



SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Year B

Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

Psalm 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19

Romans 8:31b-34

Mark 9:2-10

Gathering

(An unlit candle and a crucifix rest on a table covered with purple cloth.)

In today's gospel God calls Jesus his beloved Son and commands us to listen to him. Last week we entered Lenten desert time with Jesus. How have the first days of Lent gone for you?

Prayer

(The candle is lit. Members are invited to rest in the presence of God. After a time of silence, the prayer continues as follows.)

God is God

Leader: God is God
and does not have
to answer to anyone.

All: God is God.

Leader: Some people follow other gods,
gods that are made
of gold and silver,
of status and glitz,
gods that cannot speak truth,
gods that never listen,
gods that are not alive at all.

All: God is God.

Leader: Our God is an active,
Trusting God.
God remembers us,
Blesses us,
And shares everything with us.

All: God is God.

Leader: Everything good we have
Belongs to God!
We are alive—
With voices loud and strong,
Singing with all we have!
We sing to you, God!

All: God is God.

Prayers before an Awesome God: Psalm 115 by David
Haas. Saint Mary's Press, Winona, MN 1998.

HEARING THE LORD'S GOSPEL

(The scriptures are proclaimed aloud with a pause after each reading. Following a pause after the proclamation of the gospel, the leader invites members to name a word or phrase from the gospel that stays with them, but without any additional comment. Some may repeat what another has already said.)

*When this naming is complete, the leader passes out copies of the scriptures of the week as needed. The leader then poses these questions: “**What draws you to this gospel?**” “**Where do you resist this gospel?**” The community*

pauses for a time of silent reflection. After about a minute, the leader invites members to consider the Reflection and Questions for the week. After additional time for silent reflection, the leader invites members to rearrange themselves in groups of three or four for sharing. The small groups move off so as not to intrude on one another.)

Reflection

Current sociology tells us that most adolescents' view of God as almost identical to that of their parents. For many of us the view of God we inherit early on does not change much as we grow older. It usually takes something striking to shake us up and make us try to reconcile the events of our life with the characteristics we attribute to God.

The Genesis reading tells us of the incident that causes Abraham to expand his understanding of God. In the time of Abraham, human sacrifice was a part of the worship of many gods. Abraham might not have been surprised by the one true God asking him to sacrifice his son. His obedience is rewarded and the message is clear. This God does not want human sacrifice. Abraham must expand his image of God.

In the Gospel, Jesus takes Peter, James and John, up to the mountain. There he is transfigured, and they hear God speak. They are terrified and find themselves asking one another what this means. The experience challenges them to take a hard look at who they think Jesus is. He is God's "beloved Son." He will die and rise. They need to expand their image of God.

And so it is with us this Lent. Everywhere we look in our lives there are experiences that challenge us to see God's presence and action in a new light. In the joys, the sufferings, the tragedies, the natural disasters, we ask not only where is God in these situations; but who God is in these situations. Jesus, as the fullest revelation of God, tells in his words and actions who God is and where God can be found. The Spirit of Christ is present in all the situations of life. We are called by this gospel to make a real effort this Lent to *listen* carefully to what Jesus is saying to us. We need to open ourselves ever more fully to the bigness of our God and live ever more generously in his service.

Questions for Reflection and Conversation

- ♦ How has your image of God grown or changed over the last few years?

- ◆ Share a time when you thought God was calling you in one direction, but then discovered that God was leading you in another direction.
- ◆ What kind of sacrifice is God asking of you this Lent?
- ◆ What challenging thing is God asking of you now?
- ◆ How do you experience “rising from the dead” in the midst of life?

HEARING THE GOSPEL’S LORD

(After about fifteen minutes of sharing in threes/fours, the leader re-gathers the community. Once back together, members pause for a moment. The leader then poses these questions: “What do you hear Christ saying to us in hearing and sharing his word?” “What do you want to hold on to for yourself from this session?” “How are you/we being called to live in response to God’s word?” After a pause, the leader invites the community to conversation. When this sharing is complete, the community moves to a time of prayer.)

Response in Action Suggestions

- ◆ Every day children are “sacrificed” and sold into slavery so their families can survive. Contact Catholic Relief Services to learn how you can help prevent this from happening: www.crs.org.
- ◆ Read the Catholic Update – “Are Our Images of God Growing?” by Pat McCloskey. www.Americancatholic.org/Newsletters/CU/ac0691.asp.
- ◆ Set aside twenty minutes some day this week for reflection and prayer. Hear God say to you, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.” Hear him in the quiet.

Prayer

(After a brief pause, the gospel of the week is re-proclaimed by a member of the community. Following the proclamation, the leader poses these questions to the members: “What does Christ in his Spirit say to you now?” “What do you say to him in response?” The community pauses for a full five, perhaps even seven, minutes of prayerful attention to God. A brief instrumental selection may be played during part of this time. After this time of silence, the leader invites members without additional conversation simply to mention a word or two, or a brief expression that captures what

they hear Christ saying to them personally. The community receives this without additional comment.

Following this sharing, the prayer continues as follows.)

All: We come before you.....
God the creator,
God the Father,
God, defender of the poor,
God the shepherd,
God the liberator,
God of caring and compassion,
God the potter,
God the teacher,
God the mother,
God of love,
We come before you...
Be God for us.

In Jesus' name, in the one Spirit, we pray.
Amen.

(Members join in singing, "Adoramus Te / Tree of Life." The song may be found on the Internet. When the song is complete, members exchange a sign of peace.)