

Lenten Devotional Reflection
7 April 2020 (Tuesday of Holy Week)

Scripture: John 12:20-36 New Revised Standard Version

²⁰ Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” ²² Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. ²³ Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ 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. ²⁵ Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

²⁷ “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. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” ²⁹ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” ³⁰ Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³ He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. ³⁴ The crowd answered him, “We have heard from the law that the Messiah remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” ³⁵ Jesus said to them, “The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.”

Message

The word "glorify" has appeared four times in today's scriptures. When it comes to glory, what do you have in your mind?

In modern society and culture, glory is often linked to success, wealth, power, and socioeconomic status. In short, if one becomes superior to other people, he will enjoy glory and splendour. If one is overshadowed by others, he will lose glory and become lackluster.

Jesus mentioned glory for the first time in John 12:23. It was because several Greeks

came to Jesus' disciples, hoping that the disciples could introduce them to Jesus who had just entered the city of Jerusalem gloriously. Then, Jesus said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." What would the disciples think when they heard these words from Jesus? Most likely they thought that the time had come for them to do something great which could bring honour to their families. However, Jesus said something unexpected. He mentioned death. He said, "Those who love their life lose it."

The glory that Jesus had on his mind was neither the glory that the disciples had been looking for nor what the modern society has been advocating. The disciples expected Jesus to be exalted, praised and revered at all times, just as what they had experienced when they entered the city, so they could bathe in the reflected glory. However, what Jesus told them was about something else. He said, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself." (John 12:32) The scripture clearly tells us that "He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die." (John 12:33)

What was the power that led Jesus to pursue a different kind of glory and to choose a different kind of exaltation? He also had experienced sorrow and struggle. His strength came from his ultimate desire for the glory of the Father, which is much greater than his own needs, and even his own life. Jesus was nailed to the cross and was lifted up. It seemed that he failed and the luster vanished. However, in fact, that was the most glorious moment of Jesus, and also the most glorious moment of God the Father.

Reflection

1. What kind of glory did you pursue before? What are your changes after you have known Jesus?
2. Sometimes the disciples only expected to participate in the moment when Jesus was revered, exalted, and praised. They did not want to be near His cross. Are you willing to go deeper in the cross of Jesus?
3. Today is the Tuesday of the Holy Week. Will you continue to walk with the Lord who, for the glory of God the Father and for loving you and me, walks towards the cross step by step?

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