

# Formed in Prayer

*Let us be still and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us*

Dear Father,  
Be with us as we pray.

Open our ears  
to hear your Word in the Gospel.  
Unite us in faith, hope and love as we pray together.

Send your Holy Spirit to inspire and sustain us in our mission.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Gospel

John 12: 20-23

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, 'Sir, we should like to see Jesus.' Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them: 'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. If a man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him. Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name!' A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.' Jesus answered, 'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours. 'Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.' By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

*What words or phrases struck you in Sunday's Gospel reading? What might God be saying to you in and through the Gospel?*

## Reflection

One year after the devastating bushfires of 2020, the Australian bush is a glorious reminder of 'life after death.' The way the landscape has bounced back after the intense trauma of this event is truly awesome. Nature creatively delivers new growth from places it never did before.

The readings presented during the Season of Lent remind us of the change that is required to believe in the message of salvation. As believers, and especially as leaders, we daily make decisions to die to ourselves and, like the grain that falls and dies, find new life in relationship with God. Lent is a consistent reminder that we are never perfect and that there are always opportunities for renewal and rejuvenation.

In this fifth Sunday, the journey to Calvary grows closer for Jesus. 'The hour has come', Jesus is 'deeply troubled' and knows he has little time left. He continues to keep the message simple, the single seed dies to provide an even richer harvest of life in all its fullness. Jesus' ultimate surety in God's enduring love, even in the face of suffering and death, can inspire us with the same confidence in God's love. The presence of the Greeks reveals to the disciples that Jesus' message is for all who willingly listen and believe. As disciples who continue to spread the Good News we must be confident and courageous messengers who are willing to be vulnerable not for our own sake but for the sake of those who seek the truth. *(Kerry Power, Education Officer, Catholic Schools Broken Bay)*

## Loving God

Plant a seed of your love in my heart.

Give me the courage to recognise the parts of me that need to be renewed.

Grant me the grace of confidence and clarity to share with others  
the glorious way my life has changed by loving you.

**Amen**