



Fifth Sunday of Lent (Year B)

(Solidarity Sunday)



John 12: 20 – 33

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 come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. The person who loves their life loses it, and the person who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say – “Father, save me from this hour?” No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An Angel has spoken to him.”

Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

Excerpts from the Lectionary, Sundays and Solemnities, copyright ©Concacan, Inc., 1992, 2009. All rights reserved. This edition of the lectionary follows the Ordo Lectionum Missae, editio typical altera, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanus, 1981.



Reflection:

Some Greek speaking Jews want to see Jesus. When the request comes to Jesus’ ears, he responds by speaking about his Passion. To the untrained ear Jesus seems to be ignoring the initial request. To the those who are more familiar with his ways, he is telling us how best to encounter him. We can come to fully know him, and his love, in his willingness to die for us.



Table Discussion (at mealtime): Some Greek speaking Jews wanted to see Jesus. “How badly do you want to grow in your relationship with God?” “What are you doing about it?”



Coming to know Jesus better in and through the Stations of the Cross:

First Station: Jesus is Condemned to death.

“I hate you.” We’ve all said these words and we’ve all heard them, too. Faced with our hate, for telling us what we weren’t always willing to hear, and faced with our sin, God responds with even more powerful words: “I love you... even in those times you do not love me, yourself or others. I love you so much, I am willing to die for you.”

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Second Station: Jesus Picks up his Cross.

There’s nothing glamorous about dying for someone else. It often begins by choosing the other person over oneself; a choice that repeats itself again and again. By taking up his cross, Jesus chooses us over himself, our needs over his. He has done it time and time before, and will do so time and time again.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time.

The cross is heavy and the crowd is rough. There is a lot of pushing and shoving going on. Jesus stumbles and falls to the ground. There he lies, unable to get up. A guard yells at him, then drags him to his feet. With a renewed surge of energy, Jesus picks up his cross again.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Fourth Station: Jesus Meets his Mother.

“Look at me, Mom. Look at me.” How often, as kids, have we not sought our mother’s attention? How often, as adults, do we do so still? Imagine Jesus looking into the eyes of Mary, and his mother looking back at him. How hard it must have been for both of them to see the suffering in the other’s eyes.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Fifth Station: Simon the Cyrene is Forced to Help Jesus.

The cross is too heavy, and Jesus too weak. If he doesn’t get help, he will die in the street. Along comes Simon, coming home from the fields. Grabbed by the arm and pushed into place, Simon is forced to help Jesus to carry his cross.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus.

Even in the madness, love can be found. With soothing words and willing hands, Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. How good it is to feel her tender touch, to experience her sweet embrace. Like an angel sent by God, like an angel she restores his strength.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Seventh Station: Jesus Falls a Second Time.

Step by step, Jesus struggles onward. It's amazing he can still go on. As the road begins to climb, he falters. Hands outstretched he falls in the dust. How hard it is for us to see, Jesus crushed by the cross he bore. And yet, this is the cross he chose to carry out for love of us all, for you, me and everybody.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem.

How sad the women were in seeing Jesus like this, one of their own sons brought down so low. "Cry not for me," Jesus tells them quite openly. "Cry for your children and grandchildren instead. For if this is done to one who comes in peace and for love of all, imagine what will become of them as well."

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Ninth Station: Jesus Falls a Third Time.

The final climb is almost done, yet the end seems miles away. Unable to go any further, Jesus falls a third and final time, just short of his goal. The soldiers will drag him the rest of the way. Notice how he has nothing left to give. Bit by bit his blood was shed, drop by drop the beads of sweat. All along the path he trod, with nothing left at all.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of his Clothing.

"Did you hear this... Did you hear that?" How we love to talk about others, especially behind their backs, slowly stripping them of their clothing, telling all kinds of embarrassing things. Jesus, too, is stripped of his clothing, so that all who come may laugh at him. Still his love is strong, his mercy unending, for you and for me and for everybody.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for me.

Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross.

Blow by painful blow, Jesus' hands are nailed to the cross. "How much does he love us?" A person might ask. "Not this much or that much, as if measuring a fish, but as wide as only God can stretch. I love you more than anything else, more than all that I have endured."

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross.

At the end, death comes as a most welcome guest. What's left to do when all else is given? Jesus breathes his last and then bows his head. "Forgive them Father for all they have done," he says. And, with one gasp of breath, "Into your hands I commend my Spirit."

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross.

And who is it that waits with arms open wide? His mother receives him, now a lifeless corpse. Long does she hold him. Bitter sweet are her tears. How soft are her kisses, how warm her embrace.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb.

He died for us and even descended into hell. There to rescue Adam and Eve and all who were lost. Though death could not him and hell could not win, God's love knows no limits, God's love stops at nothing that needs to be done. Sing for joy, O little ones; sing with shouts of praise, for he who conquered sin and death will raise you up each day.

Response: We thank you Lord for all that you have done for us.

Stations of the Cross in Art:

Take some time to depict one of the fourteen stations in whatever art form you are willing to choose (i.e. a drawing, a poem, a song, a painting, a sculpture, etc.). Take a moment to discuss what struck you most about the Station you picked.

- How does it reflect God's love for you, me and everybody?
- How does it invite you to love in return?