

# LOOKING AT LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPEL

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## SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

1<sup>st</sup> March 2026

**Matt 17:1** Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. **2** And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. **3** Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. **4** Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." **5** While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" **6** When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. **7** But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." **8** And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

**Matt 17:9** As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

### Kind of Writing

This is an "epiphany", an appearance or revelation of a divine person. Matthew, Mark and Luke tell the same basic story, which is one of transformation in prayer, a mystical moment, in which some of the disciples are involved. It bridges the time between the Baptism and the Resurrection.

After that basic account, each writer shapes the story for his own particular goals. In Mark, it is to encourage the disciples on the way of the Cross. In Luke, it is a moment of prayer.

Matthew recounts the Transfiguration as an apocalyptic vision (a revelation), one of those "moments" of transcendence and transformation, never to be forgotten. The concentric pattern tells us that the centre is v. 5, that the divine voice is given a central role.

This story echoes in the ministry the Baptism of Jesus and marks some kind of appropriation of what happened then. The Resurrection is in our minds as well, because of the dazzling white garments and the explicit mention at the end. Also, Matthew wrote for a Jewish-Christian community and portrays Jesus as a Moses-type figure (in this Gospel, John the Baptist is identified as the latter-day Elijah). Jesus has just been talking about his death and Peter has quite spontaneously rejected the cross.

### Thought For the Day

Every so often, we catch a glimpse of the "something more" that God has in store for us. These fleeting experiences are to be treasured: the birth of my first child, falling in love, a sense of "being held" by God's presence. Such experiences may help us approach the Transfiguration. Like all transcendent experiences, it is fleeting and yet it etches a memory and leaves a longing. What should we do? Practice listening to him. Be not afraid. We cannot always be "on the mountain" and yet what happens on the heights can help us on the lowlands of the everyday.

Prayer : Lord, listening sounds so easy and yet is such hard work! Guide us as we listen to your Son, whose word is alive, who is himself the way, the truth and the life.

**Kieran O'Mahony OSA – [www.tarsus.ie](http://www.tarsus.ie)**

### **Pointers for prayer**

1. The transfiguration experience was one that, for Jesus, clarified his relationship with his Father and strengthened him for the future. It was also a moment of deep revelation for the disciples. What have been the experiences, the moments of insight, which for you have clarified your sense of who you are, and what is your relationship with God?
2. On the mountain the disciples saw Jesus in a new way. His appearance changed. Sometimes in friendship there are moments of sharing in which we get to know a friend in a new and deeper way. Have you had that experience in human friendship, or in your relationship with God? Recall when that happened, and what it was like for you.
3. The clear vision of Jesus with Moses and Elijah was followed by a frightening experience of being in a cloud and it was in the midst of the cloud that the disciples were instructed "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him". Have you had the experience of learning the truth about life and about your relationship with God from moments of confusion as well as from times of special joy?
4. After their special experience the disciples came down the mountain again. We cannot live each day at the level of special spiritual experiences, but the memory of them can strengthen us in difficult times. What memories encourage you in time of trouble?

### **JOHN BYRNE OSA —Intercom**

The three apostles experience the glory of Jesus in a wonderful way that will affect forever their relationship with him (see 2 Peter 1:16-18). When did you, or someone you know, experience glory that until then had been hidden? In Jesus? In the Church community? In a friend or a member of your family? In a bible passage? In nature? The story is told as a journey with different stages, and as you meditate on it you will find yourself recognizing these stages from your experience.

### **MICHEL DE VERTEUIL – LECTIO DIVINA**

Today's readings are about the journey of faith and the importance of trusting and relying on God. Abraham and Paul (Readings 1 & 2) are both examples of people who leave everything to embark on a journey that would change their lives and the lives of countless others completely. The journey of faith is not an easy one and in a world that increasingly wants to rely on proofs and certainties, they are examples of what is possible when we put our trust in God. In the story of the transfiguration Jesus is transformed in glory but later in his faith journey he will be transfigured by pain and suffering. In both these events, his identity remains the same and thus he shows us that God is not only found in the high points but also when the road is at its darkest.

### **SEAN GOAN – Let the Reader Understand**

The disciples fell face down on the ground *full of terror*.. They were afraid to listen only to Jesus and to follow his humble way of serving the kingdom up to the cross. It is Jesus himself who frees them from their fears. He came to them as only he knew how to. He touched them as he touched the sick and he said to them, "Get up, do not be afraid to listen to me and to follow only me

Even today we Christians fear to listen only to Jesus. We do not dare to place him at the centre of our lives and our communities. We do not let him be the only and decisive Word. It is the same Jesus who can set us free from so many fears, cowardice and ambiguities, if we will let him come to us and touch us.

### **José A. Pagola - Following in the Footsteps of Jesus - Year A**

'It is good for us to be here.' These words of Peter recognize the enormity of the moment. Life is full of opportunities to acknowledge and appreciate the presence of God and others. 'It's great to see you', 'Thanks for coming'. We pause with gratitude when we welcome a loved one. How often do we take a moment with God to say, 'Here I am'? Lent gives us the opportunity to press pause and come into the presence of God. We encounter God in both the extraordinary and the ordinary moments of life. In times of laughter and joy, when we delight in our loved ones, God is to be found. In times of rest and reflection, God is within. If we are attentive to the present moment, we may just find that our world is ablaze with divine love.

*This Lent, resolve to become more aware of God's presence in the ordinary moments. Remember that you don't have to go anywhere to find God. Find some space in your day and begin your prayer with the words, 'It is good for us to be here.'*

### **TRÍONA DOHERTY & JANE MELLETT—Go Deeper**