

20260301. Cycle A. II Sunday of Lent. The Transfiguration of the Lord. Don't be afraid.

A few years ago, when Maria was preparing to leave for Ball State, there were many joyful and exciting moments, and, like anyone facing change or the unknown, she also had moments of fear and anxiety. When the day came for her to leave, Amalia gave Maria this little plant in this mug that says: "Not to spoil the ending, but everything is going to be OK".

Today's gospel is about identity, promises, faith, prayer, and hope. In recent weeks, we have heard on at least two occasions that Jesus' identity is revealed. When he came up out of the river, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus is revealed as the Father's Son, who was sent to reveal the Father himself to us.

Today we will hear that Jesus goes up the mountain, and while he is praying, his face shines like the sun, and a voice comes down from heaven and says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him." Once again, Jesus is presented by the Father as his beloved Son, and he invites us to listen to him.

It is estimated that the Transfiguration occurred 40 days before the Lord's Passion. Matthew does not provide details, but from Luke's Gospel we know that Jesus, Moses, and Elijah were discussing his departure, which would take place in Jerusalem. Jesus comes down, touches the disciples, and tells them to get up and not to be afraid. It is undoubtedly important that Jesus lets the disciples know that, even though difficult times are coming, they must not lose faith. This is the promise he makes to Peter, John, and James, and the promise he makes to us.

Jesus tells the apostles: do not be afraid, but how can they not be afraid when they see how Jesus was treated in his Passion? How can we not feel fear or anguish when we are living in personal situations where we sometimes can't find a way out? Jesus suffers the Passion as part of his humanity, but it is through his Incarnation that he invites us to share in his divinity and does not leave us alone. When we experience stressful and terrible situations, we are not really walking alone; it is Jesus himself who walks with us, helping us carry our cross.

Jesus tells us, "My peace I leave with you; my peace I give you." We can live in peace thanks to the promise made to us: the promise that everything will be OK. You might be wondering: But how can I live in peace when it seems like the whole world is at war? How can we live in peace when there is so much unrest everywhere? How can we live in peace when there is so much injustice? How can I live in peace when I am afraid for my health?

In John 14:27, Jesus makes an important clarification and distinguishes the peace of God from the peace of the world, stating: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

St. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, helps us to understand this a bit more: "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil 4:6-7)

The Transfiguration passage emphasizes the need to listen to Jesus, offers a glimpse of heavenly glory, and assures the disciples that terrestrial suffering is temporary. Jesus tells us, "Do not be afraid." Jesus tells us, "The peace of the Lord be with you." How can we live in peace?

The Transfiguration of the Lord is a reminder that, despite the hardships of Jesus' passion and death, despite our own difficulties in this world, we must not lose sight of the goal: to attain the divinity that transpired throughout Jesus' face.

This is where trust and faith come in. God's peace doesn't depend on our surroundings, but on our relationship with Him. Faith is the certainty, the conviction of something we cannot see, but we know will come because we trust in God. Because we believe that God exists, and we have placed our lives in His hands.

During Father Jeff's talk last Wednesday, he reminded us of the importance of knowing "Who is praying." He asked us to write a short paragraph describing who we are when we pray to God. Regardless of our needs, it's wonderful to know that when we describe ourselves in prayer, we can always begin by saying, "Abba, Father, I am your child, and I trust in you."

It is not calmness itself that gives us peace, but the calm of the certainty of knowing that we are being held by someone who is greater than us and greater than our problems.

“Not to spoil the ending, but everything is going to be OK”

Gen 12:1-4a

Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

2 Tim 1:8b-10

Matthew 17:1-9