

Second Sunday in Lent March 7th 2004 Rev Robert Lamerton

- Genesis 15. 1-12, 17-18
- Psalm 27
- Philippians 3. 17 - 4. 1
- Luke 13. 1-9

Hymns: TIS 121, 15 (for Psalm), 212, 539, 554

Notes for sermon:

Start with story of the man searching under the street light for his keys. A passer by helps; after searching together for some time, the second person asks "where did you lose them?" The man says he lost them down the street... "then why are you looking here?"

"Because the light is on, and I can see here. It's too dark down there!"

Joyce returned home from staying with the Bannerman's at Orbost, and went on Sunday afternoon to the service at Lake Tyers. Various stories, but a totally new experience.

Wilderness :: getting out of our comfort zones.

The Passion of Jesus.... the film....

The wilderness of Jesus puts him in a place where he is confronted with his own call, or the devil, with temptations to take an easy path....

Today is the Transfiguration... why??

1. Because transfiguration /change, comes by confronting the devils, the demons in our lives.
2. Because for Jesus this is the turning point this experience of Glory is a fleeting thing, verses 36 – 38.

We then hear about a stark return to reality

- Jesus is alone again
- They came down from the mountain
- Jesus is confronted by people and their problems.
- And doubt among the disciples.

Then the journey to Jerusalem begins and the hard road ahead.

3. The transfiguration is an encouraging and inspirational bright moment before the difficult journey ahead BUT it also points to the glory at the end of the journey: the Resurrection and entry into God's glory.

As St Paul reminds us, "our citizenship is in heaven" and that we look forward to transformation into his glory. So I like to think of those bright moments in life as windows into God's glory and signs which inspire us along the way.

In the Old Testament reading, Abram, (before his name change), seals his covenant with God. As part of this he is promised

"look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.

— so shall your descendants be."

Then in a dream the Lord tells Abram:

"Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs and shall be slaves there.

etc.

on one hand, the future looks bright and hopeful but it involves a difficult journey.

Eventually however, Abram's descendants we are told, live securely in the land.

We should not think this relates to the state of Israel today, but to an earlier time.

Like the transfiguration story,

Bright and hopeful reassurance of faith followed by a difficult journey which leads into a more glorious existence.

We are on that journey!

Look to the bright spots

Not be afraid when we are out of our comfort zone and in the wilderness.

Because we are reassured of better things, for, as St Paul says: "Our citizenship is in heaven."

As we journey the world around us seems sometimes beautiful / sometimes hostile.
We are inspired by the beauty

We are not comfortable with the hostility

But we are NOT called to be hostile in return.

Rather, we draw strength by remembering and celebrating the beautiful, — the bright spots!

And look towards the brightness and joy at the end of the journey.

The journey through Lent challenges us to get out into the wilderness; out of our comfort zones and discover God's light in unusual places.