



Second week of Lent 5/6 March 2023 – Reflection Mgr Daniel McHugh

“We place all our hope in you” (Psalm 32)

On Friday evening 24 February there was a Vigil for Ukraine in the ruins of the Cathedral in Coventry marking one year since the invasion by Russia. I was among the 500 people attending. The Bishop of Coventry spoke of the Second World War and the Hope that led to building of the new Cathedral adjoining. Coventry has become a symbol of Hope and Peace. He spoke of the Faith that is at the heart of the community response to all that has taken place in Ukraine: the large number who have died or have been injured; the huge numbers displaced; the homes destroyed. And, yet the belief that a new Cathedral, made up of the people of Ukraine, that will rise again.

The pain and suffering goes on, and we pray for a lasting peace to be built on justice for the people of Ukraine for the future. And, above all, we pray that their Christian Faith will remain strong. The Gospel of the Second Sunday of Lent is the cornerstone of that Faith: Whatever happens in life – suffering, pain, death, persecution – the Cross will lead to the new life of the Resurrection.

This is what the account of the Transfiguration of Jesus on Mount Tabor is about. It is striking that when St Peter spoke of the ‘good news’ of Jesus Christ in 2 Peter 1: 16-19 it was the experience on Mount Tabor that he recalled rather than the Resurrection Appearance:

“For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eye witnesses of his majesty. For when we received honour and glory from God the Father and the voice was come to him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased”, we heard this voice come from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts”.

We note in the Gospel of St Matthew that the Transfiguration of Jesus took place on Mount Tabor; the mountains were so often the place he went for prayer and quiet, to commune with the Father:

“As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them (Peter and James and his brother John) this order, “Tell no one about this vision until the Son of Man has risen from the dead”.

The Truth revealed by Jesus is that our journey of Faith is not free from pain any more than the journey in Faith of Abraham, spoken of in the excerpt from the Book of Genesis

Monsignor Daniel McHugh

Co-ordinator for Ethnic Chaplaincies in the Archdiocese



in the First Reading of the 2nd Sunday of Lent. St Paul says in 2 Timothy 1 (the Second Reading):

“With me, bear hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God”.

He goes on to proclaim:

“Christ Jesus abolished death, and he has proclaimed life and immortality through the Good News”.

Jesus knows that Calvary lay ahead: it was on Mount Tabor in communion with the Father, in the presence of Moses and Elijah, and the three chosen Apostles Peter, James and John, that Jesus heard the words of the Father:

“This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour. Listen to him”.

It is in prayer that we too come into the presence of God, and see His splendour shine on the Face of Jesus. In the Hymn I chose for the Burning Bush Vlog for the weekend the Chorus goes like this:

*“We behold the splendour of God
shining on the face of Jesus.
We behold the splendour of God
shining on the face of the Son”*

The second verse has these words:

*“Jesus, Lord of Glory,
Jesus beloved Son.
Oh how good to be with you;
how good to share your light,
how good to share your light”*

In this week when we celebrate the Solemnity of St Chad, I am reminded of a stained glass window in the Cathedral called “The Glory of St Chad”. His holy life was always focused on the ‘last things’ especially the hope of glory. This is a prayer that reflects his dedication:

“Be with us, Lord, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of your servant Chad, whose humility and prayerfulness attracted so many to Your Kingdom. Let our lives, like his, reflect the light of Christ and the hope of Faith. In the name of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen”.

“We place all our hope in you”.

Monsignor Daniel McHugh

Co-ordinator for Ethnic Chaplaincies in the Archdiocese



THE ARCHDIOCESE *of* BIRMINGHAM

Ethnic Chaplaincies

Monsignor Daniel McHugh

Co-ordinator for Ethnic Chaplaincies in the Archdiocese

5 Maplebeck Court, Lode Lane, Solihull, B91 2UB. E: co-ordinator.ethnic.chaplaincy@rcaob.org.uk T: 07551 277616