

**St Mary Magdalene's Anglican Church  
Moore Street, Adelaide**

**Reflection on Wednesday in Holy Week**

**HOW DO WE BEHAVE?**

In the Gospel today Judas seizes an opportunity to betray Jesus. We can easily understand Judas' actions here. We, too, can be willing to seize opportunities to get what we want, especially if other means of achieving this have been scarce. Possibly what we want seems impossible to achieve by legitimate means, too. Short cuts, social advantage, and unscrupulous values – all can be used very unfairly.

Looking at it from the Jewish authorities' point of view they had been anxious to silence Jesus and here Judas presented them with an immanent means of success. Judas offered them a way and the authorities seized it.

In our experience the seizure of opportunities belong to at least three different scenarios: personal ambition, the demands of poverty and the problem of human weakness in human relations. Opportunities to gain some advantage in all three occasionally arise and we are strongly tempted to seize them.

People who suffer from “vaulting ambition” are inclined to exploit opportunities ruthlessly and selfishly – often at the expense of others. This can be a feature of business practice, especially in the absence of regulation. Not all businesses run along this line, fortunately.

People who live in poverty and without any benefit of regular help can easily and understandably depend on the practice of exploiting or robbing others. In this instance, who is ultimately responsible for the crimes committed? Is it the poverty stricken person or the society which tolerates poverty?

If we in our weakness manipulate, betray or fail to support another person we know that the responsibility lies with us and our disabling weakness.

Was Judas unduly ambitious, poverty stricken, or weak? In a way it does not really matter. It is us who need to reflect on how we behave in various circumstances and with other people.

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