

7 Easter Wednesday 5.27.20
JN 17:11b-19

If you take a mini-quick tour through the passion and death narratives of John's gospel, you will notice from the outset that throughout his passion and death, Jesus is very much in control. Jesus' hour of death was an hour of triumphant glorification.

In John's Last Supper, Jesus is very much in control. There is no question as to who the betrayer is, for Jesus, always in control, takes the bread and hands it to Judas. Judas does not make one move until Jesus gives him permission to do so. "Judas, what you are about to do, do quickly."

In John's passion narrative, there is no agony in the garden. There is no Jesus pleading with the Father to take the cup from the Son for Jesus is very much in control.

In John's arrest, Jesus is very much in control. The soldiers do not come to Jesus. Jesus goes to the soldiers. "Whom are you looking for?" When the guards learn that it is Jesus who is standing before them, they fall to the ground, not Jesus, for Jesus is very much in control.

In John's trial, seven times Pontius Pilate scurries back and

forth between the Sanhedrin and Jesus, like a rat in a cage - trapped between a frenzied, bloodthirsty crowd outside, so filled with hate / and a majestic, tranquil and calm Jesus inside, for Jesus is very much in control.

In John's trial, the ones found guilty are Pilate and the Sanhedrin. For Pilate is found guilty being tried against the truth and the Sanhedrin make the most profound blasphemy. Ironic that the Jews are now more loyal to Caesar than their Roman enemies! I'm sure Jesus nodded his head to acknowledge their incrimination when they shouted, "We have no king but Caesar," for Jesus was very much in control.

In John's crucifixion, there is no Simon of Cyrene. Jesus, very much in control, carries the cross by himself. There is no darkness, there is no cry of God forsakenness. And at the moment of death, Jesus realizes that all is completed. Reigning from the cross, Jesus decides the moment of his death. "It is finished." He bowed his head, and he delivered over his spirit, for Jesus is very much in control.

What for the evangelists Matthew, Mark and Luke was an hour of darkness, earthquakes, wailing women, and God forsakenness was for John an hour of glory. If you walk into a

Christian gift shop and notice the crucifixes on the wall, the crucifixes where Jesus is dressed in kingly robes and a crown are the Johannine crucifixes, for John portrays Jesus reigning from the cross.

It seems rather untimely that such attention would be given to Christ's passion and death, especially since it's the Easter Season, and we just celebrated His Ascension to the Father's right hand. But for John the Evangelist, Jesus' passion and death, His Resurrection and Ascension were all three triumphal hours, the hours of glory. So now what?

This morning's gospel seats us back at the table of the Last Supper. This morning's gospel is the prayer after the meal. Instead of praying, "We give thee thanks Almighty God for these and all thy benefits," Jesus prays for the Church. For the hour was close at hand when he was to return to the Father. The hour was close at hand when the disciples would have to carry on without His visible presence and Jesus knew it would be a tough go for the apostles; it would be a tough go for the Church.

It's a tough go for everyone right now, believers, members of the Church, and unbelievers more so, because they cannot

fall back on their gift of faith as we can. Unbelievers can only rely on themselves and I can only imagine how frustrating and final that feeling must be.

We can rely on our faith, on a Jesus is who always in complete control. He is in control of this pandemic, no differently than He was in control of every step of His Passion, His Death, His Resurrection and His Ascension. All will be well, my Friends. All will be well.