



Prayer of the Day

O God, in the transfiguration of your Son you confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the witness of Moses and Elijah, and in the voice from the bright cloud declaring Jesus your beloved Son, you foreshadowed our adoption as your children. Make us heirs with Christ of your glory, and bring us to enjoy its fullness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Homily

I greet you in the name of Jesus, the Light of the World. Amen.

Pastors are often asked to share their story of receiving “the call.” This morning, I would like to share with you, my story. To understand the story, you will need to hear some of the pertinent details of my family. My story begins with my grandmother.

My grandmother was born on a farm outside the village of Zurich Ontario in 1893. She was the eldest of seven children in her family.

When the youngest was born Grandma was nearly twelve. Due to health issues of her mother caused by the pressures of a young large family, Grandma took an active part in the daily activities of her siblings. This developed a strong bond between herself and the youngest of the family, Albert. This relationship would remain all their lives.

Grandma married and moved from the farm to Kitchener. Within two years, Albert moved to Waterloo to attend Waterloo College. Once again Grandma cared for Albert. The story goes; he would have supper with Grandma and Grandpa on Thursday night totting his laundry under his

arm and return Sunday night to have dinner with them again and take his clean clothes back with him. This went on during his college years.

During this time, my mother was born and Uncle Albert was called upon to be her Godfather. In 1928 he graduated from college and the following year graduated from Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

Grandma was there for brother Albert and later in life he would be there for her. He was there for Grandma and Mother when grandpa died in 1946. Uncle Albert was there for Mother on her wedding day; to walk her down the aisle.

Uncle Albert would invariably stop into our home at any unannounced moment. During the week of synod, many times the front door would open – in those days it was never locked – just after noon hour and it was Uncle Albert. He didn't come for lunch; he came to stretch out on the couch for a power nap.

In many ways he was the grandpa I never had. We did lots of things together. He joked with me; he called me "Spike" and I called him "Mike." One day Uncle Albert came to town and stopped by the house. I was between the age of eight and ten. He said to my mother, "Marion, I am going to the Seminary. Is it alright if Bruce comes along?" I was so anxious to go it must have shown because Mother didn't say no.

We went to the Seminary – to Willison Hall. Walking down the dark hallway we stopped and went into a professor's office. Greetings were exchanged and then the gentleman said to Uncle Albert, "Albert, who do you have here?" Uncle Albert replied, "This is my niece's son Bruce and I hope someday he comes here too." I still can picture that moment; hear his voice and those words even today.

I raise the question today of calling because often times this is part of the Transfiguration story that gets overlooked. Sermons will be given today, understandably that focus on Jesus' transformation but I think Peter begins his transformation here, on the mountaintop with Jesus.

Now some of you will say that Peter's moment happened six days earlier, when Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah and he was called the rock. But, if we pay attention to Peter for a moment we see him falling all over himself looking for something to do. And then it happens; the voice from heaven literally interrupts him, saying, "Would you shut up, and just listen to him!" It is the voice that interrupts all his plots and plans and announces that this Jesus is none other than God's beloved Son.

Peter terrified falls to the ground, probably covering his ears and shutting his eyes so hard. The most important thing Peter can do is simply listen to him. And then it is over – the voice, the light, the heroes of the past – nothing is left except Jesus. Jesus reaches out to him and telling him to be raised.

Peter will struggle to listen, to follow, to be faithful. Actually, he will more than struggle, he will fail. And Jesus will reach out, raise him up again and send him out again. This is when Peter realizes that he is called to listen to Jesus.

This pattern, I believe, shapes the life of every one of us. We, too, try to do our best, sometimes succeeding and sometimes coming up short. We too, fall down in fear, in trepidation, I know, only to be raised up again by Jesus to go forward in confidence. We too, are called to listen, called to discern God's way.

Let's face it – sometimes it is hard to recognize what we do is a call from God. What we think is our job like; moms and dads, students and retirees, doctors and janitors, taxi drivers and store clerks, employees and employers, the list goes on is yes, our job but it is also a call from God. In this call, we are also called to "listen to him;" to listen and to hear the voice of Jesus.

I think there is a little of Peter in all of us – that is why you were given the name tag: "Hello! My name is Peter." My hope is that you come to know that the story of The Transfiguration is also your story. You do have an important part to play in God's ongoing drama to save, bless and care for all the world.

In knowing that this is your story too.....please take a pen out and write your name on the new name badge and put the new on.

Yes, you are called and called to listen; to hear God's voice within yourself. Listen to God's voice through the Scriptures, through prayers, through hymns, through the voice of someone else. Listen to the voice. Listen. Be watchful and attentive. Be alert and ready to listen. Be ready to absorb all the sights and sounds of God's grace and mercy.

My friends in Christ.

The hands of time move to the fall of 1991. I booked a week of holidays. Exhausted, I laid on the couch in the family room day after day; meditating, discerning, praying about my life. At the end of the week, I went to Charlotte and told her I plsn to go to seminary. She knew this day was coming. I started my seminary journey in the winter of '92 and graduated in 2011 – 19 years! I believe I have the distinguished honour of being the person with the longest tenure as a student at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. The reason.....well that is another story for another time,

You see, most of our experiences may not be as dramatic as Peter's on the mountain, but it is helpful to remember that God often calls to us in and through the ordinary moments and ordinary people of our lives. Thanks Uncle Albert! Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
The Lord look upon you with favour and give you (+) peace. Amen.

Prayers used by permission by Augsburg Fortress – Sundays and Seasons

STTLC Communiqué

In Our Prayers Today.....Nancy Briscoe, Mike Harrington, Lila Martinat, Irlavere Tubbe, Bobby Keuhl, Adele Krieger, Tracy Schori and Christa Reitlingshoefer.

Shrove Tuesday February 17 – Pancake Supper – 4 to 6:30 pm.

Mark your calendar. Supper to include: pancakes, maple syrup, sausage, baked beans, fruit and beverages. Adults \$10, Children 10 to 6 years, \$5 and children under 5 years eat free!

Lenten Services at St. Timothy's

Lenten journey with our Lord to the cross will begin this Ash Wednesday, one of the holiest days of the church year. Lent prepares us for our Easter celebrations. It reminds us that to rise with Jesus we have to first die with Jesus. Our worship service is at 7:00 pm. The service will include the imposition of ashes and the sacrament of Holy Communion. Mid-week Lenten Services will be held each Wednesday during Lent at 7:00 pm. Come, bring a friend and worship.

