

# Tuesday of Holy Week

Readings: Isaiah 49:1–7, I Corinthians 1:18–31  
Jesus speaks about his death; John 12:20–36



Among the many to go to the festival were some Greeks, or people who were descended from that area and culture. They would often have clashed with Jews, but being in the temple for Passover they've embraced a different faith. They seek Philip because his name is the most Greek-sounding to them, unlike the other disciples whose names were Jewish. We all tend to do this; seek out people who are like ourselves, because it feels safe, comfortable and secure. It's less threatening... but it also means that we lose out on learning from people who aren't like us. We can almost hear their anticipation and nervousness as they politely ask: 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus'. It's like a tentative, yet brave tap on the shoulder. Jesus is a different sort of man, and speaks of a grain of wheat falling to the earth and dying in order to bear fruit. It makes sense, and yet is perplexing. They recognise that Jesus is like them, and yet not like them at all.

## The voice of the Greek

"I had heard so much about this man, Jesus. Rumours have been circulating for a while - he tells the most incredible stories, using images in words. Wheat. Sheep. Fish. They say he turned water into wine; this is my kinda guy! They say this man is here for all people – even Greeks like me and my family and neighbours, which is reassuring as I worry that they'll be left out. It was hard to believe that we had the chance to actually meet Jesus... our request was passed down through the crowd, and we heard him speak the most amazing words of hope and glory. Then there was this voice from heaven, a roar, like angels and thunder – it was awesome! I thought he'd look ten feet tall and broad and frightening, so I stood on tiptoe and when I saw Jesus, standing there, right in front of us, I was amazed. Because he looked just like me."



The very people we avoid, the ones who are too difficult or different to love, are the very ones we need to spend time with, listening to them, sharing moments or meals. Jesus made no exceptions so neither should we. Who have you been avoiding...?

✦ O God, you created all people in your image. We thank you for the astonishing variety of races and cultures in this world. Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship, and show us your presence in those who differ most from us, until our knowledge of your love is made perfect in our love for all your children; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>4</sup>