

Jesus Passion Faces Jerusalem  
2 LENT C  
“I must be on my way...” Luke 13:33

We detect a bit of testiness in Jesus words in today’s gospel. His reply to the Pharisees that his life was in danger was, “Go tell that fox for me....” Fox was not a term used in antiquity to say someone was sly. Instead it portrayed a person as “worthless, slanderous, treacherous or often cunning in an unprincipled manner.” (The IVP Bible Background Commentary of the New Testament, pg 228). This is not a backhanded compliment. Foxes are known to prey on hens. Jesus was telling the Pharisees that Herod would not stop him from his Passion. His ministry would not be prevented by threats to his life.

“I must be on my way.” How often have we said that to friends or family or maybe someone who wants to keep us on the phone trying to sell something we don’t want or need. Jesus effectively tells his detractors “Don’t bother me! I don’t have time for this non-sense.” Just as Jesus said when as a child of twelve, “Did you not know I must be in my Father’s house?” also translated, “about my Father’s interests?” (Luke 2:49).

Jesus knows he will die soon with or without the help of Herod. Yet how shocking, that the center of Jewish piety will be the place where most prophets are martyred. Nevertheless Jesus is determined to express his love for his nation and its capitol. “How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”

There is just so much time we are given in life to accomplish God’s interests. How much time has already been wasted? Only you and God know. Is there someone whose life is in desperate need of your affirmation or your help? Is there something “left undone” that we have confessed but have failed to act on?

John Smith was the only Protestant to move into a large Catholic neighborhood. On the first Friday of Lent, John was outside grilling a big juicy steak on his grill.

Meanwhile, all of his neighbors were eating cold tuna fish for supper. This went on each Friday of Lent. On the last Friday of Lent, the neighborhood men got together and decided that something had to be done about John. He was tempting them to eat meat each Friday of Lent, and they couldn’t take it anymore.

They decided to try and convert John to Catholicism. They went over and talked to him. John decided to join all of his neighbors and become a Catholic, which made them all very happy.

They took him to church, and the priest sprinkled some water over him, and said, "You were born a Baptist, you were raised a Baptist, and now you are a Catholic."

The men were so relieved, now their biggest Lenten temptation was resolved. The next year's Lenten season rolled around. The first Friday of Lent came, and, just at supper time, when the neighborhood was settling down to their cold tuna fish dinner, the smell of steak cooking on a grill came wafting into their homes. The neighborhood men could not believe their noses! *What was going on?!*

They called each other up and decided to meet over in John's yard to see if he had forgotten it was the first Friday of Lent. The group arrived just in time to see John standing over his grill with a small pitcher of water. He was sprinkling some water over his steak on the grill, saying, "You were born a cow, you were raised a cow, and now you are a fish."

Like John, we follow a Savior who is relentless in his priorities of following his Passion. May we too follow him into Jerusalem though we too may have to examine our hearts to see whether our will is in tune with his. Let us see whether we are able to follow him into his Passion. God help us to be faithful. Thank God Jesus was faithful and true to his Passion in going to the cross! Amen