

2nd (QA&SJ) Sunday of Lent Year B

“He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the Sun.”

The Transfiguration is one of the most significant events in the life and ministry of Jesus. Its narrative is found in all the Synoptic Gospels. In Mark, the transfiguration is centered uniquely on the revelation granted to the disciples. *How are we to relate the two readings we just heard in light of the transfiguration of Jesus?* In today’s first reading the story of Abraham and Isaac captures the imagination of Jews and Christians alike. It stands behind St. Paul’s rhetoric in the letter to the Romans: *“If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with Him?”*

St. Paul seems to suggest that Abraham’s offering of his beloved son is a model for the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary. The Catechism interprets the relationship this way: *“And so the father of believers is conformed to the likeness of the Father.”* With his faithfulness, obedience and willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac, God blessed Abraham and his descendants abundantly. The sacrifice of God’s beloved Son will mean abundant blessing *for everyone as well*. The Jews take pride in their ancestry from Abraham, but Jesus points out that they must imitate Abraham’s disposition and deeds. The challenge Jesus is throwing at them and also to us is not only to be believers but above all doers.

On the mountain Jesus experiences his father's love and assurance, helping his disciples overcome the trauma of the Cross and to discover the true Messiah in Jesus. "*This is my beloved son, Listen to him!*" God approves this message! This moment confirms *the importance of listening to Jesus*. It also *confirms the glorious outcome of traveling this difficult road*. Discipleship means *listening to, living in faithful obedience* to God's guidance, and *following Jesus* by living the gospel values. As Jesus is transfigured, the three apostles are in a way transfigured too. God commanded them (apostles) to be faithful and obedient to His Son, as Jesus has been faithful and obedient to the Father. To be obedient calls us to openness, trust and humility so God can enter & live in us. This means obeying Jesus not only by certain directions, but by practical commitment, *walking with Him along the road of service and love*.

Like the apostles, God has perfect timing as to where and when He will touch us. He will not let us down. Perhaps we can identify with Peter who was tempted to stay in that moment of glorification and to cling to that amazing event. Experience teaches us that nothing worthwhile in life is ever easy or simple. We cannot, much as we want to, stay on the mountaintop all the time. To live and work, to love the Lord daily is something that we will have to continue to actualize in life. The challenge then is to see the Lord in the most ordinary situations and moments in our daily life. When things seem to be difficult and falling

apart we need to be encouraged in our journey with the Lord. As one mystic counseled, *when life gets too hard to stand—Kneel!*

Jesus warns his disciples not to talk about this marvelous experience until it had been fulfilled. *Isn't the best way to propagate a story is to instruct people not to tell anyone?* And we know from Scriptures how the apostles became bold enough to proclaim the Risen Lord only after they received the Holy Spirit during Pentecost. This advice of Jesus to Peter and his companions not to share the transforming experiences is something that we were not given. Yet, ironically, some of us seem hesitant to share our experiences. Most of us have experienced how God loves us, how He continues to be gracious with His many gifts, how He has forgiven us. *How generous are you in sharing these experiences with others?*

We can make our Lenten celebration more meaningful not only through our prayer, fasting and alms-giving but also when we share our experiences of God—especially with those who shun the Church and those who seem to lose hope. God blesses a generous heart. When God asked him to offer his son in sacrifice, Abraham's heart was pained and his mind confused. Yet he trusted God and God did not let him down. God blessed him generously.

During this season of Lent, let us consider and reflect on how we can best encounter God in our daily lives. Every time we partake in the Eucharist we experience a moment of transfiguration where our Lord is

transfigured before our eyes in the form of bread and wine. Let Jesus' reassurance of his loving presence with us at communion take away all fear and doubts from our hearts and strengthen us to get up and face, with courage, the challenges and trials we meet. *A successful relationship with Jesus can improve us and make a difference in our lives.* Jesus does not change the world but he can transform our hearts if we let him. We can be agents of transfiguration and conversion. We who have been touched by God must touch other people's lives too. Loved by God, we go and love others. We all grow brighter the more we are tuned into the God-like image we are meant to reflect. Let the Glory of God shine through you! *Show and share your glow!* So that others can catch a glimpse of that glory. Amen.