Sunday, March 5, 2023

2nd Sunday of Lent

SUNDAY'S READINGS: Genesis 12:1-4a; 2 Timothy 1:8b-10; Matthew 17:1-9

SUNDAY'S GOSPEL:

> After six days 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.
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> 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."

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY DISCUSSION IN PREPARATION FOR SUNDAY

1. In this Gospel, the Transfiguration only happens ***after*** Peter, James, and John have done the hard work of climbing up the mountain. Describe some accounts from your own life when you've experienced the same. How did you persevere in "climbing the mountain" when you weren't getting an immediate payoff? Was the payoff any sweeter in also having had the satisfaction of putting in the hard work to get to that moment?
2. Even before the Transfiguration, Jesus, in all His glory, was with the Apostles; they just didn't see it as clearly. What are some ways (like His presence in the Eucharist) has Jesus been present for you in all His glory, but in a hidden way? What do you do to stay alert to the spiritual reality even if you aren't directly feeling or seeing it?
3. When the voice came out of the cloud, Peter, James, and John suddenly realized that they were in the presence of God, Who was deserving of all their respect (that's why they fell prostrate). So too for us, we need to give God our full respect when we are in His presence. This is especially true when we are inside of the church for Mass. What are the ways that we show God respect when we are in the church for Mass? What are some ways all of us can do a better job at showing God the respect He deserves?
4. After experiencing the Transfiguration, we can only imagine what it was like for Peter, James, and John to come down from the mountain. So too, it is for us after we've gone on a retreat or had some other powerful experience of God. Describe a time you had a powerful experience of God. What was it like returning to "normal" life after that? Was it hard getting off of that spiritual high and facing the task of everyday life and embracing the difficulties/crosses that come with that life? How does having that previous moment of spiritual clarity from your prior experience of God help you to persevere through the difficulties? When you don't "feel" God's presence so obviously?