

Greeks Bearing Questions Bring the Hour

Intro. Several days before the Passover feast, the Lord came to Bethany, to the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha which was just two miles from Jerusalem. He had dinner with them; maybe a kind of last supper with his friends. Then he entered the city to shouts of “Hosanna!” The end of the mission was literally in sight. Into this highly-charged hour, some Greek-speakers arrived who have wanted to see the Lord.

I. There are a couple of reasons they approach Philip and not Peter or another disciple. Philip and Andrew’s hometown is Bethsaida, near the Gentile territory. Fr. Francis Maloney says, “The disciples ‘Philip’ (v.21) and ‘Andrew’ (v.22) are the only disciples whose names have been transmitted in their

Greek form” [F. Maloney, S.D.B., *Sacra Pagina*, p. 359]. Maybe the Greeks thought Philip was one of them and felt comfortable asking him to introduce them. They came not only to *see* the Lord but to *find* the Messiah whom they now believe in. For the Lord, their presence meant the message of salvation had reached not only the Israelites, but beyond to the Gentiles as well. [His purpose was completed.]

The image of the seed giving up its “seed-ness” in order for the plant to flower is clearly an image of *his* giving his life so that others receive life. A true disciple must follow the Master and give her or his life for others. He knows the final stages of his mission are now in motion. He also feels the human fear about what that means for him *and* his disciples. At the same time knows everything has led to this

hour. In this moment the Father affirmed his love for the Son.

Concl. *We have faced or will face* our own “hours.” These are life-changing moments in our lives that test our faith in God, in each other and ourselves. It might be an illness or accident. It might be a major commitment to a career or a friendship like marriage; or a religious vocation. Those times can be painful or exciting. It is important, *even necessary* to have family or friends or a church community to support us through them. The Lord received the love of his Father in several important or difficult “hours” in his life: at the beginning of his ministry (the Baptism in the Jordan), when he revealed his glory to the three disciples (the transfiguration) and here, as he entered Jerusalem for the last time. How important it was for him to hear

the voice of support. How important for *us* to hear and know *we* are supported in our hours of need or jubilation. The Father did not intervene to *take away* the humiliation and pain soon to come through the arrest and crucifixion. However, the Father assured the Son of his **presence** through it all. If we can do the same for one another, it is possible for us to also rise to new life, now and later.