

Scripture Study

Second Sunday of Lent – Cycle B



Opening prayer

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

(Ps 116:10, 15-19)

Romans 8:31b-34

Mark 9:2-10

Overview of the Gospel:

- This Sunday's Gospel relates what is traditionally called the Transfiguration of Jesus (from the Latin: *trans* = radical change; *figur* = appearance. The Greek word is *metamorphothe*).
- This event is recounted in all three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). It is mentioned by Peter in his second epistle (2 Peter 1:16-19) and we may even see a possible allusion to it in John 1:14.
- In Mark's gospel, the Transfiguration takes place six days after Jesus first predicts his Passion to the disciples and presents to them the demands of the Cross (Mark 8:31-38). Luke adds the fact that he took his three disciples to the top of the mountain to pray (Luke 9:28). The three that Jesus took with him—Peter, James, and John—formed sort of an "inner circle" among Jesus' disciples and were present at key events in his ministry (Mark 5:21-43; 14:33).
- The traditional location of the Transfiguration is Mount Tabor. In Christianity, Mt. Tabor has been seen as the counterpart to the Old Testament Mt. Sinai, where Moses received the Jewish Law (Exodus 19) and Elijah the Prophet had an encounter with God in "a still, small, voice (1 Kings 19). Moses and Elijah were thought to epitomize, respectively, the Law and the Prophets. They also were thought to have both been assumed (taken bodily) into heaven.
- At the end of this encounter, the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) disappear (verse 8) but Jesus, who is the fulfillment of them both (Matthew 5:17; 7:12; 22:34-40; Luke 16:16-17) remains.

Questions:

- In the 1st reading, in what ways is the story of "the binding of Isaac" a foreshadowing—or type—of Christ's sacrifice on the cross? What is the difference?
- In the 2nd reading what does Paul tell us that God did for us? What results from this? What confidence and trust should we have in God as a result of this?
- What is the connection between Mark 9:1 and the Transfiguration?
- What do you imagine this scene was like? What is the significance of Moses' and Elijah's presence? Of the voice (see Mark 1:11)? Why would this event be important for the disciples?
- Who played the role of Elijah (see Matthew 17:10-13)? With what result (Mark 6:14-29)? How could John the Baptist's fate help the disciples understand the nature of Jesus' messiahship?
- Where have you grasped a bit of Jesus' glory in a special way?
- How does the picture of a suffering Messiah shape your view of what the Christian life is all about?

Catechism of the Catholic Church: §§ 554-556, 1459-1464, 2565, 2570-2571, 2574-2577, 2602

Closing prayer

We will not be able to share in our Lord's Resurrection unless we unite ourselves with Him in His Passion and Death. If we are to accompany Christ in His glory at the end of Holy Week, we must first enter into His holocaust and be truly united to Him, as He lies dead on Calvary. –St. Josemaria Escriva

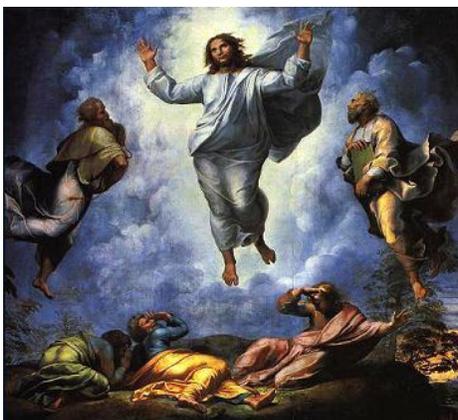
Remember to read and meditate on the daily Mass readings!

"This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!"

Gospel Reading: *Mark 9:2-10*

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! 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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