

Sunday, March 12, 2017

2nd Sunday of Lent

Meditation and Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion

Mass Readings:

1st Reading: Genesis 12:1-4

2nd Reading: 2 Timothy 1:8-10

Responsorial: Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Glorifying the Lord through Our Lenten Exercises

This is my beloved Son. (Matthew 17:5)

Jesus' Transfiguration was one of the most magnificent displays of God's glory the world has seen. The purpose of the Transfiguration was to give his apostles, and all of us, a deeper understanding of who he is. So let's see what we can learn from it.

Clearly, this was a dramatic revelation for Peter, James, and John. They never forgot what happened that day. Decades after it happened, John wrote, "We saw his glory" (John 1:14). Peter said, "We had been eyewitnesses of his majesty . . . when that unique declaration came to him from the majestic glory" (2 Peter 1:16, 17). The Transfiguration showed them that the kingdom of God that Jesus had been preaching would be characterized by glory. But it also encouraged them and strengthened them for the ordeal of the cross that lay before them. For as they learned at Calvary, the glory of God comes not only through displays of magnificence, but also through self-giving love—a love that embraces even death.

The Holy Spirit wants us to learn both of these concepts of glory. He wants us to see that Jesus is glorified every time we worship him at Mass and in prayer, and he is glorified every time we go out of our way to help someone. He is glorified when we reverence him during Eucharistic adoration, and he is glorified every time we confess our sins or forgive someone who has hurt us.

Let these lessons about glory and self-giving love sink into your heart. As you dwell on the glory of Jesus' Transfiguration, see that it is a glory that comes because of his cross. Then, tell him that you want to be changed into his glorious image. Ask him to take your every act of love and fill it with his presence. It really is possible for us to live "for the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:12).

"Jesus, open my eyes to the glory that you displayed before Peter, James, and John. Let that glory reign in my heart."

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Questions for Reflection or Discussion:

1. In the first reading, the Lord says these words to Abraham: “Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you.”
 - In what way has the Lord fulfilled these words to Abraham?
2. The first reading ends with these words: “Abram went as the LORD directed him.”
 - The Church calls Abraham “Our Father in Faith.” How would you describe his faith?
3. The responsorial psalm provides some of the reasons we can put our trust and hope in the Lord.
 - What are some of the reasons given?
 - What are your reasons for putting your trust and hope in the Lord?
 - How can you use this Lent to increase your “trust” and “hope” in God?
4. In the second reading, St. Paul tells Timothy that God has “saved us and called us to a holy life, not according to our works but according to his own design and the grace bestowed on us in Christ Jesus.”
 - Why does Paul seem to make the grace of God more important than any works we perform?
 - In what ways can our practices of Lenten piety become “works,” rather than graces and a means of being transformed more and more into the image of Christ?
 - How can you use the traditional practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving during Lent to open yourself to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ?
5. In the Gospel, Peter was so excited at seeing Christ’s glory in his transfiguration that he told Jesus he wanted to “make three tents” and remain on the mountain. However, while Peter was still speaking, he hears these words from God: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”
 - The Gospel tells us that Jesus is the beloved son of his Father. In spite of your own sins and weaknesses, do you consider yourself a beloved son (or daughter) of your heavenly Father?
 - Why is knowing this important in helping us to live out our Christian life?
6. The meditation begins with these words: “Jesus’ Transfiguration was one of the most magnificent displays of God’s glory the world has seen. The purpose of the Transfiguration was to give his apostles, and all of us, a deeper understanding of who he is.” It goes on to say that the “The Transfiguration showed them that the kingdom of God that Jesus had been preaching would be characterized by glory. But it also encouraged them and strengthened them for the ordeal of the cross that lay before them. For as they learned at Calvary, the glory of God comes not only through displays of magnificence, but also through self-giving love—a love that embraces even death. The Holy Spirit wants us to learn both of these concepts of glory. He wants us to see that Jesus is glorified every time we worship him at Mass and in prayer, and he is glorified every time we go out of our way to help someone. He is glorified when we reverence him during Eucharistic adoration, and he is glorified every time we confess our sins or forgive someone who has hurt us.”
 - As we continue into the 2nd week of Lent, what steps are you taking to bring glory to God through your Lenten practices? Is there more you can do?
7. Take some time to pray and ask the Lord for the grace to see the Lord’s glory and for the grace to glorify him through your daily life? Use the prayer below from the end of the meditation as the starting point.

***“Jesus, open my eyes to the glory that you displayed before Peter, James, and John.
Let that glory reign in my heart.”***

[The discussion questions were created by Maurice Blumberg, who is in partner relations for **The Word Among Us Partners**, (<http://www.waupartners.org/>); a ministry of **The Word Among Us** (www.wau.org) to the military, prisoners, women with crisis pregnancies or who have had abortions, and college students. He is also a member of the **National Service Committee Council of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal** (<http://www.nsc-chariscenter.org/>) and a member of the board of

As posted on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal National Service Committee’s website: www.nsc-chariscenter.org

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