

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT



Help Us Hear

God of wisdom,
you offer words of loving guidance
to all ready to listen.
Help us follow the example of our Lord
and create time and space in our lives
for quiet prayer in your loving presence.
Speak your words of wisdom
to our hearts,
offer us the guidance
we need for our lives
and help us hear your voice today.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Sunday, March 5, 2023

Listen to Him

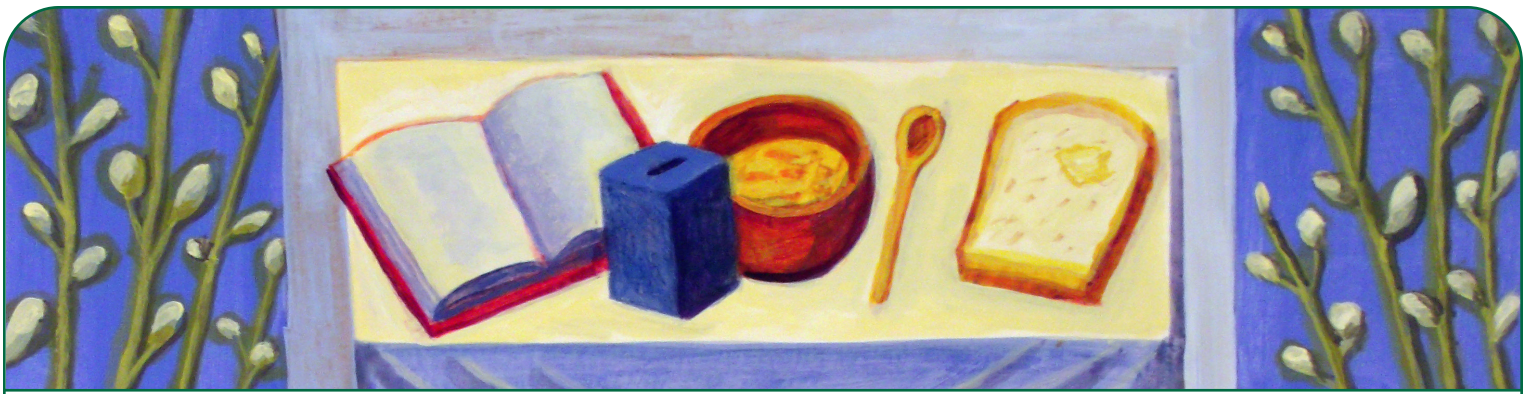


Today's readings: Genesis 12:1–4a; Psalm 33:4–5, 18–19, 20, 22; 2 Timothy 1:8b–10; Matthew 17:1–9. Every year on the Second Sunday of Lent we remember the transfiguration of Jesus. Placing ourselves in the narrative on that high mountain, new details might be noticed that draw us into deeper layers of meaning.

The readings leave three details for contemplation this week. First, whenever Jesus retreats to a mountain or quiet place in the Scriptures, he seeks prayer time with his Father. Second, this particular time of prayer between Jesus and his Father results in a *theophany*, an intense manifestation of God in visible form recognizable to the human eye. Jesus reveals his full divinity to Peter, James, and John, and subsequently to all of us through the written account.

Finally, God boldly breaks into the encounter and speaks words of confirmation to the disciples and to us, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him” (Matthew 17:5).

During Lent the Church invites us to be even more intentional about stepping away from our normal activities to meet God in prayer. Our response to this invitation will not disappoint because prayer never leaves us unchanged. When we follow the example of Jesus, make time and space for prayer, and quiet ourselves into a listening posture, we give God the opportunity to speak the words we most need to hear. How does God speak with love to you today through Matthew’s portrayal of this pinnacle moment in Jesus’ life?



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 6

Follow the Signposts

Consider the directions from Jesus in Luke's Gospel today signposts. They are so pivotal that our Church built the entire Jubilee Year of Mercy in 2016 on their foundation. Be compassionate. Avoid judgment. Shun condemnation. Offer pardon. Give generously. Write these directions on note cards and place them around your home where you will see them as daily signposts from Jesus. *Today's readings: Daniel 9:4b–10; Psalm 79:8, 9, 11 and 13; Luke 6:36–38.*

Tuesday, March 7

Live with Integrity

At the heart of today's Gospel is the call to live discipleship with integrity. To be a person of integrity means there is congruence between who we say we are and what we do. Speak with transparency. Act with authenticity. Strive for sincerity. Embrace the virtue of integrity as the doorway to holiness. *Today's readings: Isaiah 1:10, 16–20; Psalm 50:8–9, 16bc–17, 21, and 23; Matthew 23:1–12.*

Wednesday, March 8

Seek to Serve

Contending to be the first to be noticed, the first to be served, the first in line is a familiar human condition. Jesus reminds his apostles, and all of us, to vigorously resist this temptation. Instead he instructs us to cultivate humility through privileging service over prestige. Commit to practicing one act of humble service anonymously today. *Today's readings: Jeremiah 18:18–20; Psalm 31:5–6, 14, 15–16; Matthew 20:17–28.*

Thursday, March 9

Who Sits at Our Doorway?

Today's Scriptures provide a striking reminder to keep our eyes fixed on the Lord. The contrasting images between

those like the rich man who trust in human beings and those who trust in the Lord reveal the consequences of our choices. Take a careful look around to see who sits at our "doorway." Perhaps there is a neighbor who goes regularly without food or feels invisible to our local community. How might we raise the visibility of those at our doorways and reach out with hope in the Lord? *Today's readings: Jeremiah 17:5–10; Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4 and 6; Luke 16:19–31.*

Friday, March 10

The Voices We Listen To

The quickest way to veer off the path of holiness is to bury our conscience. In tuning out the guiding voice of the Holy Spirit we can be easily led to destructive choices. The people around us may influence and even form us in some ways. Think about the primary people in your life and how they impact you. Today's Scriptures invite us to examine our conscience and do a check-in on the primary voices we are listening to in daily life. *Today's readings: Genesis 37:3–4, 12–13a, 17b–28a; Psalm 105:16–17, 18–19, 20–21; Matthew 21:33–43, 45–46.*

Saturday, March 11

Lead with Compassion

Jesus uses parables to show how much our merciful God desires to be close to us. Today's parable about the forgiving father reminds us that God steadfastly stands waiting for us with open arms and infinite forgiveness. Be alert to the lost in your family and community: a child who feigns disinterest, a teen suffering with mental illness, a troubled, lonely neighbor. Through our warm smiles, kind gestures, and hospitable spirit we can communicate the invitation to return to our compassionate God and reconcile with the community of faith. *Today's readings: Micah 7:14–15, 18–20; Psalm 103:1–2, 3–4, 9–10, 11–12; Luke 15:1–3, 11–32.*

