

Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18

Psalm 116

Romans 8:31b-35,37

Mark 9:2-10

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Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them.

And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what to say, for they were terrified.

Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean.

Peter said, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

These were the first words that came to Peter's mind.

He was very fearful of what Jesus said would need to happen.

If we look in the previous chapter of Mark's Gospel,

Jesus spent a great deal of time explaining to his disciples that he has to go to Jerusalem, suffer grievously, be put to death and then after three days he would rise again.

Peter thought that by staying right there on the high mountain, experiencing a beautiful moment with God, maybe they could avoid what Jesus said needed to happen.

Don't we all go out of our way to avoid pain and suffering?

We build our lives to enhance our safety and comfort for our families and our selves.

But when we reflect on our lives, the difficult times of pain, grieving, and even coping with Covid are opportunities for one or more gifts of the Holy Spirit to be fully appreciated and flourish within us.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

But what do we do with these gifts?
How does this look like in our lives?

Recently I served at a funeral Mass of an elderly woman, at another parish.

Many years ago, when she was about 35 years of age,
her husband suddenly died.
What a shock!

Of course, this had huge implications to her three young children and herself. Don't forget this was the 1960s, when the usual person who worked outside of the home, was the husband.

So, what did she do?
She did what she had to do!
She looked for paid employment and found it at Corrections Canada.

She paid down the mortgage, paid all the bills, put food on the table and raised her children on her own.

With the gifts of counsel, fortitude and knowledge she carried on.

Just like her, we need to be open to experience God, and to be open to continue our Journey to Jerusalem, no matter what form it takes.

This is an invitation to all of us, as a community of faith,
to move towards Jerusalem, in a loving, obedient response to our Lord.

Rather than remaining where we are in comfort and safety,
we need to move towards the unknown,
to a place where we will no longer feel we are in control.

Then we can be used by God as God intends...
To bring Christ to others.