

2nd Sun Lent A Transfiguration

Introduction...

We are called to belong, not just to believe!
As our Lenten journey continues
we reflect upon what it means to belong to God's people,
God's family, Jesus' disciples.

In his letters St. Paul the Apostle many times reminds us that we are called to be God's people... He says we are *put together, joined together, built together, members together, heirs together, fitted together, held together... and will be taken to our heavenly home together...*(1 Cor 12:12; Eph 2:21,22; 3:6; 4:16; Col 2:19; 1 Thess 4:17)

In Romans 12:5 Paul says, *"In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."*

We were created for community, fashioned for fellowship, and formed for a family.

We are, God's family, Jesus' disciples.

Refrain...We are God's Family, Jesus' disciples.

I The Transfiguration

In today's Gospel we see Jesus taking Peter, James and John up a mountain to spend time with him.

Do we spend time with Jesus?
Do we get to know Jesus, who calls us to belong to his disciples?
Or are we too busy about our own agenda.

Today, this morning... we spend time with Jesus.
Jesus is pleased that you are here...
just as he was pleased that his disciples were with him on the mountain of Transfiguration.

While they are together Jesus is transformed before their eyes...
Peter begins to speak...

he is utterly amazed...
and he wants to build three condos up here, and remain awhile...

As Peter is jabbering away,
"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'."

Imagine that... God speaks... and tells Peter to
"listen to Jesus."
Quit jabbering and just listen... pay attention... hear what Jesus has to say...
"Listen to him."

Do we ever *just listen* to Jesus?
Do we spend time with Jesus in prayer,
reading the stories about Jesus,
listening to his words and teachings?
Do we take time getting to know Jesus?

What is your favorite story about Jesus?
Maybe it's the story of the Good Samaritan,
or the Samaritan woman at the well,
or the healing of the man born blind,
or the raising of Lazarus...
or the Prodigal Son...
or maybe the crucifixion, or the resurrection.

What is your favorite image of Jesus?
Maybe it's the Good Shepherd – a favorite image from the earliest times of
Jesus' disciples...
or Jesus as friend of people who suffer,
or Jesus the healer,
or Jesus the prophet,
or Jesus the loving friend of Mary and Martha and Lazarus,
or Jesus as Lord and Savior.

What words of Jesus move you?

*Maybe it's the Beatitudes,
or Jesus proclaiming "I am the shepherd,"
or "I have to come to bring life."*

Why is Jesus important to us? Because...

Refrain...We are God's Family, Jesus' disciples,

II Our Behavior

If we are God's people, God's family, Jesus' disciples –
if that's where we belong,
and if we are spending time with Jesus and getting to know Jesus, and if we
"listen to him"
something begins to happen within our hearts...
within our lives...
we begin to change...
how we view life changes,
how we react to situations changes,
how we treat people changes...

We are less self-centered and self-pampered...
because life is not just about us...
We realize that we don't always have to prove ourselves...
because we are loved by God...
We don't always have to be perfect and have the right answers...
because we are not God, but we *are* God's beloved...
We aren't burdened by worries and fears so much...
because we begin to realize that we are not in charge... God is.

We begin to have more peace of mind and heart.
We become more aware that Jesus, our Good Shepherd,
is present at our side each step of our journey, every day.

Psalm 23 takes on more meaning for us...
The Lord is my Shepherd...
We might even start off our day with that Psalm.

How we act each day can also begins to change...
not necessarily drastically at first,

but with little steps, in small ways...

Notice... we are becoming transfigured, becoming transformed, becoming more like Jesus!

And Jesus is now sending us down from the mountain to enter into our world, more Christ-like,
more a son and daughter of our loving Father.

We become more committed to compassion when we face situations of suffering...

I love the stories of Mother Theresa of Calcutta...
they tell us so much about how Christ would have us act...
and they challenge us to act in a Christ-like way.

We can't solve the world's ills,
but can we help one person at a time?

Story... The Nursing Home Angel

I remember once I was giving a Lenten parish Mission in one of our suburban parishes.

I was touched by a one of Jesus' disciples...
one of God's "little people".

She's not a celebrity. She's not one of the rich and famous.

She's a widow, who lived in the parish, who went to Mass daily, and who took daily communion to the people in a nursing home in her parish.

I accompanied her to that nursing home one morning,
a cold and windy winter morning...

and for me it became a *journey* up the mountain
with Jesus...

where I saw people transfigured momentarily
in the presence of compassion and love.

The woman bringing communion -

bringing Jesus, to the old and frail in the nursing home.

She knew all of their names, and they knew hers.

When she entered a room the people in the room looked up,
saw her,

and their faces lit up with a smile of recognition.

She would go over to the person receiving communion,
give them a hug and a kiss on the cheek...

and greet them by name.

She introduced each one to me.

I told them who I was and that I was privileged to bring them communion on this day.

We prayed together... shared the Our Father, then they received the Body of Christ...

Afterwards we held hands, I blessed them, and we chatted briefly when it was possible.... Then we moved on to another resident.

The woman I accompanied told me how she felt so blessed to be able to serve these little people of God,

our brothers and sisters in the family of God.

She seemed to glow in the presence of these residents.

And so many of them responded with a smile and with gratitude that she would visit them and bring Jesus to them...

You probably won't read about this woman in tomorrow's newspaper, or hear about what she does on the radio.

But to me, this is what life is all about...

this is what our journey and call from God are about...

We are graced by God to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, continuing Jesus' work in our world,

allowing ourselves to be God's instruments in our world.

This is **our** call... this is what **our** life's *journey* is all about.

Another Story...

I remember meeting a man who told me about the stresses he experienced on his job...

too much work to be done in too little time.

No appreciation from his boss.

Other people in his office were stressed also.

He would lose his patience and become frustrated.

He would join in on office gossip.

What was he to do?

I asked him why God had him on this job?

What was God asking of him?

He wasn't perfect and couldn't solve everything.

But, did he pray for his fellow employees?

Did he try to bring a little kindness and respect into his office?

Did he pray for more patience for himself?

As members of God's people, God's family, and disciples of Jesus, can we try to bring goodness and peace, respect and care into those situations where we difficulties, division , hostility or conflict?

Or we can add to the hostility, the anger and conflict.

Can we ask Jesus for the patience and the wisdom we need in difficult situations?

Don't be afraid to ask for Jesus' help... He tells us to do that.

That's the beauty of discipleship. That's the cost of discipleship, of being a member of God's people and God's family.

We ask God's help us to be people of character, people of integrity and people of courage.

Conclusion...

Jesus... help us to follow in your footsteps.

As we continue with this Mass, strengthen us and nourish us with this heavenly food and refreshment... your own Body and Blood...

We can't do it without your help, without your strength, without your presence within our hearts now and each day.

Help us to be committed members of God's people, God's family, and your disciples. Amen

Refrain...We are God's family, Jesus' disciples,