



March 20, 2011 The Second Sunday of Lent

And he was transfigured before their eyes; his face became as dazzling as the sun...Matthew 17:2

Dear Friends;

There are moments in life when it seems as if a veil has lifted and we can see things on a deeper level. We see it in the eyes of lovers as they gaze on each other. We glimpse it in a young mother pregnant for the first time. We are dazzled by the twinkle in the eye of the old person who has led a love-filled life. These moments remind us that there is something more to life than what we normally see. That something makes it all worthwhile.

Today in the reading from the Gospel of Matthew the disciples—Peter, James, and John, get a glimpse of Jesus in a different light. He has become so transparent that the glory of God shines through him. Then they are invited to listen to him. At the end of this experience Jesus lays his hands on them, reassures them and tells them not to be afraid. The vision will sustain them in the days ahead.

This revelatory moment on the mountain reveals to us Jesus' mission. Jesus has come to invite us to be transfigured by love. In Franciscan and Eastern Christian theology Jesus did not come because we sinned. Jesus came because God loves us and wished to share his life with us. In other words we were to be divinized.

We did sin and it became even more important that he came to give us a vision of God's love and purpose for us. We are made to become so transparent that the radiant light of God shines from us as it did with Jesus.

The only way that that can happen is to follow the way of Abraham and Jesus. In the reading from Genesis the Patriarch Abraham has a transformative vision—he will be the father of many peoples. But he first must leave behind what he knows and emigrate from Ur to the land which God would give him.

Jesus' transfiguration follows his prediction of his suffering and death. He too must embark on a long journey trusting that God would bring him to the place of glory. Both Abraham and Jesus must leave behind the safe, familiar and the secure. They must take a risk and trust in God's loving-goodness.

Both have their revelatory moment that keeps them moving ahead despite the difficulties and suffering. They are able to see the promised vision of love. We too must keep our eyes fixed on this vision of Jesus who is the promise of what we can be.

Many of us are spiritually stifled because we fail to see the vision of God's glory just beneath the surface of our lives. Yet if we look, we can see that God is beneath it all loving, creating, sustaining and saving. As the Jesuit, poet, paleontologist, and mystic, (for me a saint) Pierre Teilhard de Chardin wrote: "You are not a human being in search of a spiritual experience. You are a spiritual being immersed in a human experience."

My prayer is that through your observance of Lent you become more transparent. Shine with the radiant light of love and grace. May you see God's presence shining through life's precious moments. May that light lead you through the difficulties and suffering of life to the glory of resurrection and the radiance of love made perfect.

Peace,

Ft Ron