

Second Sunday of Lent

Fr. Murphy walks into a pub and asks the first man he meets, "Do you want to go to heaven?" The Man said, "I do father." The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall." Then the priest asked the second man, "Do you want to go to heaven?"

"Certainly Father, the man replied. "Then stand over there against the wall," said the priest. Then Fr. Murphy walked up to O'Toole and asked, "Do you want to go to heaven?" O'Toole said, "No, I don't Father."

The priest said, "I don't believe that you mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to heaven."

O'Toole said, "Oh when I die, yes. I thought you were getting a group together to go right now."

Dear Friends,

We are in the second Sunday of Lent. We read the Transfiguration of Jesus in the Gospel. We all know it talks about his glory. Exodus is another term that we hear during Lent. In today's Gospel, we read that two men conversing with Jesus, spoke of his exodus that he is going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Exodus means the road out. It comes from the Greek word exodos. In the scripture, exodus means the departure of the people of Israel from the slavery of Egypt. It was not an easy journey.

Exodus leads into a glorious future. For Abraham, it was an exodus to leave his own land and move to a different land promised by God. We hear about God's call to Abraham: "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you." This is a moment of great trust. Abraham, who had no idea where he was going, listens to God's voice and steps out in faith. God's promise to Abraham is remarkable: "I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you."

In the Gospel, we encounter the Transfiguration of Jesus. Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up a mountain, and before their eyes, He is transfigured. The Transfiguration is a powerful moment in the life of Jesus and His disciples. It reveals the glory of Christ, giving His followers a glimpse of who He truly is. It also serves as a reminder that transformation is possible. Just as Jesus was transfigured before His disciples, He wants to transfigure our lives as well. The Transfiguration foreshadows the ultimate transformation that will come through Christ's death and resurrection - a transformation that offers us new life.

There are three transformations in our lives in our journey towards eternity. The first transformation in our lives begins at Baptism which washes away original sin,

transforming us into children of God and heirs of heaven. The second transformation takes place through our victory over the trials and tribulations of life. Every challenge, every difficulty, every moment of suffering is an opportunity for transformation and spiritual growth. The third transformation takes place at death. Eternal life in Heaven is granted to those who have been found worthy. A final, complete transformation or transfiguration will occur at the Second Coming when our glorified body is reunited with our soul.

Just a note on number 3 in both readings. God asked Abraham to bring three-year-old animals which symbolizes its inhabitants and land. We see number three in the scripture in so many places. It is recorded 485 times in the bible. Three in the scripture means complete. There are numerous examples in the scripture. We see one in today's first reading and in the Gospel. Jesus took three disciples, three tents (one for Elijah, Moses and Jesus), and three-year-old animals.

We all have exodus in our own lives. Once we trust in God, there is always a promise of God to us. Lent is not just about penance; it is about transformation into the people God calls us to be.

I would like you to think about What kind of transformation that you would like to experience in this year's Lenten Journey? Jesus continues to call us to leave our old selves behind and share in an exodus of our own as we continue to be called to a new conversion, a transformation in our lives. As we take those steps to change, they may one day help us to experience that glory in the heavenly presence of God.