



5th Sunday Lent, Yr B

Lectio Divina

Lectio: The text of this Sunday's gospel is Jesus' words concluding the first half of John's gospel. So Jesus completes his announcement of the work he was going to do through seven Signs and discourses. In the second half of John's gospel Jesus will accomplish all that he had announced in the first half. We are completing the Season of Lent, our time of reflecting on the ways and challenges of Jesus. Also, this week is the last week before we celebrate Holy Week and Easter as the people of the resurrection.

In John's gospel our text comes after¹ Jesus was acclaimed by the people on entering Jerusalem on a donkey. His disciples did not understand what Jesus was doing in this entry into Jerusalem but after Jesus' glorification² they did. The religious authorities had stopped listening to Jesus. But the Greeks³, though sharing the faith of the Jews, were still seeking to know about Jesus. So Jesus uses the opportunity of speaking to the Greeks to announce that his kingdom was not just for his disciples but for anyone (cf Jn 12: 25 & 26) who follows Jesus' way of the Cross. This way of Jesus reflects the way of Nature. Through a seed 'dying' comes new life in abundance. Then, as the Father acclaimed Jesus as his Son at his baptism so now he acclaims Jesus again as he is about to face his death in which he will be glorified.

After this talk with the Greeks, the crowds still do not understand that the Messiah was to suffer. Then Jesus withdrew and kept hidden. John in his gospel then reflects on the unbelief of the Jews. Jesus comes forward again at the Last Supper with the example of service (the washing of the disciples' feet) illustrating his way.

Read: John 12: 20 – 33

Meditatio: Do I listen to Jesus? Do I think I know all about Jesus? Have I been approached by someone who wanted to know about Jesus? Have I got to know Jesus better through my activities this Lent? Have I joined with others in prayer or reflection this Lent? Have I helped those in need through Project Compassion? Am I prepared to celebrate Holy Week? In what ways do I seek glory? For me is there glory in giving or in taking? How do I understand the glory of the Cross? Have I planted a seed and reaped a harvest? What is my hope for my life? Am I striving for a comfy life or to help others in their lives? Which is more important for me, life in the world or eternal life with God? Am I a servant of God? Is my service of others the way I live out my following of Jesus? Do I hold back from helping others because of how much it may cost me? Do I pray to God to make my life easy and without challenges? As Jesus suffered on the Cross, died and rose from the dead, do I trust that God will bring me through any crosses that I may face? In what ways does Jesus 'lifted on the Cross' draw me to him?

Oratio: Pray that all people will listen to Jesus. Pray that we will work together to spread the Good News. Pray that Jesus' death on the Cross may be recognized as the greatest act of love. Pray that Lent will prepare us to face the crosses of our lives and share in the gifts of the Resurrection. Pray that we will grow in the ways of service. Pray that we will seek the glory that comes from giving. Pray that all may know the freedom won for us on the cross. Pray in thanks for God the Father's gift to us of his Son.

Contemplatio – Dwell in stillness, simply aware of the boundless expanse of mercy that surrounds you.

After your prayer – Make good use of this last ordinary week of Lent.

✍ Fr Joe

John 12: 20 - 33

Among those who went up at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, ‘Sir, we should like to see Jesus’. Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them:

**‘Now the hour has come
for the Son of Man to be glorified.
I tell you solemnly,
unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies,
it remains only a single grain;
but if it dies,
it yields a rich harvest.
Anyone who loves his life loses it;
anyone who hates his life in this world
will keep it for eternal life.
If a man serves me, he must follow me,
wherever I am, my servant will be there too.
If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him.
Now my soul is troubled.
What shall I say:
Father, save me from this hour?
But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour.
Father, glorify your name!’**

A voice came from heaven, ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’

People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, ‘It was an angel speaking to him.’ Jesus answered, ‘It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.

**‘Now sentence is being passed on this world;
now the prince of this world is to be overthrown.
And when I am lifted up from the earth,
I shall draw all to myself.’**

By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

Notes:

1 Jesus had not long before raised Lazarus i.e. his last and Seventh Sign. People were getting behind Jesus though the religious authorities’ unbelief was hardening.

2 Through Jesus’ death and resurrection Jesus was glorified i.e. raised on high.

3 These Greeks were foreigners who spoke Greek and had been converted to the faith of the Jews. They did not observe the Jewish laws yet they were accepted into Jerusalem and had a reserved place in the Temple apart from the Jews. Consider footnote on Jn 12:20 of Christian Community Bible, pastoral edn 1988.