

My dear brothers and sisters, today's Gospel focuses on the transfiguration of Jesus Christ and, the Holy Mother the Church is telling all Christians and Catechumens that **if we overcome sin and temptation, we would be transformed like Jesus Christ into his glory.** As the disciples saw Jesus' divinity revealed, their attitude to Jesus was transformed, so must we allow ourselves to be transformed. Lent is all about, transforming ourselves and our attitudes so that we can see Jesus more clearly. During this season of Lent, we examine our lives to see where we stand before God. Also we can see this call to transformation, in St. Paul's writings. According to Paul, Jesus will transform our earthly bodies to be like Jesus' glorified body. So we too hope to enjoy the glory that the three apostles saw when Jesus was transfigured. What we will be in the future is very different to what we are now! Lent is a time to go beyond false images to see who we really are before God. What we will be is what Paul wrote to the Philippians, "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform to his glorified body..." (Phil 3:20-21).

Again, in the Gospel, God the Father speaks to the three apostles, saying, "This is my Beloved Son, listen to him" (Mk.9:7)! This is what Lent is all about, listening to Jesus. The question we must ask is that are we giving God sufficient time to speak to us like Abraham, our father of faith? Just meditate on the first reading and see how God tested Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son, when Isaac was about twelve years old, Abraham was asked by God to dispatch his beloved son by plunging a knife into his heart (Gen.22:2). There were no promises given by God, no indications whatsoever, that there would be any divine protection given to Isaac. All Abraham has left, the only thing upon which he can rely, is God's goodness and love. **Abraham acts on pure faith alone.** What then shall we say this day of our own personal faith at this stage in our journey through Lent? Can we let go of the worldly things that we cling to, let them go in the sure and certain faith that God will bring good out of evil, life out of death, meaning out of absurdity, and joy out of suffering? Abraham is, as we pray in the Roman Canon, "our father in faith". If Abraham could let his beloved son go, whom God spared from death, and if God our Father in heaven could let His own beloved Son go, whom He did not spare from death, what levels of faith do we have with which to do the same? Just how much do we allow God to be truly God in our own lives by placing our lives in His Hands?

On the mountain, Peter, James and John saw that there was more to Jesus than met the eye. Jesus is true God and true man. Jesus, realizing that his death will demoralize his disciples, forewarns them and strengthens their faith. During the transfiguration, they got a glimpse of the future glory of Jesus' resurrection. Like them we too get glimpses of the presence of God in our lives. We get glimpses of God in the love we receive from other people. We get glimpses of God when badly needed help suddenly comes to us from out of nowhere. We see glimpses of God when a passage from the Bible or a homily touches our hearts. We get a glimpse of God when we spend time in prayer and experience the loving presence of God in our lives. We get more than just a glimpse of God when we receive the body of Jesus in Holy Communion.

Finally, after Jesus and the disciples came down the mountain, he ordered them not to tell anyone about his transfiguration, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead (Mk.9:9). Of course, they did not know what he meant. Unknown to them, **the glory of Jesus' transfiguration was preparing them to accept the scandal of the cross.** They would understand this only afterwards when looking back. The good times take us through the bad times. So when our cross is heavy or when we are tempted to despair about the meaning of life, let us look beyond the pain of the present moment and remember those times when we got glimpses of God, those times when God sent us his consolations. Let us look beyond the pain of life and see the presence of God in our world, and the offer of life that God wants to make to all of us. Let us look beyond the deception of happiness that this life offers to the real happiness that God offers us. Let us look beyond this world to eternal life with God, so that the salvation promised us will be ours. Amen!