

Homily 2nd Sunday Lent 2023

However fertile our imaginations, it is impossible for us to realise the real effect of the Transfiguration on Peter, James and John. But how else describe an experience of the presence of divinity, the presence of God!

Do we ask however, what this experience had for Jesus? After the temptations in the wilderness, he was given a sense of the power that he had within him; power to converse with the great figures of Moses and Elijah. It would have been good to be able to have heard what they talked about together in that brief encounter. With the knowledge of this power within him, how hard Jesus must have had to fight not to use it after his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane!

Once again, the Father calls on us to **Listen** to his Son. Listen not just with our ears but with our eyes, with our experiences, with being present, with our inner awareness; in fact, with all our senses. It is extremely important to spend time this week with this Gospel passage and make ourselves present to the experience as though we were there and discover what effect of being present will have on us.

Jacob Glatsteit talks about praying the twilight hour because he believes it offers us an opportunity to experience something of the Divine and be transformed, even transfigured! As Macrina Wiederkehr writes:

*Twilight is the mystical hour,
day fading; night rising.
Sweet peace between day and night,
ask what you will and it shall be done.
This is the hour of grace.*

Jacob: There is no need to fear the day ending or to mourn the light dying. There is no need to be anxious about the darkness falling or indeed about losing the light. Let's set aside the conditioning these metaphors instil in us and consciously receive the colours of the day's ending and the night's beginning. Know that all shades are precious for they are painted by the Great Artist. *Then* we might really begin to see *darkly*. And by *seeing darkly* come to encounter the Artist who, in these shifting colours, at this time, offers us a vision of the whole of ourselves:

*I'll let you in on a secret about how one should pray the sunset prayer.
It's a juicy bit of praying, like strolling on grass,
nobody's chasing you, nobody hurries you.
You walk toward your Creator with gifts in pure, empty hands.
The words are golden, their meaning is transparent,
it's as though you're saying them for the first time.
If you don't catch on that you should feel a little elevated,
then you're not praying the sunset prayer.
The tune is sheer simplicity,
you're just lending a helping hand to the sinking day.
It's a heavy responsibility.
You take a created day and you slip it into the archive of life,
where all our lived-out days are lying together.
The day is departing with a quiet kiss.
It lies open at your feet while you stand saying the blessings.
You can't create anything yourself,
but you can lead the day to its end
and see clearly the smile of its going down.
See how whole it is, not diminished for a second,
how you age with the days that keep dawning,
how you bring your lived-out day as a gift to eternity. ('Praying the Sunset Prayer')*