

Drinking **cup** is the word for these readings.

Isaiah 53:10-11

verse 11 Because of his affliction
 he shall see the *light* in fullness of days;
 through his **suffering**, my *servant* shall justify many,
 and their guilt he shall bear.

A scholar points out that this prophecy was probably written during the Babylonian Exile. A shift is taking place from the king to the priests, to the people themselves as representatives of God. While the king and priests represent God to the people, the people represent God to the nations. The **suffering** servant moves from king to priest to people to Jesus, the Messiah. **Suffering** has purpose.

A scholar words the development as follows, "Judah's leadership under God as it was prior to the monarchy, just as Deutero-Isaiah envisioned a return to those pre-monarchic times when God alone was to be king (**Isa** 40:9-11; 52:7), with leadership returned to the people (**Isa** 55:3-5)....They will be his arrow and his sword with which he brings the nations into covenantal relationship with God (vv. 13-14; cf. **Isa 53:11**)."¹

Scholars argue that the **suffering** servant carries a biblical sense found in **Isaiah 53:11** and Wisdom 2.² This is an important sense. A scholar recognizes a relationship between the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham in Genesis 22 and Isaiah 53, a relationship developed before the New Testament.³ This means that the suffering and death of Jesus, as of the Faithful, is without guilt, justified and justifiable (the inner self-reflexive relationship) in the sight of God.

Light is special to Poor Clares. The Faithful accept **suffering** as a light both to the world and to themselves as expiation for sins. Sins require expiation. God is God. Bringing him Communion, I visit Joe, who had been a Poor Clare daily communicant when he was able. Joe is **suffering**, but with a twinkle in his eye at his embarrassment being quite so helpless, with a joy in his heart at knowing Jesus there, full of confidence that

¹ Adrian M. Leske, "Context and Meaning of Zechariah 9:9," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 62, No. 4 (October 2000) 673.

² Dennis Hamm, S.J., "The Tamid Service in Luke-Acts: The Cultic Background behind Luke's Theology of Worship (Luke 1:5-25; 18:9-14; 24:50-53; Acts 3:1; 10:3, 30)," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 2 (April 2003) 225.

³ Robert J. Daly, S.J., "The Soteriological Significance of the Sacrifice of Isaac," the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January 1977), 63.

his **suffering** is just some goofiness through which he must pass on his way to eternal life in Jesus. If I am back from vacation, I may get to read this to Joe himself to get his reaction.

Jerome translates *servant* as *just servant*, like Joe, a just man **suffering**, but not because of his justice, but in the hope of the eternal life with faith in the love of God Almighty. I see and share what is happening with Joe. The Poor Clare nuns do much the same in the privacy of their cloister.

<u>The Vulgate</u> (circa 410):	lustificabit iustus servus meus multos
<u>Douay-Rheims</u> (1582-1610):	shall this my just servant justify many
<u>King James</u> (1611):	shall my righteous servant justify many
<u>Jerusalem</u> (1966):	shall my servant justify many
<u>New American</u> (1970):	my servant shall justify many
<u>New Jerusalem</u> (1985):	the upright one, my servant will justify many

Psalm 33:4-5

The Lectionary uses this Psalm at five Sunday liturgies.

Readings	Page in <u>Lectionary</u>	Verses used
25A	159	4-5, 18-19, 20, 22 (22)
41B	319	4-5, 6-7, 12-13, 20-22 (5b)
52A	403	1-2, 4-5, 18-19 (22)
117C	763	1, 12, 18-19, 20-22 (12b)
146B	908	4-5, 18-19, 20, 22 (22) Today.

This is the first time the 33rd Psalm appears in the Lectionary readings germane to these Notes.

verse 22 Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our *trust* in you.

This *trust*, this *faithfulness*, is the soul of Joe as his eyes light up and I interrupt his exhaustion after my attendance at Mass each morning.

Hebrews 4:14-16

This section of **Hebrews** is part of an argument extending from 2:10 to 5:10. The argument is “that Jesus received glory through faithful **suffering**—a way that others are called to follow.”⁴

verse 14 Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens,
Jesus, the Son of God,
Let us hold fast to our confession.

A scholar identifies this verse as using “the author’s customary paraenetic [Holy Spirit] form.” First comes the imperative, “Let us hold fast,” associated with two indicative statements, “we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens,” followed by the hortatory subjunctive, “Let us hold fast,” that is both imperative and hortatory.⁵

verse 16 So let us *confidently* approach the throne of grace
to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.

That is exactly what Joe does, daily, as he fights for this health.

A scholar explains, “when the author later asks listeners to hold fast to their confession (4:14; 10:23) and their boldness (3:6; 4:16; 10:19), his appeal has integrity, for he does not ask them to do anything that he has not done already,” namely boldly hold fast.⁶

Mark 10:45

The Son of Man came to serve
And to give his life as a ransom for many.

I do think Joe offers his life to serve as a ransom for his family, especially his son and his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Mark 10:35-45

⁴ Craig R. Koester, “Hebrews, Rhetoric, and the Future of Humanity,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 113.

⁵ James W. Thompson, “Outside the Camp: A Study of Heb 13:9-14,” the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 1 (January 1978) 54-55.

⁶ Craig R. Koester, “Hebrews, Rhetoric, and the Future of Humanity”, the Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 1 (January 2002) 109-110.

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A scholar observes that evidently Jesus accepted the idea “that he would sit in glory with some persons at his right and his left, whether Abraham, Moses, or Peter, we have no idea. When the kingdom came, the vineyard [in another reading] would indeed be given to *others*.”⁷ *Others* is a means to humiliate self-righteousness.

A scholar observes, “If the author of our gospel verse speaks of future eschatology, or even of realized eschatology, he shares the outlook of the rabbinic teachers who hold that distinctions of small and great are not abolished in the new eon (cf. **Mark 9:33-37; 10:35-45** parr).”⁸

Another scholar observes, “The suggestion [of the eventual failure of the disciples] will become fact as they journey with Jesus to Jerusalem, never capable of understanding Jesus’ predictions of his (and, implicitly, their) future **suffering**, death, and resurrection (8:31-33; 9:31-41; **10:32-45**).”⁹

Yet another scholar observes, “In the Gospel of **Mark**, Jesus, while on his way to Jerusalem, makes three solemn predictions that he will have to **suffer** and die at the hands of his enemies but will rise again ‘after three days’ (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34),¹⁰ in readings just before those in the Lectionary, readings never used on Sundays.

verse 39 Can you drink the **cup** that I drink

...

Jesus said to them, “The **cup** that I drink, you will drink

A scholar notes, “The **cup** is a reference to Jesus’ upcoming suffering (see **Mark 10:38-39**) and in part reinforces the passion-reference of the **cup** at the supper (14:23).”¹¹

⁷ P.M. Casey, *Culture and Historicity: The Cleansing of the Temple*, *the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (April 1997) 327.

⁸ Benedict T. Viviano, O.P., “The Least in the Kingdom: Matthew 11:11, Its Parallel in Luke 7:28 (Q), and Daniel 4:14,” *the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (January 2000) 49.

⁹ Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., “Mark 6:6b-30: Mission, the Baptist, and Failure,” *the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 4 (October 2001) 663.

¹⁰ John M. Perry, “The Three Days in the Synoptic Passion Predictions,” *the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 1986) 637.

¹¹ Mark Kiley, “‘Lord, Save my Life’ (Psalm 116:4) as Generative Text for Jesus’ Gethsemane Prayer (Mark 14:36a),” *the Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 1986) 655.

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verse 45 For *the Son of Man* did not come to be served
 But to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Nowhere is *the Son of Man* translated well from the Greek. The Greek uses *the Son of the Man*. I do not know whether I can find the scholar who points this out. The meaning is that *Son of Man* receives his glory after drinking his **cup** and because he drank.

Put negatively, these readings turn the Faithful away from ambitions in the hierarchy toward ambitions in the spiritual life. That notwithstanding, the Church is organized vertically rather than horizontally, thereby causing problems such as those associated with the current sexual abuse scandal. The hierarchy is receiving blame for not caring for the Faithful. The **suffering** Faithful are saving the Church in their **suffering** by drinking their **cup** of salvation. **Isaiah** promises that the **suffering** servant shall justify many; the **33rd Psalm** places confidence in that promise, **Hebrews** expresses similar confidence, and **Mark** expresses **suffering** as service.

For sources, see the Appendix file.