

2 Lent B 2021 SML
MK 9:2-10

This morning's gospel only makes sense if you read what happened immediately before Jesus took Peter, James and John up the mountain to be transfigured before them. What precedes the Transfiguration explains why Jesus was transfigured, as it the only time before His resurrection that He lets His divinity be seen. It's the only time they saw it. Why?

Immediately before Our Blessed Lord's Transfiguration, He told His disciples for the first of three times, that the present state of affairs was about to come to an end:

- ✓ He will be betrayed.
- ✓ He will suffer,
- ✓ and as a result, He will die
- ✓ BUT that He would rise from the dead,
 - ✓ as if they understood that. And if that were not shocking enough, He then went on to say to His disciples, so He is saying this to us as well, for each and every one of us in this Church who at least claims to be a disciple, "If anyone should follow Me:
 - ✓ He must deny himself,
 - ✓ take up his cross

- ✓ and follow Me.”

That means the cross will come our way.

So, when Peter, James and John hear the Father saying, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him:” – listen to what? Listen to what, because on the mountain, Jesus didn’t say a blessed thing. So God the Father is referring to the conversation they just had with Jesus, at least in part. He’s telling them, “Listen to my Son when He tells you the cross will come.”

- ✓ Suffering will come.
- ✓ Pain will come.
- ✓ Trials will come.
- ✓ Testing will come.

Listen to Him. And when they come, do not be discouraged, because look at Him now, transfigured before you, and realize that He, or We (the three persons of the Blessed Trinity) have “this.”

Powerful enough to be transfigured, powerful enough to help you carry your cross!

- ✓ Do not lose faith
- ✓ Do not fear that I have abandoned you.
- ✓ Do not wonder where I am.

✓ Do not lose hope.

He told you in advance this would happen, so that when it happens, you'll know that I have this. He, God, has this.

✓ I don't like pain.

✓ Don't like suffering,

✓ Don't like trials,

And I can get frustrated when these things happen. It's been said that when things like that happen, they bring out the worst in us. But that's not really true. Trials and suffering bring out what's really in us. They have a way of showing who we are and what we are really made of. These times wake us up out of the illusion that we do not need God because we do. We definitely need God.

So name for yourself the trial, the test, the cross, the "this" that you are carrying . . .

How many have heard the line, "Jesus suffered so that we don't have to." What a crock! That's nonsense. It's just not true. Jesus, Himself, told us that when He said, "Take up your cross and follow Me."

Just prior to today's Gospel, Jesus tells us in advance that crosses will come. And when the crosses do come, the crosses will not have the last word.

POINT TO THE TABERNACLE. He does.

It is so important to hold on to the reality that He has conquered death, that His grace is sufficient for everything, and that He is always faithful, and He never abandons us.

I've quoted before from a daily devotional I love, entitled "Jesus Calling." Here is the devotion I read as I was preparing this homily:

Jesus Calling: February 22

You need Me every moment. Your awareness of your constant need for Me is your greatest strength. Your neediness, properly handled, is a link to My Presence. However, there are pitfalls that you must be on guard against: self-pity, self-preoccupation, giving up. Your inadequacy presents you with a continual choice--deep dependence on Me, or despair. The emptiness you feel within will be filled either with problems or with My presence. Make Me central in your consciousness by *praying continually* simple, short prayers flowing out of the present moment. Use My Name liberally, to remind you of My Presence. *Keep on asking and you will receive, so that your gladness may be full and complete.*

I've encouraged this type of prayer, using Jesus' name liberally, to remind you of His presence. Have a ready mantra. Mine comes from the Divine Mercy, "Jesus I trust in You." Just about every night, I hold a crucifix, and repeat that mantra, "Jesus I trust in You" to fall asleep. And inevitably, that same crucifix will jab me in the side during the night.

This week, God is asking us, in addition to trusting Him, to "Listen to Him," when He tells us that crosses will come, so when they do come,

- ✓ don't be sideswiped,
- ✓ don't be discouraged,
- ✓ don't be tempted.

Because greater than any cross we're carrying is the faithfulness of our Transfigured Lord, assuring us this evening/morning, that whatever the trial we're facing at this time, He's got it.