Second Sunday of Lent (C)

Gospel text (*Lk* 9:28-36): Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.

Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my chosen Son; listen to him.” After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.

“Jesus went up the mountain to pray”

Fr. Jaume GONZÁLEZ i Padrós
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Today, the second Sunday of Lent, the liturgy of the word invariably brings us the Gospel episode of the Transfiguration of the Lord. This year with the nuances proper to St. Luke.

The third evangelist is the one who most intensely emphasizes Jesus in prayer, the Son who is permanently united to the Father through personal prayer, sometimes intimate, hidden; sometimes in the presence of his disciples, filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

Let us note, then, that Luke is the only one of the synoptics who begins the narration of this story thus: “Jesus (...) went up the mountain to pray” (Lk 9:28), and, therefore, he is also the one who specifies that the transfiguration of the Master occurred “while he was praying” (Lk 9:29). This is not a secondary fact.

Prayer is presented as the ideal, natural context for the vision of Christ's glory: when Peter, John and James awoke, "they saw his glory" (Lk 9:32). But not only his glory, but also the glory that God had already

manifested in the Law and the Prophets; these - says the evangelist - "appeared in glory" (Lk 9:31). Indeed, they too find their own splendor when the Son speaks to the Father in the love of the Spirit. Thus, at the heart of the Trinity, the Passover of Jesus, "his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem" (Lk 9:31) is the sign that manifests God's plan from the beginning, carried out in the heart of Israel's history, until its definitive fulfilment, in the fullness of time, in the death and resurrection of Jesus, the incarnate Son.

It is good for us to remember this Lent and always that only if we allow the Spirit of piety to emerge in our lives, establishing with the Lord a familiar, inseparable relationship, will we be able to enjoy the contemplation of his glory. It is urgent to allow ourselves to be impressed by the vision of the face of the Transfigured One. Perhaps our Christian experience has too many words and lacks the amazement that made Peter and his companions authentic witnesses of the living Christ.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Let no one be ashamed of Christ's cross, through which the world was redeemed. Since all the weakness of our humility was assumed by Him, in Whom, if we abide in the acknowledgment and love of Him, we conquer as He conquered, and receive what he promised.” (Saint Leo the Great)

- “Jesus thus chooses to give to Peter, James and John a foretaste of his glory, which He will have after the Resurrection, in order to confirm them in faith and encourage them to follow Him on the trying path, on the Way of the Cross.” (Francis)

- “For a moment Jesus discloses his divine glory, confirming Peter's confession. He also reveals that he will have to go by the way of the cross at Jerusalem in order to ‘enter into his glory’ (Lk 24:26). Moses and Elijah had seen God's glory on the Mountain; the Law and the Prophets had announced the Messiah's sufferings. Christ's Passion is the will of the Father: the Son acts as God's servant.” (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, № 555)