

Wednesday March 13th for the 5th Sunday of Lent

OPENING PRAYER: God of our ancestors, you have entered into a new covenant with us through the death and Resurrection of Jesus. Help us to be more faithful to our covenant relationship with you. Bless us now as we prepare to share our lives and your Word this we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

- In the words of Saint Benedict, “Listen with the ears of your heart.”
- Please note a word, phrase, or verse that seemed to really catch your notice.
- A volunteer slowly read aloud today’s passage Afterwards, we have a few minutes of silent reflection.

READING OF THE ASSIGNED GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

John 12:20-33

20 Now there were some Greeks* among those who had come up to worship at the feast.ⁿ

21* They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we would like to see Jesus.”^o

22 Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.^p

23* Jesus answered them,^q “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

24* Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat;^r but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

25 Whoever loves his life* loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.^s

26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.^t

27 “I am troubled* now. Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour.”^u

28 Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.”^v

29 The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel has spoken to him.”^w

30 Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours.”^x

31 Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world* will be driven out.^y

32 And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.”^z

33 He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

Notes

* [[12:20–36](#)] This announcement of glorification by death is an illustration of “the whole world” ([19](#)) going after him.

* [[12:20](#)] Greeks: not used here in a nationalistic sense. These are probably Gentile proselytes to Judaism; cf. [Jn 7:35](#).

* [[12:21–22](#)] Philip...Andrew: the approach is made through disciples who have distinctly Greek names, suggesting that access to Jesus was mediated to the Greek world through his disciples. Philip and Andrew were from Bethsaida ([Jn 1:44](#)); Galileans were mostly bilingual. See: here seems to mean “have an interview with.”

* [[12:23](#)] Jesus’ response suggests that only after the crucifixion could the gospel encompass both Jew and Gentile.

* [[12:24](#)] This verse implies that through his death Jesus will be accessible to all. It remains just a grain of wheat: this saying is found in the synoptic triple and double traditions ([Mk 8:35](#); [Mt 16:25](#); [Lk 9:24](#); [Mt 10:39](#); [Lk 17:33](#)). John adds the phrases ([Jn 12:25](#)) in this world and for eternal life.

* [[12:25](#)] His life: the Greek word *psychē* refers to a person’s natural life. It does not mean “soul,” for Hebrew anthropology did not postulate body/soul dualism in the way that is familiar to us.

* [[12:27](#)] I am troubled: perhaps an allusion to the Gethsemane agony scene of the synoptics.

* [[12:31](#)] Ruler of this world: Satan.

QUESTIONS FOR SHARING

1. How does the picture of a vulnerable Jesus praying to God with “loud cries and tears” touch you? How easy or hard is it for you to be this vulnerable before God? do you tend to pray more with your head or with your heart?
2. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks of the wheat grain that must die.” Is there a grain of wheat that must die for you to become more like Jesus?
3. Also in the Gospel, Jesus says: “Father, save me from this hour” (of his suffering and death). Can you share an event in your life when you might also have said the same thing to God? What helped you to get through that hour?
4. Name one thing today’s Gospel says to us that we disciples of Jesus need to heed and act on

Commentary

The religious leaders are worried that the “whole world” is flocking to the side of Jesus. The first evidence of this is the appearance of some Greeks who come to Philip to ask if he can arrange for them a meeting with Jesus. Their presence shows that Jesus has come to save not just the Israelites, but all people. The following are eight observations on this discourse from John’s Gospel:

1. Jesus begins his discourse by speaking of his “hour”- a reference to his return to God. he will pass through death, be raised up, and return to his Father.
2. Jesus uses the analogy of a wheat grain to speak of life and death. Just as a grain of wheat must first die before it bears fruit, so too must Jesus die prior to his Resurrection, and so too must we die to sin and selfishness before we bear godly fruit in our lives. Married couples know this more than other people. For the marriage to grow, each spouse must frequently die to his/her own desires.
3. “Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life, will preserve it.” This means that those who cling to their lives, concerned only about

themselves, will eventually lose out on the meaning of life, which is to love and serve others. Thomas Merton talks about our true self and false self. The true self is that part of us that seeks to follow God and his ways. The false self is that part that wants to be independent of God and his ways, the part that is self-centered, controlling, jealous, etc. this self we must “hate” – or we might say “deny” – and not allow to control our lives. This false self must be transformed through prayer, fasting and penance.

4. “Whoever serves me must follow me...the Father will honor whoever serves me.” Serving Jesus means, among other things, being willing to lay down our life for others—to die to the desires of our false self. To serve Jesus is to follow him in his path of love and to carry our cross. Such service and love will honor the Father.

5. “Save me from the hour” is a reference to Jesus’ agony in the garden. It is a beautiful statement about Jesus’ humanity. As a person who loves life and people, he has no desire to die. He recoils from it. Yet, if going through this “hour” is what he must do, then he is willing to embrace it.

6. “Then came a voice from heaven” is reminiscent of the voice that spoke at Jesus’ baptism and transfiguration. “I have glorified the Father.” Jesus gives “glory” to the Father (and so do we) by following the will of God. Jesus also says: “I always do the things that please the Father.”

7. “Now is the time of judgment in this world. Now the ruler of this world will be drawn out.” The judgment is our “yes” or “no” to Jesus. When we say “yes,” love is released into the world, and darkness and evil are overthrown—and vice-versa.

8. “When I am lifted up, I will draw everyone to myself” is a reference to Jesus’ Cross and how the force of his love will attract and draw people to him

IS THERE A CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE THIS WEEK?

IS THERE A PRAYER REQUEST YOU HAVE?

CLOSING PRAYER - The Lord’s Prayer

Bible Sharing Room 5 and Zoom

Wednesday, March 13 6:30 – 7:30pm

Weekly on Wednesday

Zoom Meeting

Description: Blessed Sacrament is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Blessed Sacrament's Zoom Meeting

Time: March 13, 2024 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZolduisqDosE923wHRoszXqNBSkCL57ORPg/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhpjorHtKTthCORpx5Goj4d-jwpiFdj_oPzwjNMS9AeDvnGMBxOZFTRY

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89811466699?pwd=UVdFVmo1SmJObUJqc3VqcytQOTdpQTo9>

Meeting ID: 898 1146 6699

Passcode: 284618