

**SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT
MARCH 12, 2017**

Now, listen here, SINNERS!

If, you do nothing else this Lent, for your penance – LISTEN!

Why *Listen* for Lent? Well, you just listen up!

The Second Sunday of Lent always brings us the awesome story of the Transfiguration of the Lord. Having caught a glimpse of His humanity out in the desert last week, today we climb up high to witness the divinity of God's only-begotten Son and Suffering Servant.

“The Son of Man must undergo great suffering.” Those are the shocking words of Jesus to His disciples just verses before today's awesome account. Along with the shell-shocked disciples, it is far easier for us to gaze on the divinity of Jesus on Tabor's mount, than it is to endure His twisted humanity on Calvary's hill. No matter when or where, we are instructed to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”

***Listen?* In a world of cells and twitters, I greatly fear that listening is fast becoming a lost art. And that's bad for the soul!**

If you're anything like me, you often find *listening* to be a penance. I think that's why too many conversations aren't conversations at all! Either they are monologues: I impatiently endure what you have to say, till the opportunity to tell *you* what *you* need to hear ... or, conversations are debates. Oh, I listen, all right, but only for the word or gesture that lets *me* get back at *you!*

Listening ...

Listening is giving our very selves to another person for a moment, a day, or a lifetime! To *Listen*, to really *listen*, is to place you in another's shoes. To really *Listen*, is to hear not naked words, but a whole person. It's to bow before a bare soul. It's a TRANSFIGURATION!

I know what you know. Too often we label each other and prejudge each other. We dismiss each other. And, then we don't *Listen* anymore. That's a sin. That's a sin! We commit all too often!

***Listen* to this! The human soul is unimaginably complex. We are all intriguing composites of positive and negative qualities. We are all thoroughly human, with just an added tinge of the divine. Not a one of us is to be easily dismissed. No way, no how!**

If we are critical, we can also be compassionate. If we are hard and demanding, we can also be gentle and generous. We can display courage as well as well as fear; we can heal as well as hurt. We are all saints and sinners. Every one of us!

Today's gospel offers a compelling scene and a critical revelation. Peter, James and John, if only for a blissful moment, glimpse something of the divine in Jesus. And only, only, because they *Listened!*

A word of caution ...

If you're good at it, *listening* that is ... word gets around!

You take on other people's problems, when you have enough of your own. People "dump" on you. Somebody may well fall in love with you. Chances are good that sooner or later you'll get crucified. I mean, no good deed goes unpunished!

Oh, but folks, lend me your ears! *Listening ... Listening ...* does indeed transfigure the soul! That's why it's "crucifying"! Someone once put it like this ...

"With the gift of listening comes the gift of healing, because listening to your brother or sister until the last word in their hearts is spoken is healing and consoling. Someone once said that it is possible to listen a person's soul into existence!

That's what the gospel today means by TRANSFIGURATION!