

SECOND SUNDAY of LENT

Reading 1 Genesis 12:1-4a

Reading 2 2Timothy1:8b-10

Gospel Matthew 17:1-9

REFLECTION:

In this story of the Transfiguration of Jesus, we hear about how Jesus revealed His divine glory to three of His apostles. What an awesome moment for those apostles! Can you imagine? They were getting a glimpse of the glory of heaven and their faith was strengthened by the knowledge that this man was indeed the Son of God. That's an amazing gift, right? It's no wonder that Peter offered to pitch some tents so they could stay there and enjoy this happy, heavenly reunion.

But that moment of bliss was only supposed to be for a short time. There was still much work to be done, and much suffering to be endured before they could partake in the glory of heaven and be free from the pain of the world. It's a perfectly natural reaction to want to skip out on the cross and jump right to the eternal prize. Aren't we guilty of the same things? Don't we regret going home after an amazing retreat experience or vacation? Don't we sometimes wish we could stay in the peace of the chapel instead of going out into the messiness of the world? Don't we long for moments of consolation and comfort from God rather than trials and sufferings that test our faith?

You can't become a saint without being purified through the fire of suffering. All the struggles that we go through, all the times we feel distant from God, or all the mess of the world that we have to deal with can be used to make us holier people. God loves us too much to let us stay comfortable in an exciting experience of His glory. Those times are gifts, but they can't be the expected norm.

Just like Peter, James and John, we have to come down from the mountaintop. We have to get back to our lives after a moment of glory. But the good news is that Jesus comes with us. He could remain distant, in unapproachable light . . . but that's not the kind of God we have. We have a God who knows when to strengthen our faith with moments of great grace and when we need to be challenged by the cross. May we have the grace to embrace both.

CHALLENGE

Think about a time when God gave you the gift of a glorious moment when you truly felt His presence and His glory. Journal about that time and thank God for it. Keep that account and try to remember to look back on it when you're struggling to carry your cross or can't feel God's presence. Ask for the grace to remember that God always has your best interest in mind –whether in times of glory or times of trial.