

2nd Sunday of Lent, year B

Reflections on the Readings: Genesis 22:1-2;9-13.15-18. Responsorial Psalm: 115:10:15-19
Romans 8:31-34. Gospel Mark 9:2-10

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The theme which runs through the three readings today is **'fidelity'**, trust, obedience, and absolute faithfulness. For starters, we know that God called Abram (God changed his name to Abraham.....the Father of a great nation, after this event) to make the biggest sacrifice in his life, and he obeyed God's request. But let's look at what obedience means here. It is much more than just doing the task of sacrificing his Son in response to an instruction; biblical obedience is listening not just with the intellect, but with body, mind, and spirit. Obedience is total listening, and feeling the consequences of the invitation, as well as being aware of the pain within the response. In short, we could say that biblical obedience is holistic listening to God. I think that we can even take this a bit further in understanding what this really means. So often when we read the Scriptures, we can do it from an information point of view, in other words, getting the meaning of the story and analysing it, then saying, what implications does it have for me? If we stay with that method, we can run the risk of staying on the surface of its import and invitation. Look at the water striders on a pond, they stand and walk on the water, but they can never get below the surface. We have the ability and gifts to go beneath the surface of the Scriptures and be submerged into its words!

Let's have a look at fidelity. The foundational building blocks of all relationships are trust and fidelity. Without this, there can be no certainty within relationships. We have all experienced times when we have failed in fidelity and times when others have failed us as well.

Now, let's have a look at the Gospel, let's go to Mt. Tabor...the Holy Mountain. These days this mountain is a great launching place for Hang Gliders! However, the mystery and holiness of the place is well and truly there. As we keep in mind the 'breath-taking' experience in ascending a high mountain and beholding the view, let's hang onto that experience as the mystery and message of the Transfiguration unfolds for the three Apostles who were privy to this moment.

Let's look very closely at the text, for meanings that could escape us, if we either rush through it, or just treat the story at an academic level. Notice it was Jesus who initiated this hike up the mountain. Now notice that in their presence, that is within the close proximity of conversation, Jesus is 'changed', Elijah and Moses appear within the proximity of the intimate group. In fact, it happened right there in their midst. Rabbi it is wonderful for us to be here etc. Peter understood this experience as a 'moment' of the Apostles' inclusion. In other words, this moment was an invitation to Peter, who in speaking up for the group, puts into words their threefold response. 'It is wonderful for us to be here etc.'

Now, I bet that you have had experiences of spiritual transfiguration within natural moments in your lifetime, which due to their intensity and fathomless depths have caused you to say so spontaneously....**'O Lord it is wonderful for us to be here'**. Was it at the birth of your Baby? Was it when all seemed lost for you, and angel in human form was the instrument of God's saving hand? Was it when 'love' embraced you, and you wished deeply for that moment to be captured eternally? Was it when you experienced without a shadow of a doubt that God was with you in a particular moment? All the above, and many more experiences can change us; we can be transfigured through them, and our faith is charged with new insight, and our whole being 'listens' anew.

On this second Sunday of Lent, let's take time out, to reflect upon the various Transfiguration experiences in our life? Do we see the saving hand of God in them? Did that experience 'change' us in any way? Were we instrumental in being part of a Transfiguration experience with others, for others? Food for Thought.