

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.
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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

[1] Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D; Divine Intimacy; page 310

[2] *The Order of the Mass I*

[3] Catechism of the Catholic Church; 555

[4] Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy Packet

[5] Matthew 17:9 [6] Matthew 28:20 [7] Matthew 16:18

[8] Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy Packet

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# Quick Connect

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## **Gospel Reading – Luke 9:28B-36 – Roman Missal – Cycle C**

Jesus took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my chosen Son; listen to him.” After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.

## **Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent**

From a sermon by Pope Saint Leo the Great

The Lord reveals his glory in the presence of chosen witnesses. His body is like that of the rest of mankind, but he makes it shine with such splendor that his face becomes like the sun in glory, and his garments as white as snow. The great reason for this Transfiguration was to remove the scandal of the cross from the hearts of his disciples, and to prevent the humiliation of his voluntary suffering from disturbing the faith of those, who had witnessed the surpassing glory that lay concealed. With no less forethought he was also providing a firm foundation for the hope of holy Church. The whole body of Christ was to understand the kind of transformation that it would receive as his gift. The members of that body were to look forward to a share in that glory which first blazed out in Christ their head. The Lord had himself spoken of this when he foretold the splendor of his coming; Then the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Saint Paul the apostle bore witness to this same truth when he said: I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not to be compared with the future glory that is to be revealed in us. In another place he says: you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. This marvel of the Transfiguration contains another lesson for the Apostles, to strengthen them and lead them into the fullness of knowledge. Moses and Elijah, the law and the prophets, appeared with the Lord in conversation with him. This was in order to fulfill exactly, through the pres-

ence of these five men, the text, which says, “Before two or three witnesses every word is ratified. What word could be more firmly established, more securely based, than the word, which is proclaimed by the trumpets of both Old and New Testaments, sounding in harmony, and by the utterances of ancient prophecy and the teaching of the Gospel, in full agreement with each other?” The writings of the two testaments support each other. The radiance of the Transfiguration reveals clearly and unmistakably the one, who had been promised by signs foretelling him under the veils of mystery. As Saint John says, “The law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. In him the promise made through the shadows of prophecy stands revealed, along with the full meaning of the precepts of the law. He is the one, who teaches the truth of prophecy through his presence, and makes obedience to the commandments possible through grace. In the preaching of the holy Gospel all should receive a strengthening of their faith. No one should be ashamed of the cross of Christ, through which the world has been redeemed. No one should fear to suffer for the sake of justice; no one should lose confidence in the reward that has been promised. The way to rest is through toil, the way to life is through death. Christ has taken on himself the whole weakness of our lowly human nature. If then we are steadfast in our faith in him and in our love for him, we win the victory that he has won, we receive what he has promised. When it comes to obeying the commandments or enduring adversity, the words uttered by the Father should always echo in our ears: This is my Son, the beloved, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him.

### **The Cross: Hope not Scandal – Lesson and Discussion**

*“Rise, and do not be afraid”*

Jesus brings Peter, James and John up a high mountain to teach them a lesson. The lesson is simple, “that it was impossible – for Him as well as for them – to reach the glory of the Transfiguration without passing through suffering.”[1] Jesus does not want the Apostles or us to be paralyzed by fear when we see suffering and the cross, but to instead see the full picture, and to rise and be not afraid. If we think there can be glory without suffering, gain without pain, we are mistaken. The cross does not make sense if it stands alone. When the Christian looks at the cross, we know that what appears to be a loss is a gain. We do not see the cross or resurrection alone, but rather look at one and see the other. We profess this mystery, the mystery of the passion, death and resurrection at each mass. “We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.”[2] We know that the passion, death, and resurrection are inherently connected. Just as this was true for Christ, it is true for us. Jesus “reveals that he will have to go by the way of the cross at Jerusalem in order to enter into his glory.”[3] The mysteries of the Transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension give hope in the midst of the mysteries of the passion and crucifixion of our Lord. The crucifixion is a victory and the cross a permanent sign of that victory. It brings hope, not scandal and despair. **In what ways has the cross given you and others hope?**

There is not scandal in the suffering and cross of Christ but rather hope

and victory. “The great reason for this Transfiguration was to remove the scandal of the cross from the hearts of his disciples, and to prevent the humiliation of his voluntary suffering from disturbing the faith of those who had witnessed the surpassing glory that lay concealed.”[4] Jesus gives Peter, James and John a foretaste of the glory of the resurrection so they can endure not only His passion and death, but also eventually their own martyrdom—excepting St. John, all of the Apostles would die as martyrs.

**What did Jesus do to console and give hope to the Apostles and other disciples?** Jesus did not want his beloved disciples to lose faith when they witnessed the horror of the Crucifixion. He wanted them to remember the glory of the Transfiguration. He also says to them, “Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”[5] Although they do not know at this point what “raised from the dead” means, this event and these words will make sense after they witness His passion, death and resurrection. We have the advantage of seeing the whole picture, passion, death and resurrection, but the disciples did not have this advantage, and probably for this reason, only one of the Apostles, Saint John, remained faithful, following Christ all the way to the Cross and with courage standing at the side of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Mary Magdalene. **What things disturb our faith? When things disturb our faith, what consolation and hope does Jesus give us?**

### **What lessons do we learn from the Transfiguration?**

1. Jesus wants to strengthen our faith and gives us opportunities to do so. **What are some of the many ways Christ strengthens our Faith?**
2. We should never be ashamed of the Cross. **What are ways people show they are ashamed of the Cross?**
3. We should not fear suffering for the sake of justice. **What does this mean?** When we are rightly punished for something, we should suffer the punishment.
4. We should never lose confidence in the reward that has been promised. Christ promised us the reward of Heaven. He also promised that He will be with us until the end of time[6] and that the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church.[7] We can completely trust in Jesus’ words and be confident that he will be faithful.

These four lessons are the heart of the Gospel. “In the preaching of the holy Gospel all should receive a strengthening of their faith. No one should be ashamed of the cross of Christ, through which the world has been redeemed. No one should fear to suffer for the sake of justice; no one should lose confidence in the reward that has been promised. The way to rest is through toil, the way to life is through death.”[8]