

2020 March 08

Second Sunday of Lent

Readings:

First: Genesis 12.1-4, "And the one who curses you I will curse." (3b)

Psalm 33, "Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us even as we hope in you." (22)

Second: 2Timothy 1.8b-10, "This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus." (9c)

Gospel: Matthew 17.1-9, "And his face shone like the sun." (2b)

Ecstasy and Agony!

Peter, James and John came down from the mountain where they had the vision. Were they the same people who went up with Jesus? While on the vision they were terribly afraid and even lost their consciousness. It was an *agonizing ecstasy!* In addition to the vision, they had also a life changing revelation on their way down the mountain, namely, *"Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead"*. Did they understand or comprehend the words, ***"Until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead"***? In all probability not.

It should have had some hang over on them with a strong reason to keep it, alive and questioning in their mind, and may be 'haunting them' in their sleep, at least for a while. From what we know about their story from the gospels, this significant event got erased from their mind! Isn't it surprising? This event of Transfiguration of the Lord on the mountain was not something imagined and not a story told but a real physical and live event happened in their full consciousness and vision. Yet apparently it did not hang around them and for all practical purposes they forgot. Their abandoning Jesus at the most critical moment is proof that this experience got erased from their minds.

For us living two thousand years after this happening it is still an amazing event, prompting us to ponder and ponder over and over again! Now let us come back to the reality of our life. We have this life changing mystery happening, not transfiguration but '*transubstantiation*' on our altar every day, changing our raw bread and wine into the precious Body and Blood of Jesus. Now we are the ones on the mountain with Jesus, not just witnessing but participating in it, and eating and drinking out of it. However, after we file out through the doors of the church do we remember what happened there on the altar? Does the happening really touch and move us?

Do the words of Jesus, ***"Take and eat, this is my Body, this is my blood, ... do this in remembrance of me."***, resonate and prod our spirit to be different and act upon it, or even just speak about it? Not much, I hope! Hence we are not much different from Peter, James and John two thousand years before. Only when the Spirit took over they changed. We need to allow the Spirit to take us over!

Fr. George