Second Sunday of Lent (A)

Gospel text (*Mt* 17:1-9): Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone.

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him"

Deacon Fr. Josep MONTOYA Viñas
(Valldoreix, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, as Lent has begun, the Liturgy of the Word invites us to contemplate the mystery of the Lord's Transfiguration: "Jesus (...) led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them" (Mt 17:1–2), an experience they would never forget (cf., for example, 2 Pt 1:16–19). That Christ transforms our lives is something that, in one way or another, all of us can testify to. So often the Lord gives us life by turning small gestures of our ordinary existence into extraordinary events.

So many times, our prayers and petitions become reality and surprise us, like the radiant presence of Jesus, who today leaves Peter, James, and John astonished. For Jesus is the revelation of the Father's love within us. And then we can make Simon Peter's words our own: "Lord, it is good that we are here" (Mt 17:4).

But immediately afterward, the Father invites us to take on an attitude that is often difficult for us to put into practice: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him" (Mt 17:5). On several occasions, Pope Leo XIV has reflected that "Christ transforms life and calls us to listen to Him." This is the key to the Transfiguration: to listen to the Son of God. To listen to the Word... also means paying attention

to our shepherds, listening to a son or daughter who is troubled, or to someone who lives in loneliness or despair, or to the sick… and, above all, listening to our heart in prayer, from where the Lord speaks to us.

“Rise, and do not be afraid” (Mt 17:7), Jesus Christ tells them at once. The Transfiguration is also a foretaste of the Resurrection. It reminds us that beyond the cross there is Glory. In moments of darkness, illness, or suffering, this scene gives us hope: the final word does not belong to pain, but to light. May this attitude of wonder, hope, and listening accompany us especially during this second week of Lent.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “And in this Transfiguration the foremost object was to remove the offense of the cross from the disciple's heart, and to prevent their faith being disturbed by the humiliation of His voluntary Passion.” (Saint Leo the Great)

- “‘Listen to him’. This invitation from the Father is very important. We, the disciples of Jesus, are called to be people who listen to his voice and take his words seriously.” (Francis)

- “The Gospels report that at two solemn moments, the Baptism and the Transfiguration of Christ, the voice of the Father designates Jesus his ‘beloved Son’. Jesus calls himself the ‘only Son of God’, and by this title affirms his eternal pre-existence (Jn 3:16). He asks for faith in ‘the name of the only Son of God’ (Jn 3:18) …” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 444)

Other comments

“And he was transfigured before them”

Fr. Jaume GONZÁLEZ i Padrós
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today on our journey to Easter Time, the liturgy of the word shows us the transfiguration of Jesus Christ. Although there is a liturgical day in our calendar reserved for this celebration (August 6th), we are now invited to contemplate the very same scene intimately linked to the Passion, Death and Resurrection of our Lord.

The Passion of Jesus was indeed getting close and six days before His ascent to Mount Tabor, He clearly announced it: He had told them that “he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised” (Mt 16:21).

But the disciples were not yet ready to see the suffering of their Lord and Master. He, who had always

been merciful towards the defenseless, who had healed many a skin marred by leprosy, who had given light to so many blind eyes, who had given back motion to so many paralyzed limbs, it could just not be that his body was to be blemished by the thrashing and flogging. And, in spite of everything, He asserts without any concessions: “I had to suffer.” Incomprehensible! Impossible!

But despite all this incomprehension, Jesus knows what He has come to this world for. He knows He has to assume all the feebleness and pain overwhelming humanity to be able to divinize it and, thus, redeem it from the vicious circle of sin and death, so that the latter defeated —death—, it cannot anymore hold man in bondage; man, who God created in His own image.

This is why the Transfiguration is a splendid icon of our redemption, where the Lord's flesh appears in a glimpse of His resurrection. Thus, while the announcement of His Passion kindles anguish in the Apostles, the radiance of His divinity strengthens their hope, anticipating for them the joy of Easter. Yet Peter, James, and John did not fully understand what it meant “to be raised from the dead” (cf. Mt 17:9). In time, however, they would come to understand.