

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT; Cycle – C; March 16th 2025
Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18; Philippians 3:17-4:1; Luke 9:28-36

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

On the second Sunday of Lent, no matter in what liturgical cycle we are in, we listen to the account of the *Transfiguration* of Jesus where we find him revealing his full identity and glory to his three disciples. We may wonder, why did Jesus, who never sought any sort of popularity, decide to reveal his divinity? Secondly, what impact did it make in the future lives of the disciples?

In order to understand the purpose of the Transfiguration, it is better we go through an incident described in *2 Kings 6:8-23*. Briefly the story goes like this: the king of Aram was waging war against Israel and Elisha knew in advance by his prophetic vision the plan and movement of the Aramean king. He informed the same to the Israeli king. So the Aramean army turned against Elisha and set out to capture him. But his servant was worried about the life of his master. He expressed his concern to the Prophet. In order to convince his servant, Elisha had to demonstrate his divine power showing him a vision of a great army on the mountain and Elisha standing amidst of it. And also the Aramean army was blinded by God.

The Transfiguration of Jesus took place nearly in a similar situation like that of Elisha. During his public ministry couple times Jesus predicted his imminent tragic death and the resurrection. But the disciples didn't give much attention to them. Finally almost towards the end of his ministry at Caesarea Philippi Jesus made his third prediction and this time the disciples understood the seriousness of the matter. We see Peter making an abortive attempt in persuading Jesus to run away from the tragedy. Like Elisha's servant Peter and companions were so much worried about the safety of their master and they were in big loss and utter frustration. They too needed a vision which the servant of Elisha was granted. **That is the reason or purpose of the Transfiguration of Jesus by which he revealed his true glory and proved that the earthly enemies could do nothing to destroy his life.** For the first time, Peter and the two other disciples with him came to understand who Jesus really was. We don't know why Jesus didn't take with him all of his disciples including Judas Iscariot? Even going to the Garden of Gethsemane he took only these three men to the interior part of the Garden.

The Transfiguration experience was, therefore, God's way of delivering the disciples from the crisis of faith. It was also an assurance of Jesus of his awaiting glorious resurrection and victory over death. At least for a moment, these men could see the life and role of Jesus in the perspective of God the Father. **Really, the Transfiguration**

experience could help the disciples handle the crucifixion and death of Jesus with more ease, though initially they all ran away from him. Later having witnessed the glory of Jesus in the resurrection, the disciples had no hesitation to preach about the crucifixion of Jesus. In fact, they found pride in that. If we go through the letters of Paul, it is clear that the entire theme of his preaching was the **‘Christ crucified and Christ risen.’** The Transfiguration of Jesus was an **‘Aha experience’** for the disciples which they received at the most critical moment of their lives.

My friends, there are occasions when you and I reach somewhat the similar situation of the disciples and Elisha’s servant. No doubt, we live in a high tech world. The facilities and securities we enjoy today were unimaginable 50 years ago. But we all have something common with the people of the past, that is, we too are worried and anxious over so many things. **Though, today, every help seems to be a mouse click or phone call away, modern man does not feel secure or worry free. We have worries and concerns about our lives; we have anxieties about our material and physical welfare.**

The moment when we think that everything is in our favor, our world turns upside down, like in the case of the disciples. At times, we feel that all doors are shut against us. We all look for a **Transfiguration experience**; an assurance of relief from our troubles. Please remember, when Jesus was stressed out he went up to the mountain to pray alone. At least in a few occasions Jesus did the same. We should not conclude that on that evening Jesus went up to the mountain to Transfigure. During his intense prayer the Heavenly Father intervened and Transfigured Jesus. It is a good example for us that when we are in troubles we need to remain with the Lord in prayer and there we will have the Transfiguration experience. When the disciples were in prayer in the Upper Room, the Holy Spirit came down upon them. In prayer not only we talk to Jesus but also we listen to him. At the end of the Transfiguration God the Father commanded: **This is my chosen Son; listen to him.**” Very often, in our distress we fail to listen to Jesus and we go on asking and asking from him; as a result we miss his words of wisdom for us. When we develop a habit of listening to Jesus, he will guide us and show us what to do and where to turn.