

Purification and Enlightenment Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
Second Sunday of Lent • Year C • March 16, 2025

Catechist Preparation

FIRST READING—GENESIS 15:5-12, 17-18

Abram's vision differs from the customary practice in those days. Both parties to a covenant would stand between the sacrificial offerings to swear their oaths. This vision reveals that God alone—symbolized by the fire pot and torch—passes between the sacrificial offerings. It signals the unconditional divine decision to establish a relationship and fulfill the promises made to Abram.

SECOND READING—PHILIPPIANS 3:17-4:1 OR 3:20-4:1
Saint Paul is concerned over some among the Christians in Phillipi who were falling from the faith. He urges them to remain firm in their baptismal commitment, keeping their gazes fixed on their citizenship in Heaven, from which will come their Savior, Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL—LUKE 9:28B-36

Luke sets the Transfiguration of Jesus on top of a mountain where Jesus, Peter, James, and John go to pray. Jesus is portrayed as speaking to Moses and Elijah (two figures who symbolize the Law and the Prophets) about his "exodus"—his suffering, Death, and Resurrection—which is about to take place in Jerusalem. Coming to know Jesus as God's Chosen One involves a recognition and acceptance on the part of believers that they must also be willing to follow him along the path of suffering to glory.

Making Connections

Key Images and Symbols

His Exodus (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC] 129, 130, 571, 614, 1094)

It Is Good That We Are Here (CCC 1098)

Chosen Son (CCC 438, 554, 1286)

Listen to Him (CCC 520, 787, 1248)

Jesus Was Found Alone (CCC 73, 522, 2176)

Music Suggestions

"'Tis Good, Lord, to Be Here," J. Speiss (GIA)

"Transfiguration," C. Landry (OCP)

"The Love of God," P. Tate (WLP)

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Have the space set with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a purple cloth and an icon or picture of the Transfiguration. (If an icon or picture is not available, a group of lighted candles, symbolic of the Transfiguration, can be used.)

Respond

Invite the group to reflect quietly on the Liturgy of the Word. Ask each person what word, phrase, or feeling stays with them.

Enhance

1. Proclaim the First Reading (Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18). With the following, or similar, questions, invite the participants to reflect on how their own journeys might be symbolized in the reading:

In what way is God asking you to trust in his promises?

How are you like Abram, who wants some proof of God's promises?

On this occasion, God establishes a covenant. What do you understand this Covenant to be? In what way has God established a covenant with us?

*How has your relationship with God deepened?
In what way has your relationship with the People of God deepened?*

2. After some silent reflection, invite volunteers to share their responses.

Pray

Invite the participants to pray, in the quiet of their hearts, a word of thanks for the covenant that God has established with them. Then conclude by praying the prayer on the participant handout: *Awesome God, your eternal Word walks among us, and we bow down to the ground as glory shines forth—the glory of your only-begotten Son, whose Commandment of love strips all pretense from our hearts and recreates us as your adopted sons and daughters. Amen.*

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Readings

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

Psalm 27:1, 7-9, 13-14

Philippians 3:17-4:1 or 3:20-4:1

Luke 9:28b-36

Welcome

Begin by welcoming everyone who is present, including godparents, sponsors, team members, and spouses who are joining the group.

Uncover

Read or summarize the **Repent** section on the participant handout, and allow time for quiet reflection. Then invite the participants to share their reflections with their sponsors or godparents if present. Gather responses to the third question in the large group.

Purify

1. Use today's Gospel (Luke 9:28b-36) as a meditation. Invite everyone to close their eyes as you read the Scripture. Then ask them to visualize the following, pausing after each scene:

See a high mountain. . . . Notice a cloud hovering at the top. . . . You hear a voice that invites you to climb up. . . . As you climb, you are surprised at how easy it is, and soon you find yourself standing with Peter, James, and John. . . . You join them as together you witness Jesus speaking with Moses and Elijah. . . . You are filled with awe at the sight. . . . After a while, Moses and Elijah disappear and there is only Jesus. . . . He comes to you and speaks the words, "Do not be afraid," and then slowly walks away . . .

2. After some silence, invite the participants to become aware of their surroundings. Read or summarize the **Renew** section on the participant handout, and allow time for reflection and discussion about the questions.

Enlighten

1. Summarize or invite the participants to read the remaining sections of the participant handout and reflect on the questions. Then discuss the following points:
 - The disciples are given a glimpse of divine glory in Jesus.
 - This Sunday draws us beyond ourselves. It draws us closer to the great mystery of God, and we long to shout, "Glory to God in the highest!"
 - The Transfiguration sheds light on the promise of what is to come to those who follow Christ through suffering and death.
 - Through Christ and through him alone, we are saved and made free.
2. Highlight the **Key Images and Symbols of the Season** section.

Live

1. Lent is a season to focus on living in right relationship with God, others, and all created things. To foster these right relationships, we are encouraged to make use of the three Lenten practices: prayer, works of charity (almsgiving), and fasting. Invite the participants to review their choices from last week, and encourage them to be faithful to walking this journey of Lent.
2. If the parish has a particular communal activity for Lent, encourage the group to participate.
3. Invite the group to reflect on **Preparing for Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist**. If there is time, encourage volunteers to share their reflections.

Pray

Use the Responsorial Psalm from today's Liturgy (Psalm 27:1, 7-9, 13-14) as the closing prayer.