

March 13, 2022  
Second Sunday of Lent  
Luke 9:28b-36

Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.

Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him." After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.

### **Background:**

Luke places his account of the Transfiguration of Jesus after the first time he has talked with his disciples about his future rejection by the elders, scribes and chief priests (Luke 9:22). Jesus then tells the disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me..." (Luke 9:23). Luke states that it was about eight days after Jesus had given this teaching that he took Peter, John, and James up the mountain where the transfiguration took place.

The event as described by Luke has two distinct parts. The first is a description of the transfiguration of Jesus, which takes place while the disciples are "overcome by sleep." The text states that Jesus took Peter, James and John up the mountain to pray. Neither Matthew (Matthew 17:1-8) nor Mark (Mark 9:2-8) mention that Jesus is going up the mountain to pray. Luke relates this to his community as an experience of Jesus in prayer. During the transfiguration it is Jesus who is changed, interiorly and exteriorly. The text states that his face was changed, and his clothing became dazzling white. But this prayer experience does not include Peter, James and John. Verse 32 states that they were overcome by sleep.

The second part of the description includes the disciples, but it no longer refers to them as Peter, James, and John. Now it is Peter and his companions, reflecting Peter's role in the rest of the event. He recognizes the unique blessing of the experience and suggests that they build tents so that Jesus, Moses, and Elijah can stay, and the experience can continue. Lest Peter misunderstand what is taking place, they are embraced by the dark cloud of God's presence, and God states clearly that Jesus is God's Son. Then when the cloud lifts, Jesus is standing there alone. Jesus is not a prophet like Moses and Elijah, but he only is God's Son.

### **Reflection Questions:**

1. Where do you go when you want to really pray, when you really want to talk to God, and to listen to God?
2. Has anyone ever showed you where they go when they really want to pray, or taken you with them when they go?
3. What do you think it was like among the disciples in the week between Jesus sharing with them his belief that he would be rejected by the religious leaders and when he took Peter, James and John up the mountain to pray?
4. What do you think it was like to climb the mountain with Jesus as he found a place to pray?
5. What do you think it was like for the disciples who were not invited to join Jesus?
6. What experience do you have that may help you appreciate how the disciples were feeling either as they climbed the mountain with Jesus or as they waited, left behind, for their return?

7. The gospel text describes a dark cloud appearing and coming over the disciples. What does the experience of the disciples remind you of in your life?
8. How do you relate to Peter, James and John coming down the mountain with Jesus that day? What kind of thoughts do you think they might have had as they came down the mountain that day with Jesus?
9. Why do you think the Church has chosen to give us this gospel text for our reflection as we begin the second week of Lent?
10. Can you take some time to talk with God honestly about your experience of God's presence in your own journey or this Lent, or some other memories or feelings that arose within you from this gospel?

The gospel background and reflection questions are written by Fr. Paul Gallagher, OFM. They are edited by Sister Anne Marie Lom, OSF and Joe Thiel. The excerpts from the Sunday readings are prepared by Joe Thiel. To be added to the distribution list, send your name and email address to [annemarie.lom@gmail.com](mailto:annemarie.lom@gmail.com)

Our Gospel Reflections are hosted by the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity. Their homepage is <https://fsccll.org/>. One link there is labeled Franciscan Gospel Reflections. A click on the icon will take you to the Gospel reflections for the upcoming Sunday. By following this link, you will be able to blog or comment on the reflection questions. The material will be posted on Fridays and will be available until the following Friday when the new material is posted.

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### **Excerpts from the readings for March 13, 2022, the Second Sunday of Lent**

The Lord God said to Abram, "Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. So shall your descendants be." Abram put his faith in the Lord, who credited it to him as an act of righteousness. He then said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession." "O Lord God," he asked, "how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He answered him, "Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Abram brought him all these, split them in two, and placed each half opposite the other. Birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, but Abram stayed with them. As the sun was about to set, a trance fell upon Abram, and a deep, terrifying darkness enveloped him. When the sun had set and it was dark, there appeared a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch, which passed between those pieces. It was on that occasion that the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the Great River, the Euphrates."

*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? The Lord is my life's refuge;  
of whom should I be afraid? Hear, O Lord, the sound of my call; have pity on me, and answer me.  
Of you my heart speaks; you my glance seeks. Your presence, O Lord, I seek.  
Hide not your face from me; do not in anger repel your servant. You are my helper: cast me not off.  
I believe that I shall see the bounty of the Lord in the land of the living.  
Wait for the Lord with courage; be stouthearted, and wait for the Lord.*

Join with others in being imitators of me, brothers and sisters, and observe those who thus conduct themselves according to the model you have in us. For many, as I have often told you and now tell you even in tears, conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction. Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their "shame." Their minds are occupied with earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord.

Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him." After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.

### **Excerpts from Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18; Psalm 27:1, 7-9, 13-14; Philippians 3:17—4:1; and Luke 9:28-36**

#### **From Joe:**

Friends,

Here are the gospel background and reflection questions for March 13th, as prepared by Franciscan spiritual director Fr. Paul Gallagher. On this second Sunday of Lent, the Gospel from Luke relates the story of Jesus' Transfiguration. Peter, James, and John accompany Jesus up the mountain, and while praying, his face changes and his clothing becomes dazzling white. Moses and Elijah appear and converse with Jesus. Then a cloud envelops them, and a voice from the cloud is heard saying, "This is my chosen son. Listen to him." The other readings also refer to conversation in the presence of the Lord, coming out of darkness for a significant encounter, and bodily change. In the first reading from Genesis, the Lord rewards Abraham for his righteousness and faith in Him. He promises Abraham descendants, and a land that shall be theirs. Confirming his covenant with Abraham in the midst of a darkness by the appearance of a firepot and torch, God says, "To your descendants I give this land." Psalm 27 proclaims, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," and "Your presence, O Lord, I seek. Hide not your face from me. I believe I shall see the bounty of the Lord in the land of the living." In the second reading, from the letter to the Philippians, Paul writes, "Our citizenship is in heaven. From it we await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him to bring all things unto himself."

Joe

> i < May the Word light your way each day!