

God promised Abraham to make him a channel of great blessing to his own family, future descendants and to all the families of the earth (Gn12:3). To achieve that promise, he must go from his family and country to the land that God will show him (Gn 12:1). Abraham believed in God's promise and promptly obeyed and did as the Lord commanded him. For that Abraham was chosen as the instrument of blessing.

Before his ultimate sacrifice on the cross, Jesus takes three of his disciples to the top of a high mountain. Moses and Elijah were led to the mountain of God to discern their ultimate call and mission, Jesus now appears with Moses and Elijah on the highest mountain overlooking the summit of the promised land. Jesus was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light (Mt 17:2).

Moses met with God on Mount Sinai and the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God (Ex 34:29), the Israelites could not look at his face because of its brightness (2 Cor 3:7). Having destroyed all the priests of Baal, prophet Elijah took refuge on the mountain of God at Sinai. There God showed Elijah his glory in great thunder, whirlwind, and fire, and then spoke with him in a still quiet voice. And then directed him to go and fulfill the mission given him by God. Jesus, likewise, appears in glory with Moses and Elijah, as if to confirm with them that he, too, is ready to fulfill the mission which the Father has sent him to accomplish.

Jesus went to the mountain knowing full well what awaited him in Jerusalem - betrayal, rejection, and crucifixion. Jesus very likely discussed this momentous decision to go to the cross with Moses and Elijah. God the Father also spoke with Jesus and gave his approval: This is my beloved Son; listen to him. The Father glorified his son because he was faithful and willing to obey him in everything. The cloud which overshadowed Jesus and his apostles fulfilled the dream of the Jews that when the Messiah came the cloud of God's presence would fill the temple again (Ex 16:10, 19:9, 33:9; 1 Kings 8:10; 2 Mac 2:8).

Jesus not only wants us to see his glory, he wants to share this glory with us. And Jesus shows us the way to the Father's glory. Jesus fulfilled his mission on Calvary where he died for our sins so that Paradise and everlasting life would be restored to us. He embraced the cross to win a crown of glory - a crown that awaits each one of us, if we, too, will follow in his footsteps.

While Jesus was transfigured, Peter, James, and John were asleep (Luke 9:32)! Upon awakening they discovered Jesus in glory along with Moses and Elijah. There are many things which can keep our minds asleep to the things of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are on our way to Heaven. We must always remember the goal of life. We are on our way to Heaven. The Transfiguration of Jesus is the sneak peak of his future and ours— the glorification of our bodies in Heaven forever.

There is a major stumbling block to this heavenly goal: the stumbling block of pornography. We are marking this as **Safe Haven Sunday**, a time to address this ever-increasing reality of our day.

Pornography is easy to access. In fact, even for a person who isn't looking for it, it will often come across in ads, commercials, videos, pictures, search strings, etc. The experts tell us that exposure to pornography is not a matter of if but of when. That is why we want to address and educate families, so that they may have help to keep their homes and families safe.

One might think that it's not actually that big of a problem to see some pictures or videos from time to time, as long as a person knows not to engage it and redirect their attention to something else.

The research indicates that seeing pornography leads to curiosity and experimentation for many. That leads to further use for sexual gratification, which can lead to riskier use, and even to dependence and addiction.

Speaking about this today isn't meant to be some form of fear or shame tactic, but rather to invite a continued conversation and serious effort to protect our families, children, and homes from this pervasive reality.

Saint Paul tells the church today to "bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God." We have been redeemed by the precious Blood of Jesus, sanctified by the Spirit of the Father, and our goal is Heaven. Any and all sin stands as a threat to us arriving at our goal. Among other sins, pornography stands as a threat to diminish one's innocence, challenge one's holiness, confuse one's relationships, and more.

Every time we frequent the sacraments, especially the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist, we are allowing Jesus into our lives more fully—he "who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to life through the gospel." As we allow him into our lives, let's ask him to protect and deliver us from all sin. As we allow him into our homes, it is high time to beg Jesus to protect and deliver our families, children, homes, devices, relationships, in summary all things... to beg Jesus to protect and deliver us from pornography and any other affront to the dignity and beauty of the human person, human sexuality, and relationships.

We do not intend to say that pornography is the only threat on our way to Heaven, but it has become a most serious threat. We want to speak about it here at church, so that you are able to continue speaking about it with your families. The point is not simply to talk about pornography, but to talk about relationships, holiness, the goodness of the human person, the goodness of human sexuality in its privileged place of marriage, and to remove anything which threatens to cheapen or destroy that goodness.

We are on our way to Heaven. We are meant to be transfigured into glory with Jesus. Today we recommit to seeking the goal of Heaven, the honoring of our bodies and the human person, and the removal of anything which threatens it. May the Cross of Jesus save us. Amen.

Peter, James, and John were privileged witnesses of the glory of Christ. We, too, as disciples of Jesus Christ are called to be witnesses of his glory. We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit (2 Cor 3:18). The Lord wants to reveal his glory to us, his beloved disciples.