

I have been to the mountaintop...

When I was a child, we would drive across the plains beside the Platte River which flowed down from the Rockies on our way to Denver, 500 miles away. We would have a contest to see who could see the mountains first.

We would scan the horizon as we got 50 miles from Denver, and then they would peak up, and with each advancing mile become more and more majestic as they framed the western sky

I have been to many mountains since: Montserrat in Spain where Saint Ignatius prayed in a cave, and Montserrat in the middle of the Atlantic where a fiery mountain sets a red glow in the night sky, and most memorable of all Croagh Patrick in Ireland, where I had a mountaintop transformation.

■ In July of 1973, Larry Dorsey and I on a lark, at midnight, climbed the holy mountain where St. Patrick prayed...1500 years before..

I griped and complained about the climb, and almost turned back.

But somehow I persevered.

But then at dawn when the first rays of the sun ■ stole into the ■ crevices on the mountain, I had a TRANSFORMATION EXPERIENCE.

I SAW THE FACES OF THE OTHER 50 THOUSAND PILGRIMS IN A NEW LIGHT, AND MY HEART WAS DEEPLY MOVED.

LENT IS ALL ABOUT SEEING THE REALITY AROUND US IN A NEW LIGHT.

Whatever small fasting or abstinence we perform should sharpen our senses to see into deeper spiritual reality.

And that is what happened in today's Gospel.

The Apostles saw Jesus in an entirely new way, and wanted to pitch camp and stay on the mountain forever.

But there would be another mountain looming on the horizon: Calvary.

Lent ought to challenge us to see OTHERS in the light of Christ:

...the person we dislike the most...see SOMETHING good.

...the migrant, not as "an illegal" but as a human being.

...the nasty neighbor as someone hurting.

(After all, hurting people HURT other people.)

So today go to the mountaintop with Peter, James, and John. See farther and deeper into the human

beings who surround your life. Then with Peter, tell the Lord:

"It is good to be here"

□ And Pray:

O God, help me to see with new eyes.

Some of my friends are with me on the Mount of Transformation..

Others are carrying heavy crosses up their own Mount of Calvary.

Help us to "bear one anothers' burdens."

Help me to see aright:

that we all must make our way□ to the mountain in the midst of messiness.

It is the human condition, and so we yearn for a better view, the vista

from on high.

But in the meantime we cross the plains and

scan the horizon for the mountains which we name:

Hope!

Courage!

Victory¹

Amen.