

Fifth Sunday of Lent (B)

A most chosen passage of scripture that is chosen for funerals comes from the book of Job.

Job 19:23-27

²³ “Oh, that my words could be recorded.

Oh, that they could be inscribed on a monument,

²⁴ carved with an iron chisel and filled with lead,
engraved forever in the rock.

²⁵ “But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
and he will stand upon the earth at last.

²⁶ And after my body has decayed,
yet in my body I will see God!^[a]

²⁷ I will see him for myself.

Yes, I will see him with my own eyes.

I am overwhelmed at the thought!

This passage is powerful, positive, and profound. This can give us an understanding that helps us to understand the gospel of today.

The Greek-speaking visitors mentioned in today's Gospel had come to Jerusalem on pilgrimage to celebrate the Passover, the most important Jewish holy day.

- And when they hear about Jesus, they give us one of the most **beautiful** prayers in the whole Bible.
- So simple, and so powerful.
- They come up to St Philip and say, "Sir, **we would like to see Jesus.**"

Jesus' response to this request is kind of confusing.

- Instead of just saying, "OK, show them in," he gives a **long explanation** of "his hour," his coming sacrifice on the cross.
- At first glance, this seems like a **denial**.
- But his last statement shows that actually, he is **granting** their request.
- "And when I am lifted up from the earth," he explains, "I will **draw everyone** to myself."

By his **crucifixion**, Jesus **reveals himself (His Heart)** to everyone, including these Greek visitors included.

- Christ **wants** everyone to find him, to see him, to learn to know and love him - that's why he became man in the first place.
- And so, he allows himself to be **crucified**, which showing us both his outer self, and his inner self.
- The crucifixion **exposes his heart** for all to see - a heart **blazing** with so much love that it is willing to die for our sake, to **suffer** unspeakable **pain and humiliation** in order to reopen to us the gates of heaven.
- The crucifix is the great revelation of the **heart of God**.
- If we want to "see Christ," to see and know God, we have only to **raise our eyes** to behold him dying on the cross in order to give us true life.
- There Christ is **most attractive** to us - and we should always remember that we are no less attractive to **him** when we bend under the weight of our **own** cross and weakness.

Nothing would **please** the heart of Christ more than if we made a **real effort** to spend more time with him in prayer during these weeks, to **give him a chance** to show us how much he loves us.

- True prayer is much more than just **saying prayers**.
- It is a **heart-to-heart conversation with God**, with the God who **loves us so much** that even while we were still sinners, he climbed up onto a cross and suffered in his own body and soul the consequences and penalty of **our** sins.
- There are **special graces** in the air during Lent, but we will **miss them** unless we take time to sit close to the Lord and talk with him.

We are all busy, and it may not be **easy** to make time to spend in prayer.

God understands that.

But if we try, I am sure we can **find ways**.

- Maybe it is just a matter of saying an extra **decade of the Rosary** while you're driving to the store or to work.
- Maybe it's just a matter of **going to bed fifteen minutes earlier** than usual, so that you can get up fifteen minutes earlier and spend that time **reading** a chapter of the Bible or of a good spiritual book, and **speaking** to the Lord about what you read.
- Maybe it could be **skipping your favorite TV show** for the next two or three weeks and coming to the parish to do a Holy Hour (or a Holy Half-Hour) in front of the Eucharist **instead** - praying for yourself and for all your loved ones.

God will never let himself be **outdone** in generosity.

If we give him a **bit more time**, he will **shower** us with a **lot more grace** - that's just how he is: his heart **never gets tired of giving**.

We just need to **give his heart a chance**.

“Men, their happiness and their life, are so important that the very Son of God gave himself to redeem and cleanse and raise them up. Who will not love this heart so wounded? Who will not return love for love? Who will not embrace a heart so pure?” St Jose Maria Escriva

“The heart of Jesus is the ultimate symbol of God’s mercy; but it is not an imaginary symbol, it is a real symbol, which represents the center, the source from which salvation for all humanity gushed forth.” Pope Francis

It is from this heart that Jesus invites you and I to find mercy, love and salvation! May God Love you! May you love God