

1. April 2022

His time had not yet come

Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

After this Jesus travelled round Galilee; he could not travel round Judaea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. As the Jewish feast of Shelters drew near, however, after his brothers had left for the festival, he went up as well, not publicly but secretly. Meanwhile some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, 'Isn't this the man they want to kill? And here he is, speaking openly, and they have nothing to say to him! Can it be true the authorities have recognised that he is the Christ? Yet we all know where he comes from, but when the Christ appears no one will know where he comes from.' Then, as Jesus was teaching in the Temple, he cried out: You know me and you know where I came from. Yet I have not come of my own accord: but he who sent me is true; You do not know him, but I know him because I have my being from him and it was he who sent me. They wanted to arrest him then, but because his hour had not yet come no one laid a hand on him.

The Lord's hour had not yet come, so his adversaries could not stop him.

This sentence, with which today's Gospel ends, shows us very clearly that it was God who had determined the time in which Jesus would be delivered up to his passion. The Lord was not simply subjected to the march of events, he was not helpless before them; but everything he did, happened in the will of God and with full consciousness. It was not the powers of darkness that determined the moment and the circumstances; but everything was and still is in God's hands.

In the Lord, we can also acquire a certain mastery over situations in which we would normally feel exposed and helpless. Take, for example, suffering: how much ground it can gain in our lives! This suffering can greatly influence our existence, and, in a way, we are subject to its dominion. But if we surrender this suffering to God, accepting it as a sacrifice, then it undergoes a transformation from within. It is no longer suffering that exercises dominion; rather, we can see how God uses it to form us.

In spiritual accompaniment, I have often noticed how the inner wounds that life had marked in people had become subject to the dominion of an evil spirit. This spirit, for its part, was in a position to torture the person with its wounds, until the moment when the person gave this inner suffering to God, and was thus able to recognize that the Lord is above his suffering.

What we have said in this example about suffering can also be applied to other situations in which we may find ourselves, such as persecution, slander, fear, etc.

Let us be careful not to succumb to the negativity of situations. Rather, let us learn to understand that every circumstance is in God's hands, even if everything around us is dark.

Perhaps we will understand how important it is to learn to accept from the Lord also those difficult hours, and not to surrender to our own nature or other forces, or to feel only exposed and helpless before them.

It is an act that we perform with our spirit, even if our feelings are completely in the dark. It is my spirit that can take this step!

Jesus had increasingly become the focus of public attention. People even knew that a plan was being hatched to kill Him. But He was not intimidated; He continued to proclaim the truth, telling who He was, where He came from and who had sent Him.

No fear should hold us back if we have a mission to accomplish. Nothing that could come upon us and threaten us happens without God's knowledge. Everything is integrated into His plan! The powers of darkness present themselves as if they were omnipotent, but in reality they are not.

It is the Lord who determines our hour, and if we cling to him in faith, we can be sure that nothing and no one will be able to separate us from the love of Christ (cf. Rom 8:35-39).

Let us place our hour in the Lord's hands and, whatever it is that afflicts us, let us not move it from there.