

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK  
The Jews plot to put Jesus Christ to death

**23.1 First Point**

The Jews, indignant because Jesus Christ performed a great number of miracles, and therefore everybody flocked to him and considered him as a prophet, plotted to bring about his death and called a council among themselves<sup>149</sup> to determine how they would go about arresting him. Because they feared the people,<sup>150</sup> who esteemed him highly, they had to act cautiously. Out of hatred for him they spread the word that he was a preacher of new doctrines, and they used this pretext as a way to do away with him.

Consider with amazement the hatred that the Jews felt for Jesus Christ and the opposition that he endured from them, especially the Pharisees, who brought about his death, and reflect on the excesses into which the envy and rage of these wicked men led them, since they did not hesitate to cause the death of an innocent man, a saint, a prophet, one who possessed all the exterior signs of divinity.

**23.2 Second Point**

Despite the hatred that the Jews had for him and the wicked plot they had against him, Jesus Christ did not stop speaking to them about himself with all imaginable kindness. On one occasion he reminded them of the many good works he had performed among them and asked them for which of them they wanted to put him to death.<sup>151</sup> In their assembly they openly admitted their motive: If we let him continue to live, they said, the whole world will believe in him.<sup>152</sup>

What evil has he done? Pilate said to them. I find no crime in him that deserves death.<sup>153</sup> But it sufficed that Jesus Christ was hated by the Jews because he reproached them for their vices, and this was reason enough for their tribunal to find him guilty and worthy of death. Let us condemn him to a shameful death,<sup>154</sup> they said, borrowing the words of the Wise Man.

Adore Jesus' interior disposition in all these plans of the Pharisees' intrigue. He courageously endured the accomplishment of their designs because this was in accord with the plan of his Eternal Father. You would have no power over me, he told Pilate, unless it were given to you from above.<sup>155</sup>

**23.3 Third Point**

Another reason the Jews gave in their assembly as reason for wanting to put Jesus to death was that a great number of persons were believing in him, following him, and honoring him as their king. They feared that because of this the Romans would come and destroy their city and nation.<sup>156</sup> In this, says Saint Augustine, they were strangely blinded, because it was as a result of the cruelty they showed to the Anointed One of the Lord that their city was besieged, taken by the Romans, and so completely destroyed that, as Jesus Christ had foretold, not a stone remained upon a stone.<sup>157</sup> All this took place, according to the testimony of Josephus, a writer who lived in those times and who belonged to the party of the Pharisees, only because they had put Jesus Christ to death.

God, as a rule, overturns the plans of men and causes the opposite of what they proposed to happen, so that they may learn to have confidence in him, and abandon themselves entirely to his Providence, not undertaking anything on their own, because they should desire only what God wants.

149 Jn 11:45  
150 Lk 22:2  
151 Jn 10:32

152 Jn 11:48  
153 Lk 23:22  
154 Wis 2:20

155 Jn 19:11  
156 Jn 11:48  
157 Mt 24:2