

2nd Sunday of Lent

(beginning at the Baptismal Font). There is something quite beautiful here but it's hidden from your sight. You will need to come closer to see it and I invite you at some point during this Lenten season to come up here and see for yourself these elements of earth and fire.

Before Lent began a group of us met to reflect together on the scriptures for Lent. One of the themes that emerged was that of the "elements" Earth, Fire, Air and Water. Last week focused on the element of the earth. The creation of the human person happens with the clay of the earth. Today the story of the transfiguration is captured in the element of Fire, as the inner passion of Jesus, the divine presence within transfigures him.

(Move to another section of the community) We also spoke of the challenge these days to converse with others and not "discuss" or "argue". Parishioners are organizing "listening" sessions that will hopefully help people to listen to other points of view. Conversation presumes attentive listening, without prejudice. Not easy these days!

Notice that Jesus was conversing with Moses and Elijah. They were not arguing or discussing. They were not arguing about the politics of Roman occupation or the authentic following of the Law. They were conversing. Scripture scholars suggest that Moses represents the Law and Elijah the prophets. Others were suggesting that they were discussing their sufferings. What I would like to imagine is that Moses was saying "I had the most amazing encounter with God in the burning bush, where God revealed his Name to me. Or Elijah saying "I had the most amazing encounter with God in the cave when God was not in the storm, the earthquake, the fire, but God was encountered in the still small voice. And I imagine Jesus saying "I had the most amazing encounter with God at my baptism. It was as if the heavens were opened and I heard the voice of God saying "You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"

A number of years ago when I was praying on a parish retreat about the Transfiguration, the lyrics to a song came to me. They were composed by Paul Melley and I share them with you now. You will hear them sung at the end of the homily.

The first verse speaks of Moses and his encounter with the burning bush

Take off your shoes, this is Holy Ground you walk on
Open your eyes, this is holy fire you see
Show me your face, a reflection of my glory
And you will know who I am

The second verse speaks of Elijah and his flight and encounter with God

Take off in flight, this is holy ground that lifts you
Open your arms, this is holy wind you feel
Show me your tears, flowing down your face in rivers,
And you will know who I am, you will know that I have healed you
You will know who I am, I am your God.

This verse speaks of Jesus in the Transfiguration

Take in the sight, You are on my holy mountain
Open your ears, these are holy words you hear
Behold Christ's face, a reflection of my glory
And you will know who I am, you will know that I have loved him
You will know who I am I am your God.

This verse speaks for us

Take up his cross, this is holy wood you carry
Open your hands, this is holy work you do.
Share in his love, poured out for you forever,
And you will know who I am, you will know that I have loved you
You will know who I am , I am your God.

After song, back at the baptismal font

I finish where I began. The divinity of Jesus is hidden from sight. We see it here in this story of the Transfiguration. You will need to come as close as you can to his humanity to see the divine presence within him.