

2nd Sunday of Lent, Cycle C: 27th & 28th Feb., 2010

Things aren't always what they seem to be and this is what Peter, James & John discovered that day on the mountain. They knew that Jesus was a very gifted spiritual leader who went around Galilee preaching and healing the sick and the possessed. Sure he was special and one of a kind, but they really had no idea just how special he was. These three (3) followers of Jesus weren't prepared for what was about to happen up on the mountain. They were to witness Jesus with all his glory shining forth joined by the personages of Moses and Elijah. As I said, they knew that Jesus was unique and special but they weren't prepared for what was taking place before their eyes. How could they have missed just how special Jesus was? Perhaps, it's because things aren't always what they appear to be.

For Christians, matters of faith are always more than they appear to be and yet what happens in life? We usually take the opposite point of view when we look at those around us as the world at large appears to be less and less genuine. We look at the married couples around us who appear to have it all together and say "they couldn't really be all that happy!" We look at our elected officials and say: "what's their angle?" or "There's got to be something in it for them?" What is it about us that makes us see people as less than what they are or less than what they can be?

I think that part of the answer to that question can be observed in the behavior of Peter, James and John in today's Gospel Reading for they could not see Jesus for whom he really was until they witnessed that moment of Transfiguration. Perhaps the clue for which we have been searching in order to answer our question is found in what might seem as a throwaway line in the Gospel: "Peter & his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory..." That's the key that we've been searching for. If we want to see things as they truly are, if we want to experience and encounter our Lord in his glory, we must be fully awake and fully alive. Only then will we be able to see people and things for what they really are.

Admittedly, that sounds so easy, but we know it's not. The reality for most all of us is that we are going through life partially if not totally asleep. And the result is that we get a distorted view of reality. It's like a dream in which we get bits of reality and bits of truth. Then, what we end up with is a distorted view that keeps us from encountering God and living in the radiance of his glory. It keeps us from seeing the Divine in the ordinary.

We should be grateful that God sees beyond the shallowness of our thoughts and actions, because if he only went on appearances, we wouldn't be happy with what he sees. He would see the petty, self-centered, judgmental and impatient sides of ourselves. But instead, God looks at us and sees a people with real hope and promise. He gazes on his children and he sees people who are imperfect, yet trying to do their best and he sees that they are also capable of great love and kindness. He looks on us as a father would look upon his children.

And our calling is to do the same. If we want to see God as he truly is in all his glory, as well as, the divine potential and goodness in one another, then we must be awake, just as James, John and Peter were awake. And Lent is the perfect alarm clock that is going off for each of us. It's our wake-up call.

Now the question is: what are we going to do? Are we going to hit the snooze button and roll back over back into our comfort zones? Or, are we going to realize that the glory of God in his creation awaits us? Are we going to let another second go by without becoming fully aware of the grandeur that awaits and surrounds us? Let's pledge this day, to use the remainder of this Lenten Season to immerse ourselves in its spirit so that on Easter morning we can be with God as he rises and shines, shining for us and for the entire world to see.