

Cycle A – Second Sunday of Lent – March 5, 2023

“Lord, it is good for us to be here ...”

OPENING PRAYER (Psalm 33)

Leader: The word of the Lord is upright,
and all God’s work is done in faithfulness.

**All: God loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of God’s steadfast love.**

Leader: Our soul waits for the Lord;
God is our help and shield.

**All: Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we place our hope in you.**

Amen



First Reading – Genesis 12:1-4

God’s calling of Abram sets in motion a pattern in history and in God’s relationship to us. God calls in a most surprising way, and promises abundant guidance, assistance and/or blessing. God issues a challenge to Abram: Abram is asked to leave his home on the strength of a promise. Abram’s journey is an adventure into the unknown, with God’s own word as his only light and compass.

1. When have you experienced God’s surprising call and how did you respond?
2. What other stories of God calling people do you recall from Scripture?

Second Reading – 2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Paul issues a call to Timothy: join with me in suffering for the gospel. Paul has only one message: in and through Christ, God has brought a newness into the history of salvation. Jesus is the visible sign of God’s unconditional grace, and gives light and life. Preaching this radical Good News involves participating in the “paschal mystery” of suffering, death, and resurrection. Joining ourselves to Christ in suffering for the Gospel is essential for effective witness.

1. Imagine Paul is speaking to you: how do you hear his words?
2. The paschal mystery is the core of our faith – the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, the hope of new life out of death and despair. In what way do you and your parish community witness to the paschal mystery?

Gospel – Matthew 17:1-9

In Scripture, the mountain is an essential place of encounter with the divine. It is no coincidence that God's revelation of who Jesus is takes place on a mountaintop. Here Jesus is linked to all the signs of God's revelation: a mountain, a light, a voice, and holy fear. In Matthew this event takes place after the prediction of Jesus' death in Jerusalem, pointing to God's plan in both this dazzling revelation and to the upcoming death on a cross.

1. What word, phrase, or thought speaks to you most strongly?
2. Is there a connection between Jesus' clothes being "dazzling white" and the symbol of the white garment we use in the baptismal rite?
3. What kinds of "mountaintop" experiences have you had? How did they affect you?

LIVING THE WORD

What is God's challenge for me/us this coming week?

PRAYING THE WORD

Intercession: For those who God calls to set out on unknown journeys of faith, service and ministry: missionaries, relief workers, street counselors, and all who bring God's love to new places. We pray to the Lord.

Invite other intentions, end with "Our Father ..."

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: God of the covenant and abundant promises,
you called Abram, and you call us,
from the complacency of life
into unknown adventures with your people.

**All: God, you call us out from the cloud
declaring your love and faithfulness to us.**

Leader: Speak to us from the depth of our heart
and in the cries of your beloved people.

**All: Make us aware of your calling voice
and give us courage and openness of heart
to trust in your promise of new life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.
Amen.**

Leader: Let us share with one another the sign of Christ's peace.