

# A DOSE OF GOD TODAY

Eucharist | Prayers | Readings | Reflections

As we mature and develop as persons, our relationship with others should also undergo change! An example is the way we relate now with our own parents. Surely our way of relating with them now, is different from the way we related with them when we were children or growing teenagers. They remain as our parents whom we continue to esteem and respect as they are entitled to.

This too should be the case with our personal relationship with God. God wants that relationship; to grow, develop, and mature! Quietly go deep within yourself. Observe, and notice! Is there a difference now in the way God is relating with you from with the way God related with you when you were a child, or a growing teenager? How about from your side, has there been a change in the way you now relate with God?

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Reading today, which is from Genesis 22, is an example of an adult to adult relationship: between God and Abraham! Compare this with the relationship between Abraham and his young son, Isaac. The 1<sup>st</sup> Reading is a very touching illustration of a relationship that has matured. On the one hand we have the relationship between a human father Abraham, and his only son, whom he loved so much. On the other hand, we have the relationship between God and Abraham. Observe the way God addressed Abraham in *verse 1*, when God commanded Abraham to do something that was very difficult! Look at *verse 11*, after Abraham proved to God that he was more than willing to do whatever God asks of him! Listen to this: *"Abraham, Abraham!". And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son from me.'"* [22:11-12]. Do you notice the *terms of*

*endearment* behind the way God called Abraham and the way Abraham responded? The way God addressed Abraham and intervened shows God's concern for Abraham and his son, Isaac!

How did Abraham take God's difficult command: that he sacrifice his only son whom Abraham loves so much? On those two occasions [vv. 1 & 11], Abraham's response was the same: *"Here I am."*



## TOWARDS A MATURE RELATIONSHIP

*"Here I am"*, shows us Abraham's nature, as a person always totally available to God. From the time they first met, Abraham had trusted, believed; and was totally obedient to God!

Did God really want a human sacrifice from Abraham? Of course not! The narrator of the story already made that clear to us! God only wished *"to test"* Abraham's faith! In the opening verse we read: *"After these things, God tested Abraham."* [v.1]. God's demand of Abraham was not intended to be taken literally! But Abraham interpreted and understood it differently! Abraham took God's command literally and seriously! Abraham was well prepared before embarking on that journey.

Abraham's willingness to undertake that long journey and follow a very difficult instruction shows us Abraham's unwavering faith, firm trust, and total obedience to God!

Probably, deep inside Abraham, God's command was completely incomprehensible and even unreasonable. Before this, in their old age, God gifted Abraham and his wife with a son! God gave Abraham this promise: "*your very own issue shall be your heir*" [15:4]. Abraham totally cut himself off from his whole past [12:1ff] when he left his homeland to obey God and follow God's call. And now this same God was asking him to give up his whole future? Does this make any sense? Is God aware and sensitive to the fact of how much Abraham loves his only son, Isaac? And God wants Abraham to sacrifice him?

At this stage in your life, how would you describe the relationship between you and God? Has God ever asked you to do something very difficult and even painful; or do something incomprehensible and even seemingly unreasonable? How did you respond to God?

Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son on the mountain of Moriah. God the Father gave up His Only Son on Mount Calvary. God was merciful to the father and son, Abraham and Isaac! Through the angel, God intervened and Isaac's life was spared. But did you realize that God showed *no mercy* to Himself? God did not intervene to spare Jesus from a violent and cruel death! God allowed His Only Son, whom He loved so much to die...to die so that all of us may have life...the fullness of life! [Jn. 10:10]. This is the God, Who invites you and me to continue to grow and mature in our personal relationship with Him!

*Fr. Manoling Thomas, CSSR*

## INTRODUCTION

A blessed Sunday, brothers and sisters.

On this Second Sunday of Lent, our liturgy

calls us towards transformation of our hearts and of our whole being into the likeness of Christ, who transfigured at Mount Tabor as witnessed by the three disciples, Peter, James and John.

May this Eucharistic Celebration bring us into that transformation and continual conversion as God call us to be.

Let us all stand and sing our entrance song.

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me. (Cf. Ps 27 (26): 8-9)*

## THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

### PENITENTIAL ACT

**The GLORIA IN EXCELSIS** (Glory to God in the highest) *is not said.*

## COLLECT

**Let us pray.** *(pause)*

**O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory.**

**Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## FIRST READING

**A Reading from the Book of Genesis****(22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18)**

God put Abraham to the test. He called to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am!" he replied. Then God said: "Take your son Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him up as a holocaust on a height that I will point out to you."

When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. Then he reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the LORD's messenger called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!" "Here I am!" he answered. "Do not lay your hand on the boy," said the messenger. "Do not do the least thing to him. I know now how devoted you are to God, since you did not withhold from me your own beloved son." As Abraham looked about, he spied a ram caught by its horns in the thicket. So he went and took the ram and offered it up as a holocaust in place of his son.

Again the LORD's messenger called to Abraham from heaven and said: "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you acted as you did in not withholding from me your beloved son, I will bless you abundantly and make your descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore; your descendants shall take possession of the gates of their enemies, and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing— all this because you obeyed my command."

**The word of the Lord.**

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

**Ps 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19****I WILL WALK BEFORE THE LORD, IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING.**

I believed, even when I said, "I am greatly afflicted." Precious in the eyes of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones. **(R.)**

O LORD, I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your handmaid; you have loosed my bonds. To you will I offer sacrifice of thanksgiving, and I will call upon the name of the LORD. **(R.)**

My vows to the LORD I will pay in the presence of all his people, In the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, O Jerusalem. **(R.)**

## SECOND READING

**A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans (8:31b-34)**

Brothers and sisters:

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us, who will condemn? Christ Jesus it is who died—or, rather, was raised—who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

**The word of the Lord.**

### Verse Before the Gospel

From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard: This is my beloved Son, listen to him..  
(Cf. Mt 17:5)

### GOSPEL READING

#### A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark (9:2-10)

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified. Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.

As they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant.

#### The Gospel of the Lord.

### Homily

### PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

### PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

**Priest:** With full confidence in the grace and generosity of the Father, let us now ask His mercy upon us to grant the desires of our hearts as individuals and as a Church. Let our response be,

#### LORD, LISTEN TO THE PRAYERS OF YOUR PEOPLE.

1. We pray for Pope Francis, our Bishops, Priests and Religious that they may continue to give their lives in the service of the Church and for the salvation of all. Let us pray to the Lord.

2. We pray for our Government Officials, that they may always discover the grace in prayers

and seek the guidance of the Spirit as they make decisions for the good of the public. Let us pray to the Lord.

3. We pray for all the sick, the suffering, the lonely and the broken hearted, that they may find comfort, assurance of support and love through their family, friends and our communities. Let us pray to the Lord.

4. We pray for all of us present in this Eucharistic Celebration, that we may receive fully the grace of God in this Eucharist and allow the Lord to transform our hearts and minds according to His will. Let us pray to the Lord.

5. We pray for all the faithful departed, that they may be embraced by God's mercy and receive them in heaven. Let us pray to the Lord.

**P:** Our most merciful Father, you have let your Son, our Lord Jesus to live with us. Grant us now the strength and the faith to build your kingdom on earth especially among our communities. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

**May this sacrifice, O Lord, we pray, cleanse us of our faults and sanctify your faithful in body and mind for the celebration of the paschal festivities. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Preface: The Transfiguration of the Lord.**

**V.** The Lord be with you.

**R.** And with your spirit.

**V.** Lift up your hearts.

**R.** We lift them up to the Lord.

**V.** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**R.** It is right and just.

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For after he had told the disciples of his coming Death, on the holy mountain he manifested to them his glory, to show, even by the testimony of the law and the prophets, that the Passion leads to the glory of the Resurrection.

And so, with the Powers of heaven, we worship you constantly on earth, and before your majesty without end we acclaim:

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts . . .



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**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**


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This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him. (Mt 17: 5)

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**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**


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**Let us pray.** (*pause*)

**As we receive these glorious mysteries,  
we make thanksgiving to you, O Lord,  
for allowing us while still on earth to be  
partakers even now of the things of  
heaven.**

**Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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**FINAL BLESSING**


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*Bow down for the blessing.*

Bless your faithful, we pray, O Lord,  
with a blessing that endures for ever,  
and keep them faithful  
to the Gospel of your only Begotten  
Son, so that they may always desire and  
at last attain that glory whose beauty he  
showed in his own Body, to the  
amazement of his apostles. Through  
Christ our Lord.

And may the blessing of Almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy  
Spirit, come down on you and remain with  
you for ever.

**R. Amen.**

*Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by  
your life.*