

Dominica II Quadragesimae $\bar{\text{A}}$

Lectio Divina by Fr. Randy Soto

I. Lectio

A. Theme of the day: **In Abraham called to be God's People**

1 st	Vocation of Abraham
2 nd	We are called from all eternity
Gospel	Transfiguration of Jesus

B. We read in Genesis the beginning of Abraham's saga. He is the father in faith of Israel and Christianity. He belongs to a semi-nomad clan that used to worship a variety of gods. In the region of Haran, north of the Euphrates an unknown god calls Abram to a strange land. This self-revealing God (YHWH) is no ordinary God: his exigencies are utterly demanding. Abram must leave behind his fatherland (*Patria*), his family and eventually, allow himself to be guided by God into a promised land. In a solemn covenant God promises Abram to become a *father of a great nation* and changes his name to Abraham (in Hebrew *father of the people*). The only condition is to respond to God with utmost fidelity and respect, which means that Abraham must also leave behind all pagan customs and become only a true worshiper of YHWH.

C. In the Responsorial Psalm (Ps 33), the Church echoes Abraham's trusting attitude in the Lord, our Leader and Maker: "*Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.*"

D. Timothy, Bishop of the Church in Ephesus, is reminded by Paul to be faithful to his calling and the obligations such honor. Timothy must announce the Gospel knowing that "*God has saved us and called us with a holy calling,*" and that God will give him the grace to accomplish his mission.

E. Upon Mount Tabor, Matthew places the scene of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ: "*He was transfigured before them.*" For Matthew, the mount scenario is symbolic of the OT episode in which Moses went up Mount Sinai to meet the Lord:

a) Moses' face shone with the Glory of God and in the Gospel we contemplate the Transfiguration of Jesus' whole body;

b) The Israelites dwelt in tents at the foothills of Mount Sinai, and Peter requests to build three tents upon the mount;

c) Upon the mount YHWH reveals *Torah* to Moses, but upon the Tabor, Moses (*Torah*) and Elijah (*Prophets*) speak of Jesus;

d) A cloud is situated upon both mountains. The cloud is a symbol of God's presence as well as a vehicle through which God speaks and reveals himself. In the OT his voice revealed the Ten Commandments and in the Gospel God reveals his Son: "*From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard: This is my beloved Son, hear him.*"

III. Meditatio

A. Like Abraham, we are called by our names to be active members of God's people. Each one has a particular task to fulfill, but regardless of the mission everyone is called to be holy in the presence of the Lord. On Mount Tabor, Christ has manifested to us what life is going to be in the Glory of Heaven. Today's episode of the Transfiguration is a foretaste of Easter Morning; it is meant to boost our desire to engage even harder in our Lenten practices and sacrifices in order to be sanctified, and thus, share in the glory of the Risen Christ.

B. Like Abraham, we are called to begin our pilgrimage by abandoning everything we own, and who we are. Our attitude must imitate that of Abraham: total surrender into God's lead. Surrender, means absolute trust in God, consequently a conversion of the heart. We must leave behind all evil practices and all other gods.

C. Like Abraham we may not know where we are going, but we are assured by God's word that the Promised Land is not a dream or a fantasy; rather it is a reality which has already begun here on earth and will be consummated in Heaven.

D. Like Paul exhorted Timothy, we are called to have faith and hope in God's promises. Sure, we will experience all kinds of troubles and trails during this earthly pilgrimage, but he who has called us, has also promised his assistance.

III. Oratio

Abraham is the prototype of anyone searching for meaning in his life and searching for God, reason of our existence. The Entrance Antiphon echoes this sentiment as we begin our celebration: *"My heart has prompted me to seek your face; I seek it Lord; do not hide from me"* (EA2). Should we experience trails in our journey, we have the chance to cry out: *"Oh God, deliver us from all our distress"* (EA1). God's voice comforts us, especially in times of weariness and distress: *"God our Father, help us to hear your Son. Enlighten us with your word, that we may find the way to your glory"* (OP); when present the gifts we pray for holiness: *"Lord, make us holy. May this Eucharist take away our sins that we may be prepared to celebrate the resurrection"* (PG). Today's preface helps us to see the why this episode of the Transfiguration is read in Lent: *"On your holy mountain he revealed himself in glory in the presence of his disciples. He had already prepared them for his approaching death. He wanted to teach them through the Law and the Prophets that the promised Christ had first to suffer and so come to the glory of his resurrection"* (Preface). At communion while receiving the Eucharist we hear once again God's heavenly voice which says: *"This is my Son, my beloved, in whom is all my delight: listen to him"* (CA). We conclude our celebration by asking the Lord to give us a share in his Glory, the Glory he manifested his disciples on Mount Tabor: *"Lord, we give thanks for these holy mysteries which bring to us here on earth a share in the life to come."*

III. Contemplatio

A. From the Catechism of the Church, a little meditation of the meaning of calling us by Name:

2158 *God calls each one by name. Everyone's name is sacred. The name is the icon of the person. It demands respect as a sign of the dignity of the one who bears it.*

2159 *The name one receives is a name for eternity. In the kingdom, the mysterious and unique character of each person marked with God's name will shine forth in splendor. "To him who conquers . . . I will give a white stone, with a new name written on the stone which no one knows except him who receives it." "Then I looked, and Lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads."*

B. *God of our Lenten journey, we have come to this Mountain trusting in you, believing that you dwell within us, counting on you to be our companion as we move through our lives. Remind us often that Jesus is your beloved Son and that in Him you are the Emmanuel (God with us). Keep us mindful of your presence so that we may say with Peter: "How good it is to be here, let us build three tents." Be our strength; grant us guidance as we continue on our pilgrimage through our earthly desert. Guide us, like you did with Abraham into the Promised Land of Heaven. And help us often to remember that truly your power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; after all you have call us to be you holy people and only you can make such holy calling. Amen. P.R.S.*