

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

**Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face.  
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;  
hide not your face from me.**

**COLLECT**

O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Genesis 15:5-12. 17-18

A reading from the book of Genesis.

Taking Abram outside the Lord said, “Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants” he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

“I am the Lord” he said to him “who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to make you heir to this land.” “My Lord, the Lord” Abram replied “how am I to know that I shall inherit it?” He said to him, “Get me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old goat, a three-year old ram, a turtledove and a young pigeon.” He brought him all these, cut them in half and put half on one side and half facing it on the other; but the birds he did not cut in half. Birds of prey came down on the carcasses but Abram drove them off.

Now as the sun was setting Abram fell into a deep sleep, and terror seized him. When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, there appeared a smoking furnace and a firebrand that went between the halves. That day the Lord made a Covenant with Abram in these terms:

“To your descendants I give this land, from the wadi of Egypt to the Great River.”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM**

Psalm 26

Response:

**The Lord is my light and my help.**

1. The Lord is my light and my help;  
whom shall I fear?  
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;  
before whom shall I shrink? (R.)
2. O Lord, hear my voice when I call;  
have mercy and answer.  
Of you my heart has spoken:  
“Seek his face.” (R.)
3. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;  
hide not your face.  
Dismiss not your servant in anger;  
you have been my help. (R.)
4. I am sure I shall see the Lord’s goodness  
in the land of the living.  
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.  
Hope in the Lord! (R.)

**SECOND READING** Philippians 3:17-4:1

(For shorter form, read between > <)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

My brothers, be united in following my rule of life. Take as your models everybody who is already doing this and study them as you used to study us. I have told you often, and I repeat it today with tears, there are many who are behaving as the enemies of the cross of Christ. They are destined to be lost. They make foods into their god and they are proudest of something they ought to think shameful; the things they think important are earthly things. >For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

So then, my brothers and dear friends, do not give way but remain faithful in the Lord. I miss you very much, dear friends; you are my joy and my crown.

The word of the Lord.<

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Glory and praise to you, O Christ!**

**From the bright cloud the Father’s voice was heard:**

**“This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him!”  
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!**

**GOSPEL**

Luke 9:28-36

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up the mountain to pray. As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” - He did not know what he was saying. As he spoke, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, “This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him”. And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

**I believe in God,**

**the Father almighty,**

**Creator of heaven and earth,**

**and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*(all bow during the next two lines)*

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the holy catholic Church,**

**the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,**

**the resurrection of the body,**

**and life everlasting.**

**Amen.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

May this sacrifice, O Lord, we pray, cleanse us of our faults and sanctify your faithful in body and mind for the celebration of the paschal festivities. Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

**This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased;  
listen to him.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

As we receive these glorious mysteries, we make thanksgiving to you, O Lord, for allowing us while still on earth to be partakers even now of the things of heaven.

Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE**

Bless your faithful, we pray, O Lord, with a blessing that endures for ever, and keep them faithful to the Gospel of your Only Begotten Son, so that they may always desire and at last attain that glory whose beauty he showed in his own Body, to the amazement of his Apostles. Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

17 MARCH 2019

# Sunday Message

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

**THE WORD**

Year C • Season Colour: Purple • Psalter Week 2



*Fresco of the Transfiguration of Jesus, in St Constantine and Helena Orthodox Church*

**The Transfiguration of Jesus marks a turning point in the Gospel. The Baptism of Jesus revealed him as the Son of God and set the scene for his ministry in Galilee.**

The incident in today’s Gospel fulfils a similar function, and marks the beginning of his journey towards Jerusalem and his destiny there. Luke presents this as a prayer experience: before any important stage in Jesus’ ministry, the evangelist shows him at prayer. At the heart of this vision of Jesus in glory, we find a reference to the Passion in the subject of his conversation with Moses and Elijah, where they speak of his *passing* (or *exodus*) which he would accomplish in the holy city. This reinforces Jesus’ prediction of his suffering and death which he had made a little while before. Glory will follow his obedient suffering. Jesus is also here revealed as the promised *prophet* like Moses to whom the disciples are told to listen.

One interesting detail we might consider in this story is the movement of the presence of God. The mention of the mountain and the cloud, light and divine voice recall the experiences of Moses and Elijah on Sinai/Horeb. As happened to them, the divine presence comes upon Jesus and the three disciples, and withdraws from them at the end of the experience. Peter wants to pin down the divine presence in some way by constructing three tents. But God is not to be controlled or contained in any human construction. It is only after the Paschal event has been accomplished that the disciples will pass on to others what they have seen, once they have received the Spirit. ■

**REFLECT**

In the early history of Israel, the most important religious object was the Ark of the Covenant. It represented the presence of the Lord among the people. Its most significant characteristic was that it was mobile, and was taken to different shrines around the territories of the tribes. A carving from a much later synagogue at Capernaum shows the ark as having wheels, which emphasises this aspect. David’s proposal to build a Temple in his newly acquired southern

capital of Jerusalem may have been a regarded by the northern tribes as a step too far. It might have seemed like localising and fixing the divine presence in the royal capital, and thereby bolstering the monarchy. In the end, David did not pursue his plan, though he did bring the Ark to Jerusalem.

We might ponder where we think God is to be found. In the Bible, the writers often wonder about God’s apparent

**LEARN**

Moses represents the Law which he received from the Lord on Mount Sinai during the Exodus journey.

Elijah represents the Prophets: his mission as God’s spokesperson was reconfirmed on Mount Horeb.

*Horeb* is another name for Sinai, used particularly in the northern kingdom of Israel, where Elijah was a prophet.

The expression the *Law and the Prophets* refers to the main writings of the Hebrew Bible.

**DO**

Look at the tabernacle in the church. The Catholic tradition tells us that Christ is present in the consecrated bread reserved there. Where else are you aware of Christ present in your life? Set aside some extra time each day this week to think about this: this is prayer.

**SAY**

**It is your face, O Lord,  
that I seek: hide not  
your face.**

absence. Perhaps the poet is right when he observes that *humankind cannot bear very much reality*. We might think that it would be easy to believe if Christ were present in glory all the time: maybe today’s gospel is telling us that although we might catch glimpses of this from time to time, we should rather listen to the teachings of Jesus and live by them. ■