

Faith is something we all need

It is something we all desire

It is something that can be shaken

Our entire world as we know it can be rocked

But we have to ask ourselves

Who or what is my faith based on?

Because even atheists have a kind of faith

There are those that believe everything is simply a game of chance

There are those that try to rely on science alone

Darwin's theory of evolution

But doesn't even this take faith?

That not one but two persons evolved at the same time

One male and one female

Not only that, but they evolved in the same geographic area

So they could then reproduce their species

No, we all need faith in something greater than ourselves

Something outside of ourselves

To have faith in God is both a gift and a choice

It is a gift we can ask for

It is a choice to continue walking in the path of faith

And when we walk this path of faith

It will lead us to the mountains and through the valleys

In our first reading, we meet Abram

This was before God changed his name to Abraham

He had met God

He was told that God would make of him a great nation

He had been an important man

He had many possessions

But he packed up and left his home

To go where God would lead him

In our reading today, he is an old man

Over 80 years old

And his wife Sara was just as old

And yet God makes him this promise

Look at the stars in the heavens

Count them if you can

Just so will be your descendants

And Abram put his faith in the Lord

For this, he is our father in faith

And God made a covenant with him

A covenant that finds its fulfillment in Christ

A covenant that makes us sojourners and travelers here

For our citizenship is in heaven as St Paul tells us

Lives of faith require that we make choices

And that we will have enemies

Or better, Christ will have enemies in every age

And they will attack Christians

But he will reign in the end

And for the faithful, he will change our lowly bodies

To be like his glorious body

The glorious body the 3 disciples describe in our Gospel

Jesus took Peter, James and John with him

The same three that would accompany him on many missions

They were in the boat with him

When Jesus told Peter he would now be a fisher of men

To the Synagogue official's house when his daughter had died

These are the three that go with him to pray in the Garden of Olives

In our Gospel today, they accompany him up Mt Tabor

Peter and his companions do what they do in Gethsemane

They fall asleep while Jesus prays

They awake to find Jesus is no longer alone

Moses and Elijah are there with him

Representing the law and the prophets

The two pillars of the Jewish faith

And Jesus himself is changed

His glory shines from within

Giving Peter, James and John a glimpse of his glory

Jesus, Moses and Elijah are talking about what was to come

His passion he would suffer in Jerusalem

We see his passion and his glory are one and the same

He will fulfill all that was written in the law

He would fulfill all that was spoken of by the prophets

Then Peter, never one to keep silent

Calls out

Master, it is good that we are here

Let us make three tents

One for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah

It seems Peter perceived Christ as an equal to Moses and Elijah

But God prevents us from making this same mistake

For a voice comes from the cloud

This is my chosen Son

Listen to him

We, too, are called to listen to him

No matter how perplexing it may seem

No matter how difficult it may be

We are called to listen to his voice

To hear Sacred Scripture not only with our ears

But also with our hearts

So we can walk our path not alone

But always with Christ

We have faith in this because of God's covenant

Not a contract that we have obligations to fulfill

But a covenant of love

Sealed with God's own blood

A covenant opened to each of us with our baptism

It is renewed in each generation

With each individual conversion

We enter that covenant with our very lives

It is personal and communal

None of our lives are too busy to enter this covenant

No life is too simple

Wherever we are, God desires to be

We can choose our own path away from Christ if we so desire

We can try to stay on the mountaintop as Peter tried

Or we can listen for his voice

Christ did not stay on the mountaintop

He went back to the valley

We are called to follow

Because we need both the valleys of everyday life

And the grace of the mountaintop

Without the experience of the mountain

We lack a spiritual strength

We lose our moral compass, and risk becoming only a shell

Without the valley

We risk a religion of escape

Only a private experience

One that does not call for conversion or offer to transform us

One that redeems no one and isolates us from the world

This is my beloved Son

Listen to him

Listen at Mass and at prayer

In the silent mountaintop moments of life

But also listen through our everyday life

Listen to his voice when we fail as well as when we succeed

Listen in difficult relationships and conflicts

As well as when things are going well

Listen to his voice in suffering and illness

And in health

He continues to call in every moment of life

When we chose to follow in his path

He will bring us to the mountain to give us strength

And he will walk with us through the valley

So we can enter into his life

Walking the life of faith

That leads to the final glory