



Lenten

Reflections

The Divine Intervention

February 21, 2016

Scripture

Luke 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.

Our Scripture Reflection

Today's beautiful Gospel text begins with Jesus taking three of His handpicked disciples, Peter, James and John to the mountain top. These three were the first called by Jesus (5: 1-11), they will go with Him to raise up from the dead the child of Jairus (8:51) and only they are allowed to enter the Garden with Jesus on the night of His Passion (22: 39-46). Why only these three? Luke does not tell us and many have speculated through the centuries.

Right before their eyes, Jesus is radically transformed and two great Old Testament figures, Moses and Elijah, appear in conversation with Him discussing His "exodus", "journey." Similar to what we read earlier during Jesus' Baptism, a cloud appears and a voice speaks to the disciples, "This is my chosen Son," and this time is added, "Listen to Him."

The meaning of this scene: The disciples without realizing it are given a privileged glimpse of what will happen to Jesus at the Resurrection, on one hand. On the other hand, they are given a glimpse of what will happen to all who believe in Jesus. One day we will be radically transformed at the Resurrection. What glory awaits those who believe and live in Jesus!

Food for your Journey

Speaking of transformations.....

Spencer Morgan Rice, Rector of Trinity Church, Boston, once told of how early in his ministry he was serving a small congregation in the Los Angeles basin. The sexton of the church took as much interest in those who came to pray and meditate as he did the upkeep of the church.

One man in particular attracted his attention. This man dropped by the church briefly every day about 12:15. He would walk down the center aisle, stand at the chancel steps and stare at the altar for a moment. Then he would leave.

After a few days, the sexton began to worry. The man was not well-dressed. He was not the cleanest. He did not always walk steady. The sexton mentioned his concern to Rice,

who suggested the sexton simply ask the man if there was anything the church could do for him.

When the sexton asked, the man said, "No, thank you. I just come in every day and stand before the altar and say, 'Jesus, it's Jim.' It is not much of a prayer, I know, but I think God knows what I mean."

Months slipped by. The sexton never again mentioned their daily visitor. Then, one morning Rice got a call from the Mother Superior of a home for aged men run by the Sisters of the Transfiguration. These women minister to men broken by life.

Let's let Rice tell the end of the story:

The Mother Superior told me that Jim had been admitted, and I said I would be out to see him. She met me at the door and said, "You know, Father Rice, he has been here for two months. He went into the most cantankerous ward we have. Every nun here has tried her best to bring some sense of joy and calm to that ward. We failed. Jim went into that ward and the place is transformed. It is a new place. I went to him two days ago and I asked, 'Jim, how is it that you have been able to bring such joy and such a sense of peace to these men?' And he said, 'Oh, sister, it is because of my visitor.'" And she said, "I know he didn't have any visitors. That chair hadn't been occupied the 60 days he has been here. So I said, 'Jim, what visitors? I've never seen a visitor.' And he said, 'Sister, every day at 12:00, He comes and stands at the foot of my bed and says, 'Jim, it's Jesus!'"

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, With the power of Your wonderfully amazing Grace, transform me from being the sinner that I am to the person that You desire for me to become: a person of faith, hope, unconditional love and free of all worry and fear. Amen.