

June 9, 2013 – 10th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C
Transitions

May I have a show of hands?

Who was born in the month of June?

How many people here were married in the month of June?

Now for a harder one: how many people here received the Sacrament of Confirmation in the month of June?

Now for the easy one: how many people here graduated in June?

June is a busy month, especially for marriages and graduations.

June is a busy month for **transitions**, for significant changes in our lives. Each of those four questions I asked involved a **transition**, in fact, an important **transition**.

Being born in June or any other month is probably the most significant transition for each of us.

We go from the safety and security of our mother's womb out into the new world outside the womb.

We go from being sustained by an umbilical cord to breathing on our own and to receiving nourishment through our mouths.

What a major **transition**!

Getting married in June or any other month is clearly another major transition.

It's a really big change from the life of a single, independent, self-reliant individual to becoming a party of three: me, you and us – and we need to make room for God in that relationship as well.

Yes, marriage is undoubtedly another significant **transition**.

When adults become members of the Church they receive the three sacraments of initiation ... Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

At that point they are then “fully initiated”.

This weekend several of our parish youths and youths from five other parishes will be taking one step of that initiation here at Corpus Christi when they receive the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Donald Hanchon.

Confirmation is a time for **transition**.

It is a transition that can open other doors for us.

For instance, once we are fully initiated we can be a candidate for becoming a lector here at Mass or becoming an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

As you can imagine, we can also speak about graduation as being a significant **transition** as well.

Generally, after graduation several things change.

We won't be seeing all our old friends everyday in the class room.

We probably will be going to a different location every day – another school for our next degree, possibly a place where we will start working for a boss instead of for a degree, and certainly a place with most people being new acquaintances for us.

A transition!

Today's reading from Elijah and today's reading from the Gospel of Luke both address yet another **transition**.

Yes, it is the **transition** from the life that we know fairly well to a new life which we have never yet experienced... from life to death to a new life.

In our First Reading, Elijah, one of the two greatest prophets in the Old Testament, had been living with a widow and her only son because Elijah was fleeing from a tyrant king.

The widow was almost starving when he met her and yet he asked that she feed him.

As a reward for her generosity Elijah asked God to never let her jar of flour nor her jar of oil to run low.

With God's compassionate help all three of them survived a great drought.

Today's reading picks up the story at that point and tells how the widow's son gets sick and dies.

Death, the ultimate **transition!**

Elijah prays to the Lord to restore the life of the son and the child recovers.

In today's Gospel we have another tragic death of a widow's only son.

We see a compassionate Jesus helping a poor widow by bringing her only son back to life,

a son who was her only means to a secure life in the culture of those times.

From life to death ... our ultimate **transition**.

While we can anticipate some of what will happen on the other side of a **transition**, we will never completely know about it until we actually experience the **transition** ourselves.

For example,
 we could read about marriage and get an understanding of marriage.
 We could hear about marriage from others who have made the **transition**.

Still, these experiences of other people are not our experiences.
 It will be different for us ... and we are quite sure of that.
 Until we experience it ourselves we will not know what it is like.

For life after death we can visualize a variety of paintings on that topic.
 We can listen to the stories of people who have near death experiences.
 We can read Scriptures to get a deeper perspective on what our God is like.
 We believe in a God who is just, merciful and compassionate.
 We can imagine a fair hearing in front of the Lord.
 We can imagine ourselves asking for and relying on the mercy of our
 compassionate God.

Two weeks ago at Mass two parish members and Fr. Don each gave a short witness talk.

The term often used for such mini-witness talks is “elevator pitch”.

I would like to offer my short witness talk about a **transition** that almost happened.

Seven years ago I was at work in an office and not feeling just right.

I had some internal discomfort, maybe my stomach or my chest.

It was little familiar but different enough that I called a doctor who sent me to the Emergency Room.

There they checked me out and said I was not having a heart attack.

Their policy was to keep patients like myself overnight just to be safe.

They kept me connected to instruments to keep alert to my condition.

That evening they came in and told me that I was having a heart attack.

They started to wheel me down the hall to a laboratory to find the blockage in my veins.

I was flat on my back as they rolled me down the hall.

For some reason the following children’s song came to mind.

“Jesus, Jesus, Jesus in the morning,
 Jesus at the noontime,

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus when the sun goes down.”
 Oh my God! Is the sun going down on me?
 Am I going to die?
 I am not expecting this!
 OK God, this up to you!
 I am ready if you are ready.
 Wow, I can get to see what’s on the other side!

Soon after entering the laboratory I passed out.
 After the heart catheterization,
 installation of a stent to open up my artery,
 and three zaps with the electric paddles I was revived.

Later on I was amazed at how calm I had been and how I had welcomed the time to be with the Lord in a new and different way. (263 word El. Pitch)

No, I had not died.
 No, I had not made the ultimate **transition**.
 However, there was some of that same elation that the families in today’s readings had enjoyed.

Transitions.

I have been born, have been Confirmed, have graduated several times, have changed jobs several times and have been married now for 47 years.

That’s a lot of **transitions**.
 And I almost made the big **transition**.
 Would I be ready again today?

How about you?
 Do you have confidence in our God of justice, mercy and compassion?
 Do you have confidence to face the final **transition** of your life?