

**“Stop, look, listen!”** These words of caution appear at railway crossings. They are very important to heed them for our safety. Attentive parents deal with their children in the same way, telling them to stop what they are doing or take a time-out. They tell their children to give them their attention, to look at them. Then they ask them to listen to what they are telling them.

Today’s Scriptures have the same message from the Lord to all his children, young and old. In the first reading, from the Old Testament book of Genesis, God tells Abram, whose name will be changed to Abraham, to stop his activities, to be attentive to him, and to listen and follow his instructions to go to a new land where he and his descendants will be blessed.

In the second reading, Saint Paul writes to his co-worker Timothy and instructs him and other Christians, who are undergoing persecution with a message of consolation and encouragement. They are to be attentive to their commitment to Christ and urged to “bear your share of the hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.”

In the Gospel we hear that three apostles, Peter, James, and John, witness Jesus’ physical transfiguration, which is a glimpse of his future triumph over persecution and crucifixion. They observe Jesus conversing with Moses, the recipient of the Old Law, and Elijah the prophet, whose mission and message Jesus has come to bring to fulfillment.

Then Peter, James, and John hear the heavenly voice of God the Father telling them: “this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased, listen to him.”

Like Abram, Timothy, and the apostles, we are exhorted, especially during this Lenten season, to pause from our usual routines, to stop, to look and listen more closely to Jesus and his message, the Good News of God’s loving plan for us for a fulfilling life now and eternally.

To illustrate this, may I suggest that during Lent you try something like this with your family. Turn off the TV and all electronic devices for 15 minutes. This is

**the “stop.” Next gaze at a crucifix or other religious image. This is the “look.” Next read aloud from the Bible one of the readings, the Gospel, for the following Sunday. You can use the publication *At Home with the Word* or a Bible. This is the “listen” in the process. Then simply pray silently for five or ten minutes, and discuss what the reading means to each of you. Conclude by joining hands and praying the Our Father.**

**Most of our lives are so busy and noisy that this suggestion may be unrealistic. Try it! I think it will bring you peace of mind, closer to your family, and to God. I am not a doctor, but I think it should even lower your blood pressure!**

**Over time, and always with the aid of God’s grace, if we stop, look, and listen to the Lord often, we will be transfigured, transformed, changed into better Christians and happier people.**