

## **03/05/2023.2<sup>nd</sup>Sunday in Lent-A (Transfiguration of Jesus)**

Gen 12:1-4a; II Tim 1:8b-10; Mt 17:1-9

Today's first reading Abram, a pagan, was prosperous in land and livestock, but he had no children, and that, to people of his time, was the most serious of all possible deprivations. So, God challenged him with an offer: "I will make of you a great nation." But God's requirements were absolute: "Go forth from the land of your kin."

Blind obedience to God at His command transformed childless Abram into the Patriarch Abraham, a believer in the one God. The requirements were, to become even more absolute when, after Abraham finally had a son, God asked him to sacrifice that same son (Genesis 22:1-18). Faith is presented here as the obedient response to the call of God which opens up channels for the redemptive action of God in history, thus transforming the world. God asks us, too, to leave our old life of sin behind, to go forth with Him into a period of repentance, renewal of life and transformation, and to give Him the whole of our being in loving surrender forever.

St. Paul's letter to Timothy explains the type of Lenten life-transformation expected of us. We should be ready to bear hardship for the Gospel's sake, and to be thankful to God for our call to holiness, not trusting in our own merits but in grace. "Bear your share of hardship for the Gospel with the strength that comes from God.

In the Gospel, while praying, Jesus was transfigured into a shining figure, full of Heavenly glory. The Transfiguration took place in late summer, probably in AD 29, just prior to the Feast of Tabernacles.

A little boy was riding with his father from New Mexico to Colorado on a fishing trip. The trip covered 250 miles, a good five hours of driving (not counting rest and restaurant stops). After about thirty miles the excited son asked his father if they were almost there. The father said "Not yet, still long way to go. Fifty miles later; "now are we almost there?" Asked the boy. "No", said his father, "Not yet". Another fifty miles later; "we must be just about there, right, Daddy?" "No", said his father, "not yet". The boy said "Daddy, am I still going to be four years old when we get there?"

The Transfiguration is so familiar to all of us that it has lost its original bang. We have to take off our wraparound sun- glasses. We climb a mountain and we see new views, we see the city from a new vantage point. We see the

countryside in its beauty. We need times to climb mountains and get away from the ordinary. Lent is a time like that – as we give something up, we take something on.

The hours on the mountain were a huge experience for Peter, James and John, who would always be with him. They saw him in his glory, the beloved son of the Father. To experience the transfiguration, the apostles must entrust themselves to Jesus and let him lead them up a very high mountain where they can be alone.

The primary purpose of Jesus' Transfiguration was to consult his Heavenly Father in order to ascertain His plan for Our Lord's suffering, death and Resurrection. The secondary aim was to make Jesus' chosen disciples aware of His Divine glory, so that they might discard their worldly ambitions about a conquering political Messiah. A third purpose was to strengthen their Faith and Hope and to encourage them to persevere through the future ordeal.

The apostles return to ordinary living, but with a memory so deep that they know they cannot share it with others for the indefinite future. We receive this word of God and we receive our call to share it. The apostles would spend their lives sharing what they got on the mountain, and how it changed them. So, Faith is not just something we profess. Faith is a life that we lead. It is a life of joy, a life of sacrifice, and a life leading us to the Glory of God. Our faith is a journey, a journey of joy, a journey that demands sacrifice, and a journey that leads to glory. Faith demands that we make that joyful journey from sacrifice to glory. That is what Jesus said to the disciples; let us go down the mountain.

The three apostles experience the glory of Jesus in a wonderful way that will affect forever their relationship with him (see 2 Peter 1:16-18). Whenever we climb the mountain of the Lord or make any journey with him, we are changed. As every mountain is different, so every moment with him is well worth while!

And the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain reminds us that the way of the cross leads to Resurrection and eternal life and that the purpose of Lent is to help us better to enter into those mysteries and invite us to work with the Holy Spirit to transform our lives by renewing them during Lent, and to radiate the grace of the transfigured Lord around us by our Spirit-filled lives. **Amen.**