

Homily for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun in Lent,  
Feb. 27-28, 2010

Rose and John have been married for fifteen years and their relationship is limited to newspapers exchanged at breakfast-table and weather reports noted at the dinner-table.

Rose spends her days lingering over the housework because she dreads the time when she has nothing to do. John works long hours and says he is too tired to talk in the evenings — so they settle for drowsy boredom in front of the television.

Rose never hears John call her by her name; only as "you". She feels like an old plant that has been left to wither quietly behind a curtain in the attic.

One day Rose's friend, Maude, arrives and tries some advice: "Rose, take a look at yourself! You're always going around with curlers in your hair and tripping over your face. You're a mess. What you need is a new hairdo and a new outfit — then John will notice you. Get some spark, dear! Tomorrow, we will go shopping."

The next day Rose spends hours at the hairdresser and at various stores. Maude is enthusiastic about the results, but Rose feels the whole exercise is a wasted effort. After their long day they return to wait for John. When the key turns in the lock Rose stands up feeling foolish.

When John comes in, he stops; he looks at his wife and when he sees her he realizes what he has done. He has pushed her to desperation. In bewilderment, and sadness because of his neglect toward her, he moves toward her, takes her in his arms, and calls her name over and over

again. When that happens, Rose becomes radiant and aglow. She is transfigured — not because she has a new outfit but because this is the first time in years she has heard her name called in love.

Each of today's readings describes an earthly reality, and then gives us a glimpse at a new depth to that reality. With the men of the scriptures we are taken through a little exercise that allows us to understand more about our world and more about our God.

Abram is shown the stars of the heavens, and these stars become a sign of how his descendants will multiply and inherit the land. Paul writes about our bodies and how they will become glorious, like Christ's glorious body. Peter, James, and John see Jesus, their teacher and their friend, transformed before their eyes; they are privileged to witness a little of his glory as the Son of God

For Abram, for Paul, and for Peter, James, and John, the world has been opened up. There is more to their lives and to the life of the world than they could have dreamed. Their understanding has grown. They see the world differently.

We often live with a narrow view of reality as we get caught up in our day-to-day living. But we are Christians. We are aware that there are **horizons** beyond our own, **concerns** beyond our own, **needs** beyond our own, **lives** beyond our own.

Our religion asks us to take into account other people and other ways of thinking. We are asked to let God teach us and lead us to see reality as he intended it to be. Our practice of religion is the means that allows us to see God

at work in the world around us; and so we grow in understanding.

As we grow, our faith becomes increasingly a part of the whole of our life. In each event, we trust that God is present, even if he is unseen. And we trust that there will be times when we receive a glimpse of the glory that lies behind the everyday places and people. We believe that the glory of God is waiting to be revealed to us everyday.

The Gospel shows us that the Father doesn't just *recognize* Jesus but *recognizes* him in **love** as his chosen one. And when Jesus comes down the mountain he sets his face towards Jerusalem where he will come face to face with death. The transfiguration, the Fathers calling him by name, enables Jesus to make the most difficult journey in his life — to take the road that leads to Calvary. Jesus, calls his disciples by name, and gives them the power and the courage to face the difficult challenges of naming him to the world.

Transfiguration is not a solitary event in the Gospel but one that happens over and over again. Throughout his public ministry Jesus transfigured many people — the broken, the wounded, and the wayward. He called to the deepest and best part of people and transfigured them by the power of God's love.

In our Baptism and in Confirmation we have been called by name in love. God has called us by name through his Church. For Jesus, that experience named his purpose in life and told him who he really was. It was the same when Jesus called his disciples by name. They knew who they were, Sons of God, and what their purpose was, to be builders of God's kingdom. As we are called by name in

love, we move closer to who we really are, we become radiant, and we are given courage and hope to face the future.

In our Lenten journey we are asked to transfigure each other by the power of God's love in us. We are all called to the ministry of transfiguration, a way of life that recognizes God's glory in every part of creation, and most importantly in every person.

Who calls our name in love?

Whose name do you call in love?