

The Price of Obeying God

I. LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

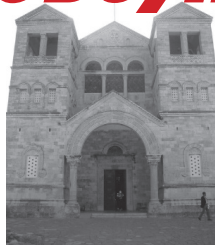
FIRST READING (Gen 22:1-2, 9, 10-13, 15-18)

¹Some time afterward, God put Abraham to the test and said to him: Abraham! “Here I am!” he replied.^a ²Then God said: Take your son Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There offer him up as a burnt offering on one of the heights that I will point out to you.^b ⁹When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. Next he bound* his son Isaac, and put him on top of the wood on the altar.^c ¹⁰Then Abraham reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son.^d ¹¹But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, “Abraham, Abraham!” “Here I am,” he answered. ¹²“Do not lay your hand on the boy,” said the angel. “Do not do the least thing to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you did not withhold from me your son, your only one.”^e ¹³Abraham looked up and saw a single ram caught by its horns in the thicket. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son.* ¹⁵* A second time the angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven ¹⁶f and said: “I swear by my very self—oracle of the LORD—that because you acted as you did in not withholding from me your son, your only one, ¹⁷I will bless you and make your descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore; your descendants will take possession of the gates of their enemies,^g ¹⁸and in your descendants all the nations of the earth will find blessing, because **you obeyed my command.**”^h

THE FOCUS: You obeyed my command

OBSERVATIONS

- The reading is long, although some parts have been omitted, by the liturgists.
- The story can be entitled: “The sacrifice of



*Church of
Transfiguration,
Mt. Tabor, Jerusalem.*

Isaac” or “The obedience of Abraham.”

- There is a chilling effect of the story. We may ask myriads of questions regarding the story, like:

Why does God ask Abraham to sacrifice his son of promise?

Cannot God test Abraham’s faith in another way?

Did it really happen?

If Abraham did not obey what would have happened?

- Yet there can be myriads of answers we can find in the story, like:

God does not like human sacrifice.

Let God be God. He has his own way of testing the faith of his beloved one.

Abraham shows himself consistent with regarding to obeying God. He might have questions in his mind but he allows God to take hold of him.

- Precisely Abraham is the father of faith because he obeys God even without exacting any explanation.

REFLECTIONS

Faith is believing in God’s promises even they are not realized in your life time.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 116:10, 15--19)

**I WILL WALK BEFORE THE LORD IN
THE LAND OF THE LIVING**

SECOND READING (Rom 8:31-34)

What happens when God is for us?

(Question and Answer)

³¹What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

The answer is: Nobody can be against us.

³²He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him?

The answer is: He will give us everything...

³³Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us.

The answer is: God will acquit us, if we are charged in court.

³⁴Who will condemn? It is Christ (Jesus) who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

The answer is: Christ intercedes for us, if someone condemns us.

THE FOCUS: The benefits of being with God

REFLECTIONS

God is like a lawyer who does not abandon his client and defends one through and through.

GOSPEL READING (Mk 9:2-10)

^{2*} ^bAfter six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was **transfigured** before them, ³and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. ⁴Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus. ^{5*}Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified. ⁷Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them,* then from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." ⁸Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.

Warning

^{9*} "As they were coming down from the

mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant.

THE FOCUS: The transfiguration is understood better after He has risen from the dead.

OBSERVATIONS

- The events come one after the other.
- There is a rapid reporting of what happened in the transfiguration. Things happen very fast.
- Only after the transfiguration that there is slowing down.

REFLECTIONS

Mark wants to tell us that the transfiguration of Jesus is properly understood by them and by their listeners later on after the resurrection.

II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP YOUR SHARING/HOMILY

Abraham obeyed God without conditions (First Reading).

There are many benefits that comes from believing in God (obeying him) (Second Reading).

The apostles obeyed Jesus when he told them to postpone their story until the appropriate time (Gospel Reading).

Obedience to God (doing his plan, *hindi siya pangungunahan* [not preempting]) is a sign of transformation during Lent.

III. OUR CONTEXT

- Increasing Unemployment?
- Cause of Juvenile Delinquency
- Teen-age Pregnancy increasing
- Fake News (HM)

