



## February 28, 2010 The Second Sunday of Lent

*"While he was praying, his face changed in appearance..." Luke 9:29*

Dear Friends;

It is said that when Leonardo da Vinci was painting his masterpiece, "The Last Supper," he looked carefully for a model for his Christ. He found a member of the choir of one of the Roman churches. It was a young man of handsome features named Pietro Bandinelli.

Years passed and the painting remained incomplete. Leonardo had painted all the disciples except for Judas Iscariot—Christ's betrayer. Finally Leonardo searched for a model whose face had become hardened by life and distorted by sin. He found a beggar on the streets of Rome whose appearance made Leonardo shudder when looking on him.

He hired the beggar to sit for him as he painted the face of Judas on his canvas. When he had finished painting, Leonardo said, "I have not yet found out your name." I am Pietro Bandinelli. I also sat for you as your model for Christ."

So often we reduce morality, ethics and even our spiritual lives into a series of "thou-shalt-nots." It does not help that leaders in the Church often encourage this negative approach. We so focus on what we should not be doing that we fail to realize what we could be doing. While we may not have become the face of Judas we have not become the face of Christ.

The Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain reveals that Jesus is Divinity shining through our humanity. Jesus comes not only to free us from bondage to sin but to share with us God's life and nature. We too can become radiant with the divine fire of love. So the question that we need to ask ourselves is, "What do I want to look like?"

For the Christian there can be no other answer than to say I want to look like Jesus. Lent is a time when we can examine ourselves. What prevents me from looking like Jesus? With God's grace can those things which disfigure me be healed? Then what must I do to let the image of Jesus grow in me? Traditionally Lent helps us by suggesting prayer, fasting and the practice of charity as means to grow in the image of Christ.

The only way we can answer these kinds of questions is to fast from the perpetual busy-ness and ambient noise in our lives. And in the depths of our hearts invite in the Lord of Love, then we can become radiant with joy! Happy Lent!

Peace

*Fr Ron*