on the floor, saying he knew he was wrong in what he had done. He went off feeling very sad and unhappy.

**DISCUSS THESE KEY QUESTIONS**

* Why do you think Judas may have chosen to betray Jesus?
* How do you think Jesus felt knowing that one of his friends had betrayed him?
* Have you ever been let down by someone you cared about, how did it feel?
* Have you ever let anyone down, why do you think you did it and how did you feel afterwards?

**TASK**

* Write a diary entry for Judas using either the scripture from Mark 14: 10-11 or from scripture Matthew 26: 14-16 to help you. Include Judas’ private thoughts and emotions throughout his conversations with the priests and Jesus showing an understanding of his struggle between betrayal and loyalty.

**LEARNING FOCUS 3: The arrest of Jesus.**

The following explains why Holy Thursday is also called Maundy Thursday. Near the end of the Last Supper, after Judas had left early, Jesus said to his disciples*, “A new commandment I give unto you: that you love one another, as I have loved you.”*

John 13:34-35

The Latin word for ‘commandment, *mandatum*’ became the source for another name for Holy Thursday: *Maundy* Thursday. When Jesus commanded us to *“…love one another, as I have loved you,”* he showed his love through his service – the washing of the feet - and he commands us to do the same.

Look at the attached files from *God’s Story 3* pages 117 and 116 *Gethsemane* (based on Mark 14: 32-46). Discuss what happened.

At the end of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Maundy Thursday, the priest takes the Blessed Sacrament to a special place, the altar of repose, where people keep watch. This reminds them of Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane and asking his friends to *“keep watch with me.”* When Mass is over the altar is stripped bare and the tabernacle is left empty.

**DISCUSS THESE KEY QUESTIONS**

* Why do we call Holy Thursday, Maundy Thursday?
* What is important about the new commandment?
* Why do you think Jesus gave them a new rule at this time?
* In the garden Jesus told to his friends that he was terrified. What does that tell us about him?
* What do you think about his disciples?
* How do you think Jesus knows his time of sacrifice has come?
* Why do you think Judas used a ‘kiss’ to betray Jesus?
* How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus was arrested?

**LEARNING FOCUS 4: The sacrifice of Jesus.**

After Jesus was arrested, he was taken to the High Priest’s house for questioning, he was insulted and badly treated. They handed him over to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate; this is Mark’s account of his trial. Read the following scripture:

*Early in the morning, the chief priests, the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole council had their plan ready. They tied Jesus’ hands and led him away to hand him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “The words are yours.” The chief priests were accusing Jesus of all sorts of things so Pilate asked him again, “Aren’t you going to say anything? Listen to all they are saying about you.” Again, Jesus refused to say a word and Pilate was amazed. At every Passover festival Pilate usually set free one prisoner. At that time a man named Barabbas was in prison. He had committed a murder during a riot. When the crowd gathered Pilate asked, “Do you want me to set the King of the Jews free or Barabbas?” He knew that the chief priests had handed Jesus over because they were jealous of him. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd and got them to ask for Barabbas to be set free. Pilate spoke again to the crowd, “What do you want me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?” They shouted back, “Crucify him!” “But what crime has he committed?” Pilate asked. They shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!” Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he set Barabbas free for them. Then he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be crucified.*

*Mark 15:1-15*

Notice that Jesus makes no attempt to explain himself. He accepts his fate, knowing it will lead to his death. He is ready to make this sacrifice. After his struggle in the Garden of Gethsemane he has accepted God’s will. In the Old Testament a sacrifice is an offering to God. In the New Testament Jesus offering himself up to die on the cross is his total self-giving.

*His self-giving began with his birth, was his whole life and reached fulfilment in his death and resurrection. By Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross we are set free from sin and by his resurrection we can live a new life and become holy.*

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**DISCUSS THESE KEY QUESTIONS**

* How does Pontius Pilate try to find the truth about Jesus?
* Why does Pontius Pilate call Jesus the King of the Jews?
* Why do you think Jesus does not answer him?
* Why do you think the crowd shouted for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be crucified?
* Do you think this is the same crowd who greeted Jesus on his entry into Jerusalem, if so, why have they changed their minds?
* What do we learn about Jesus from his attitude at his trial?