

# Read

Genesis 12:1-4a

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

2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Matthew 17:1-9



## REFLECTION

God's mountaintop message to Peter, James, and John is the same one as at Christ's baptism: "Listen to Jesus!" Think about it: Peter had the opportunity to listen in on a conversation between Jesus, Elijah, and Moses, but he couldn't be quiet. He had to interrupt with his own exclamations and plans. In some ways, Peter seems to understand better than the other disciples what a special, fleeting thing this time with Jesus is. You can just imagine Jesus smiling at Peter's enthusiasm and sighing at his cluelessness!

How often do we do the same thing? Frequently we talk when we have the most to gain from listening. God doesn't want us to be afraid—Jesus took on humanity to be among us, to be our friend. A one-sided friendship isn't much of a friendship though. We need to give Jesus the chance to tell us his plans for us, instead of always asking him to bless our own plans! Who are the people you are most comfortable simply sitting quietly with? Can you cultivate that same comfort spending time silently in God's presence?

## QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ Peter is so enraptured by this glimpse of heaven on earth that he wants to set up camp and stay where he is. Have you ever had a mountaintop moment of happiness so perfect you wanted it to last forever?
- ❖ Why did Jesus want his transfiguration kept secret?

# LIVING THE WORD

## Second Sunday of Lent

March 5, 2023

## ACTION

Find some time this week to go to your parish church or adoration chapel and practice sitting quietly with Jesus. (If you can't get to a chapel, any quiet place will do!) If your mind tends to wander, try beginning by listening to the *Pray As You Go* podcast or reading the account of Elijah hearing God in the quiet moment, rather than the flashy moment (1 Kings 19:11-13). Surrender any cares to Jesus and let your spirit rest in God's presence.



Check out the *Pray As You Go* podcast for daily reflections:

<https://pray-as-you-go.org/>



March 5, 2023

## 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

Jesus is transfigured in today's Gospel. *Transfiguration* is defined as a major transformation. His clothes turn bright white, and his face is radiant. Jesus is surrounded by Moses and Elijah, two very important prophets and figures in salvation history. Elijah and Moses eventually disappear, and only Jesus remains. This week we explore what the transfiguration means for our lives as disciples. Think about the ways that God is revealed in your life and share a story or two of those moments with the young people.

**Q FOCUS:** *We stand in awe of God's presence in our lives.*

### Liturgical Calendar Connection

This week we celebrate two saints of the early Church who give witness to a strong faith. Sts. Perpetua and Felicity were martyrs and are honored on February 7. These women were executed for their faith during a time when the Christian faith was illegal in the Roman empire. They had everything to live for—Perpetua had recently given birth and Felicity gave birth during their imprisonment. Yet they were strong, faithful women who would not deny their faith in God and in Jesus. In their strength and fortitude, they were martyred for the Christian faith.

### Church Teaching Connection

“At the end of the stunning experience of the Transfiguration, the disciples came down the mountain (cf. v. 9) with eyes and hearts transfigured by their encounter with the Lord. It is the journey that we too can make. . . . Transformed by Christ's presence and by the ardor of his Word, we will be a concrete sign of the invigorating love of God for all our brothers and sisters, especially for those who are suffering” (Pope Francis, Angelus Message, August 6, 2017).

## 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:*

► **Have you ever seen someone, but not recognized them because they looked different or were out of their normal environment so you couldn't place who they were?**

Perhaps you saw a teacher at the grocery store in shorts and a T-shirt instead of professional clothes. Or you saw some friends whom you hadn't seen in years and who looked different than your memory of them. This Sunday, we hear the account of Jesus' transfiguration. This is a big word for changing the appearance of something or someone. We can relate to this experience, as we sometimes wish that God would transfigure our appearance too!

This is a simple definition however. A deeper understanding of the word also includes a sense of spiritual transformation. Christ's outward appearance was radiant, but the apostles realized there was also something deeper, something sacred being revealed to them. Christ's nature didn't change, but the apostles now had some understanding that Jesus was not merely a wise teacher. During Lent, we are called to allow God to transform us spiritually. We must allow God to transform our hearts.

► **Have you ever had a "God moment"—a moment where you felt the presence of God close or were in awe of the way he was working in your life? What was this like, and how did you react?**

In today's Gospel, the transformation of Jesus in front of Peter, James, and John strikes them with awe. In fact, they bow down before Jesus. The three men followed Jesus to the mountain, and they watched as he was transformed. Elijah and Moses also appeared to them, side by side with Jesus. Both Elijah and Moses were two very important prophets and were integral to our salvation history as Christian people. God reveals the truth during the transfiguration: Jesus is God's beloved Son. Peter, James, and John must listen to Jesus. This is the message that God speaks to all of us today too. Jesus is God's beloved Son, and we must also listen to him.

God chose this moment to transfigure Jesus to demonstrate to Jesus' followers that Jesus really is God's Son, that he is the Lord, the savior, and the messiah. All of these words describe who Jesus is, and so many more. Being God's Son, Jesus has a huge responsibility resting on his shoulders. He will be tortured, mocked, and crucified as an innocent man and will rise from the death three days later in order to save the whole human race, those deserving and those we deem undeserving. Salvation is offered to everyone.

► **Do you think having seen Jesus transfigured and revealed in this way helped Peter, James, and John deal with Jesus' crucifixion? Would it have been helpful to you if you were in their shoes?**

► **How does knowing about Jesus' transfiguration help you in your path of discipleship today?**

We are all God's children, following God's commandments and following Jesus' example as we forge our way through life. With this privilege of being God's own children comes great responsibility. We are called to sacrifice for others; we must pray and reflect and nurture our relationship with God. We must give our love freely, our forgiveness without a price, and we must love those who do not see eye to eye with us and those who hurt us. The responsibility of being God's beloved children is big, and we are in constant need of a transfiguration of heart and mind so that we can do what we are charged to do

as followers of Christ. God transfigures our hearts and minds during Lent so that we can be more open, more ready, and more capable to do God's will.

## 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 138.

**Jesus' transfiguration helped his apostles better understand his divine nature.**

**Moments when we recognize God's presence don't always have to be flashy and bright; he is revealed to us in the ordinary as well.**

**We must be open to God transfiguring our hearts during this Lenten season.**

## Act on the Word

### Transform Me

For this activity, you will need colored cardstock, plain paper (colored or white), a hole punch, yarn or twine, and pens.

In this activity, the young people will create journals that they can use to reflect upon the transformations taking place within their hearts and lives during Lent.

Give each participant eight to ten pieces of plain paper (colored or white) with one piece of cardstock. The cardstock will serve as the cover of a journal. The plain paper will serve as the inner pages of the journal. Have the teens place the cardstock horizontally on the table and then place the stack of plain paper horizontally on top of the cardstock. Taking the whole stack of paper, including the cardstock, fold it in half, so that the cardstock serves as the front and back cover, while the plain paper has been folded on the inside as the pages of the journal. Then, punch two holes near the folded side of the journal with a hole punch. Lace yarn or twine through the two holes to hold the journal together, and tie the two ends of the yarn or twine together in a bow.

Now that the journals are created, take some time to explain the importance of journaling as a prayer form. It is a place where we can be honest with our thoughts and ideas; it is a chance to speak from our hearts to God. Also, it is a good and healthy way to navigate through difficult emotions and feelings.

Invite the young people to write their thoughts on the following prompts:

- ✱ **What parts of your heart need transforming?**  
What hurts, grievances, or difficulties are you carrying with you that are in need of transformation?
- ✱ **"You are my beloved."** —God. What does this statement mean to you? How do you describe God's love for you?

If there is time after the teens have finished reflecting, invite them to share a thought or two about what they wrote, if they feel comfortable. Encourage them to use these reflection questions every day or every other day during Lent. Each day might bring new insight into the way God is working in their hearts.

## Closing Prayer

*All powerful Lord,  
you showed the disciples your majesty  
at the transfiguration.*

*Open our eyes this Lent  
to see what you dream for us  
so that we may become closer to an  
image of you.*

*We ask this through our Lord Jesus  
Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity  
of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.*

## 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](http://www.ltp.org/lwgr). Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.