



LENT WEEK 5

John 12:20-33

GOSPEL READING:

“Among those who went up to worship 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 together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them:

‘Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you, most 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 the 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 men to myself.’

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

REFLECTION:

This moving gospel reading is the immediate prelude to the account of the Last Supper and the Passion. It is full of Jesus’ dread and confidence at what he knows is approaching. In the gospel of John there is no agony in the garden before Jesus’ arrest, for in John the story of the Passion is so shaped that it is clearly the triumph of the Son of man. There is no mention of humiliation or mockery. Jesus remains in control from the beginning, when he permits the guards to take him into custody, till the end, when he calls out that he is ready to die, ‘It is complete’. This is all the hour of the exaltation of the Son of man, when Jesus is raised up in every sense. All the more important, then, for John to show before the Passion that the cost for Jesus was real, with this little dialogue in prayer between Jesus and his Father. This is John’s equivalent of the prayer in the garden. The second reading from Hebrews shows that there were in early Christianity strong but slightly variant traditions of Jesus’ prayer before his Passion. All express his very human fear, his unshakable commitment to his task and his loving confidence in his Father’s care.

(Commentary from Universalis app)



QUESTIONS:

- *For understanding* – How does the expression "when I am lifted up" recall the fourth Servant Song from Isaiah? How does Jesus see himself as an embodiment of Isaiah's "ensign" posted for the gathering of the nations?
- *For application* – What is your response to intense personal suffering? How like Jesus' attitude is your own?