

Reflection Questions

- What spiritual awakening is taking place in your life today?
- How is Jesus asking you to take up your cross and follow Him?
 - How are you responding?
- What progress have you made along your spiritual journey?
 - How do you measure your progress?

Weekly Lenten Reflections in Your Inbox

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- Exclusive video/written content on faith and recovery
- Monthly contribution of \$10/month has a direct impact on individuals and families experiencing addiction
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Sunday Mass Readings This Week

1st Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

2nd Reading: 2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

2nd Sunday of Lent



We ascend the mountain of spiritual progress by continuing our work through the 12 steps and engaging in the sacramental life of the Church. As we continue through Lent, this week's Sunday Gospel Reading has us reflecting upon the story of the transfiguration of our Lord. It begins:

Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light.

A *spiritual awakening* is often discussed as a necessary component of finding new life in 12-step recovery. This moment proved to be just that for the disciples who witnessed it. However, it can also remind us that we must continue to follow the direction of Christ and surrender our will to Him. Peter and the others were literally asleep but became fully awake to see His glory. Like Peter, John, and James, the glorified nature of Jesus is revealed to us and awakens us from sleep—a biblical metaphor to describe our new life.

Peter petitions to Jesus, proclaiming, “Lord, it is good that we are here.” He requests that they pitch tents and stay atop the safety of the mountain, although scripture notes, “He did not know what he was saying.” The Gospel Reading continues:

While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”

We can relate to the experience of Peter, who wished to stay in the presence of the fully-revealed Christ. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke each precede their accounts of the transfiguration with the story of Peter rebuking Jesus for proclaiming that He must suffer and die. Peter was intent on our Lord’s glory coming without the cost of suffering. Later, Peter would deny knowing Jesus after He had been sentenced to death on a cross.

We may wish for our own spiritual journey to be void of suffering, in which case it is important to recall the words of Jesus: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). Abstaining from our lustful behavior while denying ourselves of temporary earthly pleasures during Lent aligns us with the will of God.

Fighting to remain in a moment that has passed or looking to replicate a spiritual experience can prevent us from encountering the will of God in the present. We can certainly delight in the past and should carry moments of divine revelation with us, but we must not let that be a barrier to picking up our cross. Instead, we can look to our spiritual awakening as an opportunity to envision the resurrection that awaits us after going through inevitable hardship and trial.

Prayer and meditation guide our attitude toward suffering and help us accept our daily cross. We might find ourselves praying for comfort or for God’s will to be bent toward our own. Rather, prayer is a practice of becoming willing to bend our will toward that of the Lord. He will often give us moments of growth and opportunities to trust Him if we are committed to our recovery. At times, He will dazzle us with His grace as we climb the mountain of freedom.