



## HOMILY FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A.

GENESIS 12:1-4a, PSALM 33:4-5,  
2 TIMOTHY 1:8b-10, MATTHEW 17:1-9.

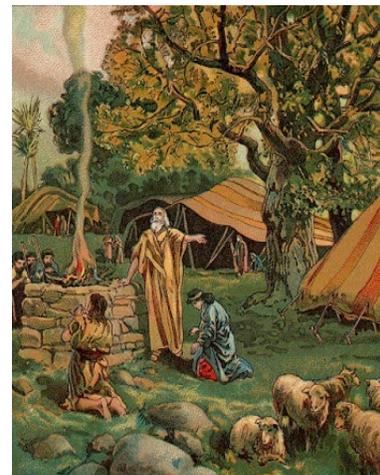
### THE TRANSFIGURATION IS A SIGN OF HOPE.

One of the most ancient images we still use to describe life is the “journey” that we all make from the womb to the grave. The image of the journey speaks of a passage through time and places; it includes the people we have met, the kind of time we have had, and the successes and failures we have experienced on the way. Although many people aspire to the same goals in life, everyone’s journey is different in its own details. We all have to make our own journey; it is life’s task that no one can do for us.

With most of the journeys we make in life, we know our destination and how to get there. As for us Christians, our destination is Heaven, and Christ is the way. If we are unsure, we check the map, and our map is the words of Jesus Christ. Knowing fully well that life's journey is not easy, listening to Jesus' voice will certainly lead us to our destination, no matter the challenges. We must constantly remember that life is not only a journey, but also a search: we all have to discover for ourselves the paths that will lead us to what we seek. Some of the roads we take lead us to dead ends, and unless we want to pitch our tent there, we move on. As Christians, the season of Lent reminds us of the importance to keep going as we follow the voice of Jesus Christ. As Robert Louis Stevenson observed:

To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labor.

Throughout our lives, many of us change direction and explore unfamiliar paths. In our first reading today, we hear how Something happens to Abram that dramatically changes the course of his life. He is invited to leave the world of the familiar, his country, and his father’s house, and find his security in the promise of God. He cannot see either the land or the family he has been promised, yet he began this journey without maps. But he travels hopefully, believing that one day his journey will lead to the fulfillment of God’s promises.



Throughout his journey, Abram experiences setbacks and trials, but he travels on, rooted in the conviction that God’s promises are being fulfilled. This same conviction works in the heart of another man who changed direction in his life: Paul. As we hear in the second reading, Paul is persuaded that the hardships that come from following the Gospel do indeed serve God's purpose. Something happened to Paul that altered the whole course of his life. And even though many people were suspicious of

the new direction he was following, Paul listened to Jesus' words, so he maintained this course until his death. In his death, God's plan was furthered.



In our Gospel today, Jesus has to change His direction in life—a change that confused His family and neighbors when He left Nazareth to take up the work of the wandering prophet. The more Jesus shares His understanding of the reality of God and the kingdom, the more determined are the religious authorities to be rid of Him. However, Matthew tells us that Jesus understands His journey to death as one that furthers God's plan.

Today's story of the Transfiguration reminds us that listening to God's voice enabled and strengthened Jesus to embrace His death, which is God's plan for humanity. This gospel further invites us to listen and respond to the voices of Jesus. Listening to Jesus is a true mark of discipleship and a demonstration that we are obedient children of God. Moreover, we must listen to Jesus because the will of God is fully revealed in Him. Jesus came not to abolish the law and the prophets but to fulfill them (Matthew 5:17).

Beloved friends, Lent is the ideal time to listen to Jesus, who calls us to repentance and a change of heart (Mark 1:15). He invites us to come to Him with our heavy loads to receive rest (Matthew 11:28); Jesus challenges us to deny ourselves, take up our cross each day and follow Him (Luke 9:23). Jesus also wants us to be merciful like God the Father is merciful (Luke 6:36). He calls us to be the salt of the earth and light of the world (Matthew 6:33).



Beloved friends, true listening demands a response. Like Abraham, who listened to God and responded, God was able to create from him a great nation and make him a blessing to all nations of the world. If we also listen to Jesus, we will experience many blessings. When we listen to Jesus, we will be graced to contemplate His glory, and this, in turn, will strengthen us to face the challenges and difficulties of this life without taking the focus away from Jesus. We only see in those challenges the path to eternal glory with Jesus because the suffering of our present life cannot be compared with the glory that will be revealed and given to us (Romans 8:18). We must constantly remember that the Transfiguration is a sign of hope, a glimpse of the glorious future that awaits the faithful.

