

Readings Genesis 22; 1-2, 9-13, 15-18; Romans 8: 31-34; Mark 9: 2-10



Fr Michael says:

“You are my beloved Son.”

Mark makes the Transfiguration, the fulcrum of His Gospel. The question he asks us constantly in the first half of it is: “Who is Jesus for you?” It is in this feast that Jesus shows us who He is, in the fullness of His divinity, as Son of God and it is in the power of this moment that He can come down from the mountain to go to Jerusalem, to show us what that meant for us, thus empowering the disciples for their own work and mission. So what struck you about that scene? Who held your attention? What do you remember of the scene now?

For Jesus this is another Epiphany moment, from His Birth, His Baptism, His gift of Himself in the Eucharist, as John reminds us to the supreme moment of Jesus’ life, when He hears the words: “You are my beloved Son.”

Jesus is affirmed in His Mission; the affirmation for the disciples is achieved after the Resurrection: the Law and the Prophets are brought to fulfilment. The Genesis reading shows us the depth of Abraham’s trust and faith through the challenge of sacrificing his son, in obedience to God, who would provide. The depth of God’s love for us is seen in what happened to Jesus, as Paul tells the Romans, God did not save His Son from death, because of His great love for us as His children.

His life, like ours, has dark moments to as we journey together. We hear all sorts of messages coming to us: “You’re good, but only if successful or popular” All we need is that still, quiet voice repeating the Father’s words to us! By recognising this fact, we can indeed live our lives in the light of this truth. Jean Vanier, the founder of L’Arche, communities surrounding people with disabilities and living with them and supporting them, asked a man who was mentally affected: “Do you like praying, Pierre?” “Yes” he said and Jean continued: “What do you do when you pray?” “I listen” he replied. “What does God say to you?” He says: “Pierre, you are my beloved son!”

Those words came struck home for me, at my Ordination on a bright sunny day in my home Parish in Nottingham, and repeated at my First Mass the next morning, this weekend 49 years ago, when I was called to take on my ministerial Priesthood, to hear those words echoing throughout the Readings, ‘this is my beloved son’ – chosen despite my quirks, failings and going off the rails at times – to share this wonderful thought with you, that all of us are God’s beloved sons and daughters in the same way – it is not because of who we are or what we can do, but because of who ALL ARE, his beloved children.