

# **A Bible Bullet (aimed at the heart)**

Second Sunday of Lent, Cycle C

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-28; Phil 3:17-4:1; Luke 9:28-36

After celebrating Sunday's Liturgy for the first Sunday in Lent, I found that the theme of "fortitude" leads the way into next Sunday's lesson. The second reading on any Sunday is not required to support the themes found in the coordination present in the first reading and the Gospel reading. However, within the second reading that is from Paul's letter to the Philippians is a simple admonition to "stand firm." With this in mind, let's move on to the characters involved in the readings from Genesis and from the Gospel.

Abraham believes that God has asked him to move his entire household to an unknown place, one that would be revealed to him only after he arrives there. We have no idea how much flack he received from Sarah and the others when he announced his intention. How anxious would you be to leave the familiar comfort of home, sell all your items of value to buy stinky sheep that could walk along with you, and trek through a wilderness until some unseen God transmits magically to your spouse's heart that you have indeed arrived? Since that is what happened we know that Abraham did indeed stand firm in the face of others' doubts.

We also know that in spite of the promise of a land all his own, Abraham died owning only the cave in which he buried his beloved Sarah. And as for descendants that would number like the stars of the sky, Abraham died having fathered only two sons, the oldest of which he was forced to abandon in the desert to appease Sarah. With little to no visible proof of God's promises, Abraham lives a life of faith deep enough to have produced continuation of the Promise into the life of his son, Isaac. Abraham stood firm.

On Mt. Tabor, Peter, James and John witness the awesome power of

God through the Transfiguration. Of course they want to stay there! Who wouldn't? In this place, as the old hymn says, "It is well with my soul!" Like Abraham, they are told they must move from the place of security. The unknown awaits and it's not going to be pretty. To allow the will of God to occur they must stand firm.

We are teachers. That means we are sowers, not harvesters. We sow seeds of right vs. wrong, knowledge vs. ignorance, love vs. hate, and hope vs. despair. We do not know what each of these young people will become or what roles they will play in the Kingdom of God. We are only simple instruments in the early stages of their lives. That has to be enough for us.

Years ago, before I ever was a part of the St. Agnes community, Sr. Rita visited a group of women at St. Bonaventure to lead us in a meditation. Within this meditation we encountered Jesus. We were asked to give him something of value that we had with us. I gave to him pictures of my four children, who at that time were of grade school ages. Jesus reached into his pocket and gave back to me pictures of whom each would become. He did this with as much pride as I had when I presented their pictures to him. But as I looked at each of the pictures he gave to me, the photo was blank.

I have known since that experience that what they would become within his kingdom was for Jesus to know. I was only to stand firm within my role as their mother, nurturing them, praying for them, sharing my faith with them, and loving them even when they chose what I did not find lovable.

Our value as teachers and followers of Jesus is in our faithfulness to his promises. Blind faith. We will only know tomorrow when it has become yesterday. Stand firm.