



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 5th March 2023 - The Second Sunday in Lent

1 Relax & Remember

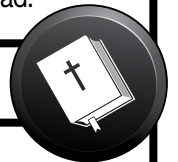
Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for Sunday 5th March 2023 - The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9)

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone. There in their presence he was transfigured; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light. Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Lord,' he said, 'it is wonderful for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and from the cloud there came a voice which said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour. Listen to him.' When they heard this, the disciples fell on their faces, overcome with fear. But Jesus came up and touched them. 'Stand up,' he said. 'Do not be afraid.' And when they raised their eyes they saw no one but only Jesus. As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them this order. 'Tell no one about the vision until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.'



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

Each year on this second Sunday of Lent we read the account of the Transfiguration. It was the moment when the disciples were shown the divinity of Jesus on the Holy Mountain. The scene is reminiscent of Moses' encounter with God on Sinai, when his face, too, shone like the sun. Moses and Elijah are present because they are the two Old Testament figures who experienced the presence of God on the Holy Mountain. With his usual impetuous generosity Peter attempts to 'freeze' the moment. The public declaration of Jesus as God's Son at the Baptism is repeated, but with the addition that Jesus is the authorized divine teacher; Matthew is alert to the implications for the Church of the presence of Christ as Teacher. The cloud is also a symbol of God's presence, to which the human response can only be to fall to the ground in fear and reverence. The awesome moment of revelation cannot, however, last, and Jesus brings his disciples back to the dire realities before them with the reminder that his death must precede the revelation of his glory at the Resurrection. Until they have experienced the limitless generosity of his death, and the vindication by God of this love, they are not ready to spread the message of Jesus.

What stands out for you in this account of the Transfiguration? How may it help you to deepen your own relationship with Christ?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



**The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church
Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph**

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 5th March 2023



First Reading: *The Call of Abraham*

Genesis 12:1-4

The Lord said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your family and your father's house, for the land I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name so famous that it will be used as a blessing. I will bless those who bless you: I will curse those who slight you. All the tribes of the earth shall bless themselves by you.' So Abram went as the Lord told him.

Each year on this Sunday we have a reading about Abraham, for it is with him that the history of salvation begins: God prepares a people, the family of Abraham, from which will eventually issue his Messiah, Jesus. Here we have the account of that beginning. God calls Abram to leave his country, his family, his comfort-zone, to go out into an unknown land and an unknown future. Abram has no security beyond the simple promise of God that God will bless him and his family, with a blessing so great that all nations will recognise it and use the very name of 'Abram' as a blessing. In a fierce and arid land, which offers no protection to strangers, he has no family, no children to support him. He is to become a wanderer over the earth, not knowing the goal of his wanderings. He does not ask for the credentials of this Voice which calls him. He does not seem even to have any concept of God, and yet he follows this call. Just so, the first disciples at the lakeside will, without a word or a question, follow God's Son when he calls them. Abram's trust in this Voice is the model for all personal trust.

What for me are the real implications of unconditional trust in God?

Second Reading: *The Response to God's Love*

2 Timothy 1:8-10

With me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God who has saved us and called us to be holy - not because of anything we ourselves have done but for his own purpose and by his own grace. This grace had already been granted to us, in Christ Jesus, before the beginning of time, but it has only been revealed by the Appearing of our saviour Christ Jesus. He abolished death, and he has proclaimed life and immortality through the Good News.

“Grace is the loving way in which God has regarded us from the beginning of time.”

This reading is put before us by the Church as an encouragement to persevere in our Lenten resolutions. In his earlier writings Paul had often seen his own sufferings and those of other Christians as completing those of Christ. Not that there was anything faulty about the sufferings of Christ, but the members of Christ's Body, the Church, must share in the destiny of the suffering Christ. Now the recipients of this letter are also called upon to share the sufferings of Paul in prison, not to earn salvation but as a response to the grace of salvation. The word 'grace' has been much misunderstood, as though 'grace' were an independent gift, a thing in itself. In fact the word is used in the New Testament to express the love of God or of Christ, particularly the burning human love of Christ. Primarily it is a loving divine or human relationship. When Mary is addressed as 'engraced' or 'full of grace', it means that she is the special recipient of God's love, which in turn makes her more lovable. So here the 'grace granted to us in Christ Jesus' is the loving way in which God has regarded us from the beginning of time, though its fullness has become visible only at the Appearing of Christ Jesus.

How can I best respond to the grace of salvation?

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*

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