

A Year of Renewal

2nd Sunday of Lent Feb. 27/28

My / Our response as belonging to a Community

Readings from the Liturgy:

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18 & Luke 9:28b-36

The nature of our Lenten season is a time of preparation (or renewal of baptism) is quite obvious in the themes in today's readings. Both the first and third readings portray a mystical encounter with God in prayer. From ancient times, prayer along with fasting and almsgiving has been a primary means of accomplishing the "work" of Lent.

In the reading from Genesis, Abraham's prayer results in a solemn covenant with the Lord, just like those now who are among the Elect in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, will ultimately lead to their baptismal covenant at the Easter Vigil. The reading in Genesis describes in cultic terms a time of mystical prayer in which God forges a covenant with Abraham promising him both land and progeny. These promises seemed impossible in human terms yet Abraham puts his faith in the Lord. In a graphic description of an ancient ritual used to seal a sacred covenant, Abraham falls into a kind of

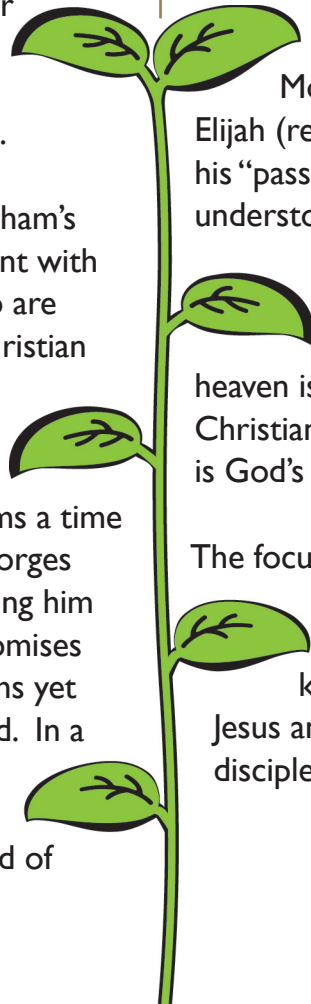
trance and sees the Lord's presence symbolized by a blazing torch.

Luke's version of the transfiguration differs from the other Gospels in minor ways that reflect his particular understanding of Jesus and his mission. The setting is a special time of prayer, always a time in Luke that something important is about to take place. In the larger context of the Gospel, this scene occurs just after Peter's confession of faith and between the

two predictions of the Passion. Jesus is portrayed speaking with Moses (representing the Law) and Elijah (representing the Prophets) about his "passage" or "exodus" by which Luke understood the suffering death and resurrection Jesus was about to undergo in Jerusalem. The message of the voice from heaven is clearly directed to the early Christian community, affirming that Jesus is God's Son, the Chosen One.

The focus on today's readings is on the kind of deep transformative prayer that will bring us to that kind of personal knowledge of Jesus and will prepare us for the type of discipleship to which we are being called.

continued



Reflection QUESTIONS

What type of powerful prayer experiences have you had?

Did you respond to your prayer experience by any particular action or ongoing change in your life?

Did this experience create a further longing for God and a desire to put your faith into action?

P of the week PRAYER

*God of life, you are good and holy,
Slow to anger and rich in kindness,
merciful and always forgiving.
May I know and trust
your love for me more each day.
Help me to let down my guard with you
And not be afraid
to show you my face and heart.
You are the holy one of my life.
Amen*

A Family ACTIVITY

Imagine that there are many people who make bad remarks about your school or your sports team.

For example: Adams kids are all _____ or Brewster kids are all _____ or West Middle School kids are all _____.

Is that fair? What's wrong with that kind of thinking?

Make a list of all those groups of people that bug you. What is your reason for your point of view?

They _____

They _____

They _____

Is your thinking fair?

Here's a challenge for this week. Every time you catch yourself thinking or saying "they" or "them" you need to notice that not ALL of "them" fit into that thinking.

"They" and "them" is not an honest way to look at other people. God is in those other people. What might we miss that God wants us to know?

