

An hour is one-twenty-fourth of an average solar day. As we all know it is comprised of 60 minutes, or 3,600 seconds.

Although I discovered that there are such a thing as “leap seconds” which adjust based on imperfections in the Earth’s rotation so that official time is the same as perceived time. This means that an hour could be 3,599 seconds or 3,601 seconds depending on the how the planet is rotating.

By my calculations, I’ve been alive roughly 462,700 hours. I’ve been ordained about 50,700 hours. And according to the website Death Clock dot Com, I have about 184,000 hours left.

But I’m not banking on that. I typed in information on people I know who are a lot older than me ... who are still very much alive ... but that website says they should already be dead. So it’s probably not very accurate ... I hope.

With any luck, I will be imparting the final blessing less than an hour after we all made the Sign of the Cross at the beginning of Mass ... as is my usual custom.

Today is the 5th Sunday of Lent. This Sunday ushers in what is often called “Passiontide.” You may have noticed that the images in the building have been veiled. The only images that remain are the Stations of the Cross ... as a way of directing our attention to what is coming in Holy Week. The Gospel readings for the next two weeks will reflect the growing tension between Jesus and the authorities ... as we move into Holy Week and the reading of the Passion on Palm Sunday and Good Friday.

In today’s Gospel Jesus says:

*The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.*

Throughout St. John’s Gospel, from the Wedding at Cana up to this point, Jesus has either protested “*My hour has not yet come,*” or pointed out that “*the hour is coming.*” Or else the Gospel writer narrates that “*His hour had not yet come.*” Seven times throughout St. John’s Gospel we hear that it is not yet the *hour* or the *time*.

But now, something has changed.

The hour has come.

It's time.

We know where this is leading.

Jesus points out:

*Whoever loves his life loses it*

*[because] whoever ... serves [Jesus] must follow [Him.]*

The hour has come.

Are we ready?

Are you ready to follow Jesus ... to the Cross ... and beyond?

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray for the grace to persevere in our Christian walk. May we, through the graces of the Sacraments, be able to die to ourselves ... be obedient to God's will ... and truly serve and follow Jesus Christ.