

Homily: 2nd Sunday of Lent: Cycle C: 2022: Gen 15: 5-12, 17-18; Ps 27: Phil 3: 17 – 4: 1; Lk 9: 28-36

“God Personal Visitations leading to a Transformation in Life”

1. In the first reading today we see God revealing Himself to Abram (later Abraham) in a tangible way. It was a moment of visitation, a personal encounter with the Lord of the Universe, the one and only God. And a reminder that God is the all holy Being, as the Scriptures say, and so *a deep terrifying darkness enveloped Abram* when he encountered God. The mystery of our God is He is both Transcendent and Personal; He is both approachable and lives in unapproachable light (yet when we encounter Him in this life it is often in a holy darkness – see St. John of the Cross’s writings: because our senses both physical and esp. spiritual need to be purified, here can be the beginning - or completion if we generously cooperate with the HS – of our Purgatory – so we can be in God’s full Light in Heaven). God is a Mystery beyond all human mysteries, which is why we need to treat God with respect, reverence and awe and even with a holy fear, while at the same time drawing near to Him in love, in prayer and in pondering the mystery of His life in the Sacred Scriptures and in the depths of our being where He dwells as **the Indwelling Trinity** - if we are living in the state of grace.
2. In order to encounter God in a personal way, in the way He deems fit for our own life, St. Paul gives us some very good advice in the 2nd reading today. In writing to the Philippians, he reminds them **“not to be enemies of the Cross of Christ.”** (See also the book: *Why the Cross* by Fr. Edward Leen). What does that mean for us? Well, Lent is the time when we especially focus, or should focus, on dying to self and living the new life Christ won for us on the Cross, to draw closer to Him in a personal way. Our works of penance, various forms of prayer, almsgiving, and self-denial are meant to prepare our being for that deeper personal encounter with the Blessed Trinity. **The ultimate goal of our Lenten practices is not to just do them for the sake of doing them, but to have a deeper conversion in Christ, to live His way of thinking, of acting, of loving.** Let us ask the Lord this Lent for a special grace to grow in holiness Let us pray to the Holy Spirit to see

what the one thing is we need most spiritually to grow closer to God in love: *it may be humility, or forgiving someone who hurt us badly, purity in our bodies, self-control of our instincts, asking God to help us keep in check some addiction we struggle with, having more calmness in dealing with stress and anxiety, a greater focus to our prayer; to be more loving, to be more generous with God and others with our time; to be more compassionate and less negative, to have a greater docility and spirit of obedience to God and the Catholic Faith instead of picking and choosing among the teachings of the Faith to suit us, or to make a heartfelt Lenten Confession of all the sins we may have hidden in the past out of embarrassment or pride. Whatever it is: let us be bold in asking, and humble in receiving, the grace to grow spiritually, so we can be transfigured in Christ!*

3. This leads us to the Gospel today where we encounter the mystery of **the Transfiguration: the miraculous occurrence of Jesus revealing His true Divine personhood to the 3 chosen Apostles: Peter, James and John.** We also see in this mystery the revelation of the Blessed Trinity, *as the Father's voice is heard from Heaven affirming Jesus as His eternal Son and telling the Apostles to listen to Him, and the Holy Spirit descends upon them all in the shining cloud.* And then Moses and Elijah are there speaking with Jesus; as Jesus is the one to fulfill both the Law and the Prophetic teaching of the OT which Moses and Elijah represent. It is an amazing event and a holy spiritual memory that St. Peter will one day come back to as the first Pope when he writes his second epistle to the Church and says, *"It was not by cleverly concocted myths that we taught you about the coming in power of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we were witnesses of his sovereign majesty. He received glory and praise from God the Father when that unique declaration came to Him out of the majestic splendor: 'This is my beloved Son, on whom my favor rests.' We ourselves heard this said from Heaven while we were in His company on the holy mountain. Besides, we possess the prophetic message as something altogether reliable. Keep your attention closely fixed on it, as you would a lamp shining in a dark place until the first streaks of dawn appear and the morning star rises in your hearts"* (2 Peter 1: 16-19). **Holy memories**

such as this help us to keep a proper spiritual perspective. If we frequently call to mind like St. Peter did of the reality of God's personal presence in our lives, and those special moments of spiritual visitation, we will persevere on the narrow way which leads to eternal life. **This is why it is so important to ask God over time to reveal Himself to us in a more profound and personal way in the depths of our minds and hearts, and for us to cultivate a deeper personal relationship with Him in prayer.** Our acts of penance done in a spirit of love and self-sacrifice prepare us for more graces of transformation in holiness from the Lord. **The season of Lent is a golden opportunity to help bring this about** - in God's grace and wisdom. Let's take advantage of the special Lenten graces the Lord thru the Church gives us, esp. the extra devotions like the Stations of the Cross (*please try to attend at least once, and all the rest of the Fridays of Lent - if possible*). And remember to not get discouraged by our weakness and lack of consistent resolve at times and to get back on track spiritually - if we haven't been consistent yet with the good intentions we had on Ash Wednesday. Remember there's still 5 weeks to go.☺ And what **gratitude** should flow from our souls, in that, **the Lord is so kind and patient in working with us weak sinners**, but remembering like St. Peter that we all are capable of greater holiness by relying more on God in our daily life, and on the prayers of our Blessed Mother Mary, our favorite saints, and our own guardian angel, to persevere on the narrow way that leads to Heaven during this dire spiritual time in our world. God bless you.