

Scripture Study

Second Sunday of Lent – Cycle C



Opening prayer

Genesis 15:5-12,17-18

(Ps 27:1,7-9,13-14)

Philippians 3:20—4:1

Luke 9:28b-36

Overview of the Gospel:

- In this Sunday's Gospel Jesus, having just made his first prediction of his Passion (Luke 9:22), takes three of his Apostles (Peter, John, and James) up to Mt. Tabor to pray. Jesus often prays at momentous times in his life (see Luke 6:12; 9:18; 11:1; 22:41; 23:46), and these same three Apostles are often present at crucial times (see Luke 5:37; 14:33).
- During Jesus' prayer, he is transfigured so that his divine glory (usually veiled by his human flesh) is revealed, in a limited way, to these three Apostles. Their experience recalls the experience of Israel at another mountain (Sinai) where in a similar way God's glory was seen and his voice heard (see Exodus 20:18-21 and Deuteronomy 5:24).
- The presence of Moses and Elijah represent, respectively, the Jewish Law and Prophets whose voices Israel had always been urged to heed. Jesus, who is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, is God's chosen Son; God's voice tells us to "listen to *him*" (verses 35-36).

Questions:

- In the First Reading, why was Abram (later renamed Abraham by God) doubtful of God's promises? Ultimately, upon what did Abram place his trust that God would fulfill the promises that he had made to make of Abram a great nation with innumerable descendants?
- Why would Jesus take these three disciples to witness this event? How is this related to: (a) Peter's confession (verses 18-20)? (b) Jesus' prophecy (verse 22)? (c) The preceding saying (verse 27)? (d) The radiant face of Moses (Exodus 34:29-30)?
- Why is this event misunderstood by Peter (verse 33)? Underscored by God (verses 34-35)?
- When have you experienced God in an unusual manner? What happened?
- When it comes to listening to Jesus, how hard of hearing are you?
- What do you do to obey the command of the Father to obey his Son?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 554-56, 697, 2600

Closing prayer

The saints are like the stars. In his providence Christ conceals them in a hidden place that they may not shine before others when they might wish to do so. Yet they are always ready to exchange the quiet of contemplation for the works of mercy as soon as they perceive in their heart the invitation of Christ. -St. Anthony of Padua

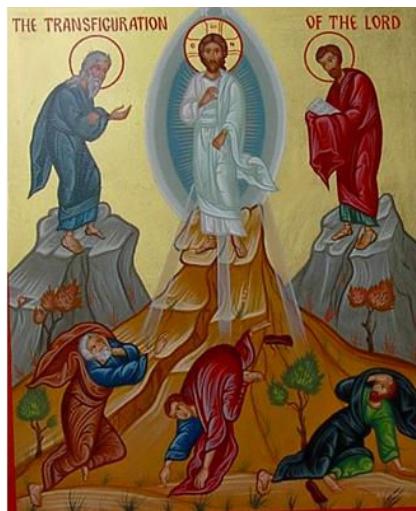
Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings!

Jesus transfigured in glory

Gospel Reading: Luke 9:28-36

Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white. And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Eli'jah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, and when they wakened they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli'jah" -- not knowing what he said. As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

Meditation: What can blind us or keep us from recognizing God's glory in our lives? Sin and unbelief for sure! Faith enables us to see what is hidden or unseen to the naked eye. Through the eyes of faith Abraham recognized God and God's call on his life. He saw from afar not only what God intended for him, but for his descendants as well – an everlasting covenant of friendship and peace with the living God. Abraham is the father of faith because he put his hope in the promises of God. Faith makes us taste in advance the light of



God's glory when we shall see him face to face (1 Corinthians 13:12) as he is (1 John 3:2).

Are you prepared to see God's glory? God is eager to share his glory with us! We get a glimpse of this when the disciples see Jesus transfigured on the mountain. Jesus' face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. When Moses met with God on Mount Sinai the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God (see Exodus 34:29). Paul says that the Israelites could not look at Moses' face because of its brightness (2 Corinthians 3:7). In this incident Jesus appeared in glory with Moses, the great lawgiver of Israel, and with Elijah, the greatest of the prophets, in the presence of three of his beloved apostles. What is the significance of this mysterious appearance? Jesus went to the mountain knowing full well what awaited him in Jerusalem – his betrayal, rejection and crucifixion. Jesus very likely discussed this momentous decision to go to the cross with Moses and Elijah. God the Father also spoke with Jesus and gave his approval: This is my beloved Son; listen to him. The cloud which overshadowed Jesus

and his apostles fulfilled the dream of the Jews that when the Messiah came the cloud of God's presence would fill the temple again (see Exodus 16:10, 19:9, 33:9; 1 Kings 8:10; 2 Maccabees 2:8). While this transpired Peter, James, and John were asleep (Luke 9:22)! Upon awakening they discovered the transfiguration of Jesus along with Moses and Elijah.

How much do we miss of God's glory and action because we are asleep spiritually? There are many things which can keep our minds asleep to the things of God: Mental lethargy and the "unexamined life" can keep us from thinking things through and facing our doubts and questions. The life of ease can also hinder us from considering the challenging or disturbing demands of Christ. Prejudice can make us blind to something new the Lord may have for us. Even sorrow can be a block until we can see past it to the glory of God. Are you spiritually awake? Peter, James, and John were privileged witnesses of the glory of Christ. We, too, as disciples of Christ are called to be witnesses of his glory. We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Lord wants to reveal his glory to us, his beloved disciples. Do you seek his presence with faith and reverence?

"Lord Jesus, keep me always alert and awake to you, to your word, your action, and your daily presence in my life. Let me see your glory."

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