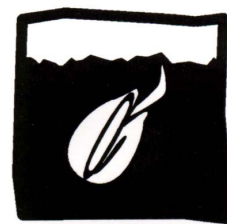


2nd Sunday of Lent C



*This is my Son, my beloved,
in whom is all my delight: listen to him. (Mt 17:5)*

First Reading

Genesis 15:5-12.17-18

Taking Abram outside the Lord said, "Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants" he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

"I am the Lord" he said to him "who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to make you heir to this land." "My Lord, the Lord" Abram replied "how am I to know that I shall inherit it?" He said to him, "Get me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove and a young pigeon." He brought him all these, cut them in half and put half on one side and half facing it on the other; but the birds he did not cut in half. Birds of prey came down on the carcasses but Abram drove them off.

Now as the sun was setting Abram fell into a deep sleep, and terror seized him. When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, there appeared a smoking furnace and a fire-brand that went between the halves. That day the Lord made a Covenant with Abram in these terms: "To your descendants I give this land, from the wadi of Egypt to the Great River."

Second Reading

Philippians 3:20 – 4:1

For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

So then, my brothers and sisters and dear friends, do not give way but remain faithful in the Lord. I miss you very much, dear friends; you are my joy and my crown.

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up the mountain to pray. As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." – He did not know what he was saying. As he spoke, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, "This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him." And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen.

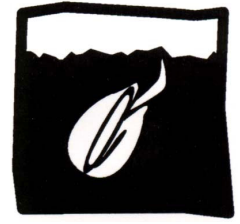
Meditation

Every year the first two Sundays of Lent present the whole gamut of human existence, the whole range of the history of salvation. On the first Sunday of Lent the temptation of Jesus recalls the temptation of every human being since the beginning. On this second Sunday of Lent the transfiguration of Jesus holds out the transformation in glory which is the goal of every human hope.

The transfigured Jesus, however, models not only the goal of the Christian but also our ongoing life. The passage forms a fitting climax to the instruction on discipleship which immediately precedes it. First of all, Luke emphasizes that Jesus' transfiguration took place "while he was praying", an action integral to Christian life. Secondly, he speaks with Moses and Elijah concerning his exodus, his transit to the Father through death, resurrection, and exaltation, which is announced in the first passion prediction. The disciples also are called to take up the cross and follow Jesus in order to arrive at life. Then they will see the glory of the Son of Man and of the Father. This appearance is a foretaste of that glory. Finally, at the transfiguration the voice from the cloud, heard at Jesus' baptism, is heard again, this time commanding, "Listen to him." The disciples are those who "listen to the word of God and keep it."

Thus we see in the transfigured Jesus both the goal and the way. We must not confuse the one for the other. The transfiguration marks only a temporary halt in the journey to Jerusalem, only a pause in this exodus. We who follow Jesus must continue to the end, strengthened by the glorious hope to which we are called.

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Second Reading

Philippians 3:17 – 4:1

My brothers and sisters, be united in following my rule of life. Take as your models everybody who is already doing this and study them as you used to study us. I have told you often, and I repeat it today with tears, there are many who are behaving as the enemies of the cross of Christ. They are destined to be lost. They make foods into their god and they are proudest of something they ought to think shameful; the things they think important are earthly things.

For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

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