

3.21.21 L5 Jesus' Hour for Us

- Not just once, but SEVEN TIMES Jesus says in the Gospel of John that HIS HOUR has not yet come, or that is HOUR is coming in the future
 - SEVEN times his hour has not yet come or is coming – so it's a PRETTY BIG DEAL
 - For instance, the first time Jesus says that his hour has not yet come is at the wedding feast at Cana when the wedding reception ran out of wine.
 - His mother, Mary told Jesus, clearly expecting him to do something about it, but Jesus told her, “Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come. [2:4]”
 - However, after those strange words, Jesus went and turned water into wine – but his hour had not yet come
 - Or there's the last time that Jesus said that his hour had not yet come – Jesus was in the temple teaching
 - And there in the temple, the heart of the religious establishment, Jesus made two audacious claims – first, that he was the LIGHT of the World, and second, that he was closely related to God the Father
 - But after saying these shocking things to religious leaders who didn't believe him, Jesus was not mocked, assaulted, or arrested, because... his hour had not yet come
 - And in between the first and last times when Jesus said that either his hour had not come, or that his hour was still yet to come, Jesus did all kinds of amazing things that only God – only God in the flesh could do
 - Jesus healed the sick, Jesus fed a multitude of thousands, Jesus walked on water, Jesus calmed the stormy sea, and Jesus even raised the dead!

- But none of these spectacular works of Jesus, God in the flesh – none of these miracles revealed that Jesus' hour had come
- Finally... FINALLY... in today's gospel reading we hear that Jesus' hour HAS come
- Yet surprisingly, Jesus' hour arrived in this reading at a seemingly ordinary event
 - Listen to the seeming ordinariness of what happened: "Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, 'THE HOUR HAS COOME FOR THE SON OF MAN [THAT'S ME!] TO BE GLORIFIED.'" 12:20-23
 - *Not at water changed to wine, not at feeding thousands, not at walking on water or stilling the sea, not even at raising his good friend Lazarus from the dead – it was only when some Greeks, that is was only when some foreigners came and wanted to see him, that Jesus FINALLY announced that his HOUR HAD ARRIVED*
 - APPARENTLY, the arrival of the foreigners is a really big deal
 - And what a wonderful thing that is for us, because the arrival of the Greeks means that Jesus came not for just a few people, and Jesus came not just for the people of his tribe and his religion, but rather that JESUS CAME FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD including us
 - The truth proclaimed in today's gospel reading is that Jesus was not local a Savior for just that place or that time, but that Jesus came to become the King of all the world
- But what a strange king Jesus was... and still is!
 - We stand on the edge of Holy Week – next Sunday we will hear that Jesus was greeted with Palms and Hosannas, but soon that short-lived moment will fade away to see Jesus betrayed, convicted, and crucified
 - And in his HOUR OF DEATH on the cross, Jesus is revealed as not just the King of the world, but the Lord and King even over sin and death

- The HOUR OF JESUS began when the Greeks came to see Jesus, and then he began his journey to the cross – and through that event, Jesus has embraced all humanity, even with our fatal illness of sin and death
- Yet we tend to cut this Jesus Christ who is big enough to be the king of all things and beings – we tend to cut this Jesus Christ down to our much smaller size
 - This Jesus is not contained WITHIN the church – this Jesus works THROUGH the church’s mission... and even works in the world when the church’s mission is not big enough
 - This Jesus does not have a favored country – this Jesus is Lord all nation and all peoples
 - This Jesus is not hemmed in by the hurtful barriers that people put up and erect between themselves and others – no barrier of race or class, no separate but unequal status between genders or orientations, and no walls or battle lines between countries – none of this matters to the one whose hour revealed and glorified Jesus Christ the king
 - Instead today we hear Jesus in the gospel reading declare: “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” And then our Gospel for today leaves us with these words: “He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. [12:32-33]”