

Friday 4th Week of Lent
March 20, 2015
St. Agnes Church / NDA Chapel

For us, an hour is a highly precise division of time; an hour is 60 minutes.
The people of the OT had no word for “hour”.
By the time Jesus makes his way on the scene,
the Jews, had adopted a loose usage: twelve hours of daylight, twelve hours of darkness.
The word “hour” simply meant “a brief period of time”
The word “hour” also meant the proper or appointed or expected time for an event:
the hour of temptation....the hour of fulfillment, the hour for Christians to wake from their sleep.

The “hour” we hear of today is Jesus’ hour:
the hour he departs from this world to return to the Father;
the hour when he is delivered into the hands of his opponents;
the hour of his enemies and of the power of darkness.

This “hour” is an appointed event; not a random collision of conflicting forces.
Though brought about by an evil, wicked plot,
it is the event for which he was born, the very destiny for which he took on human flesh.
His “hour” entails suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension.
It is the time of his messianic manifestation, the time of his glorification.
As Jesus faces the “hour” he is troubled. He is tempted to seek a reprieve.
But he does not relinquish his destiny...
he surrenders himself to this unique, irreversible, non-repeatable, historically cosmic, event.

Jesus’ “hour” is completed; but it has not passed into history.
As we celebrate this Eucharist, we are given the privilege of entering into his hour...
to stand by the side of the Son of God as he fulfills his destiny,
to be with him in this most crucial moment of our salvation.
To enter into this hour is to realize that we are part of what is happening,
we are the reason Jesus’ chooses to fulfill his destiny.
We feel with him the love he has for all of humanity;
we see what he sees at this moment: a world in need of redemption.
We experience the outpouring of compassion no words can capture.

We are personally connected to our God and our God is personally connected to us.
It is here that we feel “this is where I belong”, feel most fully alive.
It is here we are joyfully ourselves before God.
This experience sustains us, nourishes our spirit, captures our thoughts, inspires our hopes.
It expands our hearts, our souls; it broadens the length and the breadth,
that height and depth of our being.

Our celebration of Lent reminds us: we need to grow in our appreciation and gratitude
of what God is doing for us every moment of every day.
It is possible to become more attentive to God’s activity in our lives.
It is possible to become more conscious of his love for us.
We are created to be in communion with our God.
To what degree will we surrender to this destiny?

“Lift us up, O Lord, beyond self-imposed limits, that we might have new life in you. Amen!”