

## Homily. 5th Sunday in Lent. Year.B. 20/21 March 2021.

The Greek speaking Jews request to meet Jesus led Him to announce that His 'hour' had come. Jesus wasn't speaking of the arrival of a particular time like we might speak of the hour for our next appointment or the time of the next train, bus or plane. Jesus used the word 'hour' more in the way that we say; 'it's now the 11th hour', the time before it's too late to change, or like we say; 'that was his or her finest hour', meaning the most important and best performance of their lives.

The Greeks desire for Jesus meant that knowledge of Him had spread across the known world of that time. Jesus knew that this would lead to problems for Him with the powers and authorities of His society ending in an unavoidable confrontation between them; a confrontation between Gods ways working in Him and the ways of their own comfort and status.

The remainder of John's gospel explores what this confrontation meant for Jesus. He would be like a seed of wheat sown into the earth and dying, only to rise as fruit and nourishment for all who hunger after truth, love and life. He wouldn't cling selfishly to His life in this world, choosing instead to unselfishly let it go, thereby saving it for eternity. Having said this Jesus asked us to follow Him, making His servant way our own.

Sacrifice is demanding, troubling for us and our human egos. John tells us that Jesus was troubled by all of this, too. He wondered aloud if He should ask God to save Him from such an hour and fate? In the end Jesus accepted His hour with all of its costs and demands so as to do

God's will and glorify God's name, for He knew that by His lifting up on the Cross out of love all people would be able to share in His life.

Centuries before any of this happened the Prophet Jeremiah wrote of a time, an hour that would come when God would live in us, a New Covenant written within us by God's Spirit. The issue was, how could this ever come about? As it turned out it could only come to pass if God became one of us, showing us in person the depths and the fullness of God's loving way. Yet, it was, and it still remains, our choice to push such love and kindness to its limits, to death on the hard, bitter wood of the Cross. It was, and it still is, God's choice to make of our worst the best gift of all; the victory of loving over hating and of life out of death. All of this is what we'll be celebrating and renewing at Easter in two weeks' time.

For us who believe in Jesus and trust in God's way, the path that Jesus laid out and journeyed, we know that Easter is every day. It's Easter already as we follow Him now; it's Easter for us in every Eucharist and Communion as God offers us life and feeds us on God's Spirit in Christ. This is why it's so very important for us to stay closely connected to the Lord in the Eucharist and be active in His body, our local Parish, lest we miss Him, or worse still, even forget altogether the gift of His saving love and care for us. After all, Jesus came to draw us into Himself, the very best way that we can experience God's mercy and acceptance today.