

Read

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19,
20, 22

2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Matthew 17:1-9

LIVING THE WORD

Second Sunday of Lent

March 1, 2026



REFLECTION

Today's Gospel reading reveals a tension between the extraordinary mountaintop experience of the transfiguration and the demanding, everyday work awaiting the disciples below. Our yearning for perpetual mountaintop moments makes us sympathetic to Peter's desire to build shelters and remain on the mountain.

God's voice redirects our focus to Jesus, whose mission for us is not on the mountaintop but in the world. On descending from the mountain, Jesus and the disciples must confront the complexities of human existence with all its joys and sorrows. The contrast underscores that our faith isn't an escape but a source of strength amid life's challenges.

Today's Gospel encourages us to find God not only in the extraordinary but also in the mundane. Our spiritual journey involves both transformative mountaintop encounters and the day-to-day work in the valleys. It's a call to embrace the ordinary, recognizing God's presence and work in all aspects of life.



ACTION

We can't live on a mountaintop, metaphorically speaking, but we can make space for extraordinary encounters with God to happen in the midst of our ordinary lives. Plan to take a five-to-fifteen-minute mini retreat every day this week. This could look like starting your day with five minutes of meditation, stopping by a church for a quick chat with God, or going for a walk, being mindful of God's creation all around you.



"Mountaintop"

—The City Harmonic

<https://youtu.be/OUYAqH2yRqQ>

QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ Do you think their mountaintop experience helped Peter and the others when they later faced hardships and persecution?
- ❖ Think of some of the peaks and valleys in your life. How have both types of moments shaped your life?



March 1, 2026

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

LECTIONARY #25A

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalms 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Matthew 17:1-9

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

In today's Gospel, we hear about Christ's transfiguration. This event once again places Jesus on a mountain, as Matthew often does, to draw parallels to Moses in the Old Testament. Moses actually appears at the transfiguration, as does the prophet Elijah. These Old Testament figures were revered by the Jewish people and represent two essential components of Judaism—the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah). Matthew makes the connection between Jesus and these two pillars clear: Christ fulfills the law and the prophets; his divinity is on display in his transfigured, illuminated presence. His identity is further confirmed by the Father's voice assuring the listeners that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Q FOCUS: *We learn more about who Jesus was through his transfiguration.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week on March 3, the Church honors St. Katharine Drexel (1858–1955). Katharine came from a very wealthy American family in Philadelphia. She used her inheritance to fund schools and provide care for Native Americans and for Black Americans. She eventually started her own religious order, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. On March 4, the Church honors a popular Polish saint, Saint Casimir (1458–1484). Although Casimir was a prince in line to be king of Poland, he gave himself

to his studies, a life of celibacy and prayerful piety, and charitable acts.

Church Teaching Connection

“The Gospel of the Transfiguration is proclaimed every year on the Second Sunday of Lent. During this liturgical season, the Lord takes us with him to a place apart. While our ordinary commitments compel us to remain in our usual places and our often repetitive and sometimes boring routines, during Lent we are invited to ascend ‘a high mountain’ in the company of Jesus and to live a particular experience of spiritual discipline—asceticism—as God's holy people. Lenten penance is a commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross” (Pope Francis, Message for Lent, January 25, 2023).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory.

Gospel

Matthew 17:1-9

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And

behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone.

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

In today's Gospel, Jesus is once again on a mountaintop. This time he brought with him his three closest disciples, Peter, James, and John. Though we do not know which mountain this occurred on, placing Jesus on a mountain for the transfiguration recalls the way God revealed himself to Moses (in Exodus) and Elijah (in 1 Kings).

► Who was Moses? Who was Elijah?

Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. On Mount Sinai, he encountered the presence of God and God gave him the Ten Commandments, along with other laws and regulations for their worship of God. Elijah was a prophet who performed many miracles and warned the king against false worship. He encountered God's presence on Mount Horeb (which is

the same as Mount Sinai) in a "light silent sound" (1 Kings 19:12).

► Why do you think these two figures appeared with Jesus at his transfiguration?

These men were well-known figures in the Jewish tradition and highlight the way God gave his law to his people (Moses) and used the prophets to communicate his desire for their return to him (Elijah). Jesus himself fulfills the law and what had been prophesied. When Jesus is transfigured, the Gospel says that "his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light." Throughout this, he is talking with Moses and Elijah. God's voice is heard, calling Jesus his beloved Son.

► What do these things reveal to us about who Jesus is?

Peter wants to honor this moment and remain in this mountaintop experience by setting up tents. Tents allude to the way the Jewish people, during the feast of Tabernacles, set up tents to live in as they commemorated the ancient Israelites dwelling in them during their journey through the desert to the promised land. Jesus does not allow them to do so because the journey is not yet complete, there is further to go (to his cross and resurrection). He reassures the disciples to not be afraid after they hear God's voice.

The Father reveals to the disciples who Jesus is and tells them to listen to him. At the end of the reading, we hear Jesus instruct them to not share what they saw with anyone. Even though his close disciples have witnessed this, we know that they still don't understand the fullness of who Jesus is and what must happen to him until after he rises from the dead.

► How do you think you would have reacted if you had been there with Peter, James, and John?

As followers of Christ, we too are called to listen to him. However, unlike Peter, James, and John, we already know the story of Jesus' death and resurrection, so we are able to share this Good News with others now. Even during this season of Lent, when we are preparing to commemorate Jesus' death, we can still tell others about his triumphant victory over it!

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the “Church Teaching Connection” on page 146.

Matthew uses Old Testament figures to reveal things about Jesus’ identity.

Peter, James, and John were some of Jesus’ closest disciples.

We are called to share all we have learned from Jesus and the Good News of his resurrection, even during Lent.

Act on the Word

Mountaintop Tents

For this activity, you will need plain sheets of cardstock or regular copy paper, clear tape, and colored pencils or markers.

Remind the teens that in the Bible, mountaintops were often the location of an encounter with God. Share with them that the phrase “mountaintop experiences” is often used in Christian circles to refer to moments of intense spiritual experiences and encounters with the presence of God. These might happen during a particularly moving liturgy, a time of prayer, an emotional experience, a retreat, and so on. In today’s Gospel, Peter, James, and John experience a mountaintop moment seeing Jesus transfigured. By building a tent, Peter wants to commemorate this event and to remain in that experience. But they cannot remain there. They have to come down from the mountain because Jesus’ journey to the cross is not done yet. We can’t stay in our mountaintop experiences either, but we can take what we experience there and bring it to our daily lives.

Divide the young people into small groups and have them share with one another some of their mountaintop experiences or things they have learned from those experiences. Caution the teens that because these experiences might be of a more

personal spiritual nature, some people may not be comfortable sharing and that is okay. They can share as much or as little as they would like to.

After giving everyone time to share within the groups, hand out the paper, tape, and coloring utensils. Tell the teens that they’ll be creating mountaintop tents. Have the teens orient the paper in a landscape or horizontal layout, and then fold the paper into thirds (from side to side rather than top to bottom). Once they have creased the paper at those folds, have them open it out again. On each third, the teens should draw their mountaintop experiences, things they learned from them, or the account of the transfiguration and what they learned from it. If they prefer, they could also write phrases or words associated with these things. Once their tents are decorated, have the young people fold them back into a triangular tent again, keeping the designs on the outside, and tape the edges together.

Encourage the teens to place their tents in their prayer space at home during Lent to remind themselves of their mountaintop experiences.

Closing Prayer

*God of all creation,
you love us and we stand in awe
of your majesty.
Grant us the grace to see your glory
in all creation.
Transform our hearts this Lent,
and make us ready for the celebration
of your Son’s resurrection.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.