



Interfaith Power & Light

A Religious Response to Global Warming

Transfiguration Sunday – Lent 2C Homily By Father Charles Morris

NOTE: This is only a first draft that can be used either for Transfiguration Sunday or [for Catholics] the second Sunday of Lent Year C. Both are based on the same Gospel [Luke 9:28-36]. Since I am a Catholic priest, that is the prism through which this homily will be delivered. Since it is still more than a month off when I will be delivering it, I will have to tighten it up some more.

Even though this is in outline form, it is nearly a complete text. Outline form helps me structure my preaching thematically.

- I. “This is my Beloved Son. Listen to him”. Don’t Peter, James and John know that? Don’t they see – the miracles? The healings? The wisdom?
- A. Funny thing about mountains. You get a whole different perspective.
 - 1. But to make the ascent to gain the vision comes at a cost.
 - 2. As one who has climbed a few mountains, albeit none more than 8,000 feet, it is one of the most challenging, scary, difficult things I have ever done.
 - 3. But when I finally reach the summit I know why I take the risk.
- B. From the summit the air is clearer. From the summit all I can hear is the whoosh of the wind against the white pine and the robin’s warble.
 - 1. From the mountain summit I can see no boundaries that divide nations, counties or towns.
 - 2. From the mountain summit I begin to see what I couldn’t see when I was below.
- I. It was a bright sunny day in early February of 1992 when I was coming into Mexico City from Cuernavaca. However, I could see from a mile away a thick cloud covering the city. We were coming into noxious smog. Even though I couldn’t see any buildings or people from a distance once we came down and entered the city my eyes burned and I could smell the stench from the pollution.
 - A. However, within an hour my eyes adjusted and I could no longer smell the toxic air I breathed.
 - 1. My sense, my awareness had become numbed.
 - 2. But it is not just Mexico City.
- II. Down here in the city I have adjusted to a less than abundant life.
 - A. Down here in the city I have accepted as normal melting glaciers, the waste of water and the spread of deserts.
 - 1. Down here in the city oil will never run out. Down here in the city there is business as usual.
 - 2. All the while amidst the clatter I become deaf to the cry of my Inuit neighbor in Newkot, Alaska, whose town is about to go under water.
 - 3. I become inured to the silence of the golden frog and the other myriad forms of animal life who can longer sing because they have become extinct.

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4. The dreams and hopes of children yet to be born unto the 7th generation escape my attention as I find myself assaulted by the din and clatter of the ever rushed life down here in the city.
- III. It is when the mountain trek is made that Peters' vision clears and he sees Jesus' glory as if for the first time.
 - A. Peter's ears become unplugged and he hears Abba's voice call Jesus "beloved" as if for the first time.
 - B. But it's not the first time.
 1. At Jesus' baptism the Heavenly Voice calls him "Beloved".
 2. Sisters and brothers, weren't we baptized in the same waters?
 - a. Didn't we receive the same Spirit?
 - b. Aren't we beloved sons and daughters as well?
 - C. From this Mountain View all of God's children are beloved.
 1. From this Mountain View the "world is charged with the grandeur of God"
 - D. Jesus' glory was always there. But down in the city Peter couldn't see.
 1. Jesus was always beloved. But down in the city Peter couldn't hear.
 2. And, sisters and brothers, so are we all. And that makes all the difference.
 - IV. From this Mountain View we can no longer accept the world as it is, but see the world through a different lens.
 - A. From this mountain we behold a "what if" world where the food is safe and comes from their local community;
 1. where water is not wasted but treated as a precious trust for future generations;
 2. where our sources of power come from those renewable sacred gifts of God – the wind and the sun
 3. where all of God's children, especially the poor and people of color around the world, have adequate access to food, water and clean air;
 4. and where the climate is stabilized because "listen to Him" we once again rediscover the ancient wisdom that our true heart's treasure is not bound up in the stuff we accumulate but in the quality of our relationships.
 - V. Peter wants to build three tents and stay up on the mountain forever. Who wouldn't?
 - A. But his work is below, back in the city. And so is ours.
 - B. We may not have mountains to climb, but this Lent Jesus does give us the tools transform the polluted places into the shining city on a hill – prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
 1. From the Mountain View may I suggest that for Lent we would fast from electricity at least one day a week.
 - a. By turning off the computer, television, I-Pod, and radio, by staying home in the evening [cars require electricity] we may discover the art of conversation with family members around the table. We may spend more time in solitude and reconnect again with the natural rhythms of sunrise and sunset.
 - b. This would lead to:
 2. Lenten prayer, where I might reflect on the meaning of "beloved" for all God's creatures, where I might in my imagination dialogue with one of the voiceless – a child of Darfur, your great-great grandchild.
 - a. Or as a family we could read and reflect on the Church's teaching on creation care such as Pope Benedict's World Day of Peace Document "If You Want To Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation" [copies of which you are invited to take for your family on your way out of Church in the back vestibule].
 3. Falling in love again with this beautiful world affords me a new perspective on

4. Almsgiving, where I might take the money I am saving by not eating out and put that toward the purchase of a carbon offset.
 - a. I could make a call to Senator Levin and Stabenow and tell them, as a person of faith, how important climate legislation is to our children's future and to the security of the world.
 - b. I might volunteer my time with my State Interfaith Power & Light.
- VI. Our journey ahead is long and the task is daunting to lift the haze, to clear the din of our polluted places and bring the vision of the Transfigured Christ to a hurting and hungry world.
- A. But we walk not alone. Moses, Elijah, Jesus, and yes, even Peter, walks ahead. And we walk with one another.
 - B. But it is good we take a moment to pause to remember what it means that you, I, and generations yet unborn have been transfigured.
 - C. And then we may discover, perhaps in a new way, the meaning of Easter Resurrection.