

Listen

In our heart of hearts

Who or what are we listening to?

I know we all hear the word of God

We all hear Sacred Scripture

But are we listening?

Because these are not the same thing

Adam and Eve heard God speaking with them

But they listened to Satan

Cain heard God speaking

But he listened to Satan

Except for Noah and his family

The people at the time of the flood refused to listen to God

When the people of Babble built their tower

They were listening to themselves

Not God

In our first reading today

The people of God are hearing

But not listening

So God has a special invitation for Abram

Abram was a very successful man

An elder among his people

Respected

Wealthy

Set in his life

In the midst of this setting

Abram not only hears the invitation

The voice of God

But he listens

Leave the land of your ancestors

I will show you where you are to go

And he is given a promise

I will make of you great nation

I will bless you

I will make your name great

I will bless those that bless you

I will curse those that curse you

These are the promises made

God desires a new start with his people

And in a response similar to Mary's response to the angel

Abram leaves behind his plans

His place in the world

He listens and follows

For this he is our father in faith even today

No longer Abram and Sari
But Abraham and Sarah
Their descendants are Jesus' ancestors
And like Abram
Jesus' disciples have to learn how to listen
They know there is something special about this man they are with
But they don't know everything
They have heard him speak
But do they really listen?
So Jesus takes his 3 closest disciples with him
Up a mountain by themselves
Where Jesus reveals who he is
In his transfiguration they begin to learn how to listen
But not all at once
First, Jesus is transfigured
His face shining like the sun
His cloths white as light
He is offering a glimpse of his glory
So when he suffers and dies
They will know there is more
When their human senses fail
They will rely on their spiritual senses

So they will not only hear him speak

But begin to listen

Then, he is there with Moses and Elijah

The law and the prophet

Conversing with Jesus

They hear them speaking

But it goes no deeper

They think they are there only for themselves

Lord, it is good we are here

We will build 3 tents

What he is really saying is

We will do this so we can stay here

We don't need to go back to the others

But while he is still speaking

A cloud covers them

And a voice

This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased

Listen to him

Now they are beginning to learn to listen

They fall prostrate and are afraid

Then Jesus touches them

Rise up, and do not be afraid

He is back with them in his humanity

But he knows that they are still learning to listen

So he tells them

Do not tell the vision to anyone

Until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead

**The resurrection is the event that will open their hearts as well
as their ears**

Then they will have learned to listen

This is another reason for this time of Lent

There is so much that demands our attention

So many voices to hear

And many times we find ourselves listening to the wrong voice

In our Office of Readings today

We read from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church

This is a document from the Second Vatican Council

It tells of many things in the world that can grab our attention

How we can fail to listen to the voice of God

And listen to our own inner voice

We can find ourselves following our ego

And not God's Word

**There are tensions in the world that reflect the tensions in the
human heart**

We can achieve the best and the worst of humanity

We can seek freedom or slavery

We are limited

But our aspirations are limitless

Which voice do we listen to?

Do we seek a materialistic way of life?

Do we seek the promises of a godless philosophy?

Do we think we can be saved by human efforts alone?

Even in our faith life

There are so many demands that the Church change

Change the teaching on whatever is my personal favorite

Change the liturgy

Make it more relevant to me

Do we think the Church is here to serve me?

Or am I here to serve God through serving His people?

Do we despair of any meaning in life?

Here today; gone tomorrow

The great questions of human history are still there

For each generation, each person to struggle with

What is the meaning of pain and suffering?

Why is there evil in the world?

Why am I here?

Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing?

It is our belief that there is meaning

There is a purpose

And that meaning and purpose is not about following our own ego

It is not about following the voice of the world

It is wrapped up in our Gospel reading today

The transfiguration of Jesus Christ is our destiny

Christ; the same yesterday, today and forever

This is the certainty that is the foundation of our faith lives

Things may change

But Christ does not

The voice of the world is enticing

But it does not last

We can have a new beginning in Christ

No matter where we have been

What we may have done or not done

His invitation of divine blessing is for us

We are strengthened for our trials as we glimpse our future glory

In the transfiguration of our Christ

When we choose Christ

When we listen to the invitation before us

Our true destiny is set before us

So we have this special season of Lent

To quiet the voice of the world

To place aside the trappings of the world

To hear not only the spoken word

But listen to the word deep in our hearts

To walk with Christ in the wilderness

To leave the things of the world behind

And grasp firmly to the things of eternity