

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT



The Light of the World

Lord of all the nations,
you gather us into your arms
and bless us with your love and mercy.
Give us your eyes, so we may see you
in all peoples,
and respond to the needs of the
most desperate.
Give us your hands to reach across barriers
and repair the wounds wrought by closed
hearts and minds.

Give us your loving heart,
so in our lives we may, as Abram,
do your will
and work to become one community
of the earth.
May the blessings you instill in us
become blessings for all;
and may Christ, the Light of the World
shine on all peoples.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

March 12, 2017

Transfixed or Transfigured



Today's Readings: Genesis 12:1–4; 2 Timothy 1:8b–10; Matthew 17:1–9. Moses, Elijah, and Jesus are transfigured on the mountaintop. Peter, James, and John are transfixed on the same mountaintop. On this Second Sunday of Lent, we are in awe of all six figures, for we seek to be transfigured, to be changed and enlightened, as are these three giants of the Scriptures. Today's Gospel also is read at the Feast of the Transfiguration on August 6. Each person transfigured on the mountaintop is significant for the season. Moses spent forty days on Sinai, twice, and led the Israelites for forty years through the desert. Elijah spent forty days in the wilderness, in a cave, and is also here with Jesus. The Law, the prophets, and the Messiah did not gain the Light of being transfigured without time in the wilderness, desert, or moun-

tain. They did not gain the Light of being transfigured without being tempted and without being supported through prayer for those days and years.

We are in the early days of our forty days. Are we supporting ourselves with prayer? Are we taking time finding our mountaintop, cave, or wilderness spot? Now is a crucial time for this Lent. If we hope to find the light and find a bit of our transfiguration, we cannot remain simply transfixed and in awe of others on the mountaintop. We need to work at our prayer, our fasting, our wilderness. No longer afraid, as Jesus tells us, we can return to our daily lives knowing that our ancestors in faith sustain us through whatever our wilderness times and places may be.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 13

Give in Good Measure

Today's Gospel reading calls us to forgive and to give generously without judgment. Forgiveness and generosity are constant Lenten themes. Our sinfulness can be outdone by our loving service to others. That is the measure by which God's love is poured out. *Today's Readings: Daniel 9:4b–10; Psalm 79:8, 9, 11, 13; Luke 6:36–38.*

Tuesday, March 14

Cleanse Us and We Shall Be White as Snow

Where is my Lenten almsgiving leading me? Am I putting away my misdeeds, as Isaiah directs? Only when the misdeeds are put away will my sins be washed away. Find a center for service and justice in your community and contribute without personal attention or reward. You might devote time to a homeless shelter or soup kitchen or work with a St. Vincent de Paul organization of a local parish. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 1:10, 16–20; Psalm 50:8–9, 16bc–17, 21, and 23; Matthew 23:1–12.*

Wednesday, March 15

To Serve or Be Served

The readings today challenge us to a life of service. Humility is to accompany that service, for we are not to seek reward for our service. We need to keep in mind that, as followers of Christ, we have come to “serve not to be served” (Matthew 20:28). Even as we live out our baptismal calling, how much can we give without recognition? Jesus reminds us that our place in the Kingdom is of our doing. We might reflect today on how we can serve someone with prayer and compassion. *Today's Readings: Jeremiah 18:18–20; Psalm 31:5–6, 14, 15–16; Matthew 20:17–28.*

Thursday, March 16

Simplicity

Abraham and Lazarus remind us even today that societal trappings can blur our priorities. In your home this Lent, set up a simple prayer space, with a cross, a candle, and a Bible or Lenten reflection booklet. When life's daily demands seem to overwhelm you, take time in this sacred space to center your life on God. *Today's Readings: Jeremiah 17:5–10; Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4, 6; Luke 16:19–31.*

Friday, March 17

St. Patrick, Bishop

The first bishop of Ireland, St. Patrick is celebrated today with green, shamrocks, and parties. As is well known, Patrick converted the nation by using a shamrock to tell of the Three Persons in one God. The significance for using a simple shamrock as a teaching tool for the Trinity is a brilliant reminder that God is revealed through nature, a given community's experiences, and in personal responses to our encounters with God. *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 18

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Bishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century, Cyril was known for his catechesis to catechumens at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. He shepherded his flock with love and care and was diligent in handing on the faith. Be mindful of the catechumens and candidates in your parish, and support them as they prepare to join you in living and celebrating the Catholic faith through worship and service. Welcome them along their journey. *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.*

