

Today's readings treat us to images of mystery, wonder, and transformation.

How many of you have noticed before Thursday's snow, patches of green grass, perhaps crocuses or hyacinths making their way out of the ground. Take a Look at the pear trees that line the parking lot in the front of the church – they have buds on them. I have noticed a distinct hue on the trees. There is a slow process of transformation occurring, even when we can't see it.

Deep sorrows and great joys have the power to transform. The potential birth of a new baby transforms a couple. Serious illness or death can also be transformative.

The utter destruction in Haiti a month ago has the potential for transformation. The devastation certainly brought the world community together. I read in the paper last week that there has been a call to cancel Haiti's international debt, so that they might be better able to transform their lives and the rubble that was left behind. .

Remember that Abram he took his wife, Sarai and the rest of his family and moved from their homeland at God's prompting. Having land and children in Abram's time were signs of God's blessings. When our reading begins today Abram has just finished complaining to God about not having offspring or land. God's response to Abram is to invite him to count the stars and then come to know that his descendents will be even more than what he sees. And then in the midst of what was a common ritual to seal a partnership between two people. God makes a covenant with Abram. God walks between the animals of sacrifice in the form of fire. The fire transforms the sacrifice and seals the covenant that God makes with Abram.

In our gospel we are witnesses to the power of transformation. We stand side by side with Peter and James and John on the mountain top. Shrouded in a cloud of mystery we catch a glimpse of the glory of Easter. We meet Moses who received the Ten Commandments on another mountain top and Elijah the great prophet. The Law and the Prophets - two prominent representatives of Israelite history who talk to Jesus about his exodus in Jerusalem. The death and resurrection of Jesus would be the sealing of a new covenant.

Luke describes the transfiguration of Jesus in physical terms. But transformation does not happen on the outside without happening on the inside. Jesus hears the same voice the apostles hear saying, this is my son, listen to him. Wouldn't that statement give you a boost of confidence if you were Jesus? Jesus glows with a new passion and purpose that enables him to continue his journey to Jerusalem and to his cross and death. This event of the transfiguration was as much a transformational experience for Jesus as it was for the apostles.

Abram and the three apostles listened to mysterious words which brought them to the point of trusting or turning. We are only two weeks into Lent. Perhaps like the disciples we have already become weighed down, overtired or unreflective, not too serious about our Lenten journeys. Do you find yourself saying what difference does it make whether I pray more, or give to those in need, or fast. No one is watching. What we do, our acts of sacrifice, our prayers, our almsgiving require that we believe that we will be transformed. We still have time to change our hearts and awaken our minds and bodies so that we will be able to see the opportunities of transformation that we lead us to experience the Easter.

Real transformation occurs inside us. Our elect and candidates who are preparing to become members of our church, I believe have been transformed. They don't look any different from the outside. But I believe their families and those closest to them would talk about a difference that there is about them. In fact one of our friends was talking about becoming upset at work and needing to raise his voice. And afterwards he thought, wait a second I can't be doing that – I'm becoming a member of the church. I believe that is a sign of transformation. Our transformation isn't going to happen on a mountain top. It is in the little things that transformation occurs.

Transformation involves a risk for all of us – because as we allow ourselves to be touched and challenged by our encounter with the mystery and wonder of God's invitation, we will be changed. Lent reminds us that we are called to repent – to transform our lives in order to live according to God's ways. Lent is the time to welcome changes in our lives which can be transforming for us. Changes lead us to our heart's desire, union with God. When we gather around our Eucharistic table, we are offered the Eucharist which allows God's grace and God's light and God's power to consume us and renew us and transform us.

God has made a covenant with us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. This covenant comes to us with a history, promises and directions. The history is contained in our Jewish and Christian scriptures. The promises are made in terms of the life to come. The direction is that we are to listen to God's beloved Son who tells us all, that we too, are chosen daughters and sons of God.

As Saint Paul says we need to stand firm as we await the transformation that lies ahead.