

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Lent invites us to examine not only our behavior, but our expectations of God and of ourselves. In recovery from lust addiction, we may long for dramatic transformation. We hope for a moment when temptation disappears and struggle fades. Yet spiritual growth often unfolds more quietly, shaped by daily choices rather than extraordinary experiences.

This Sunday's gospel reading brings us to the Transfiguration, where Jesus allows Peter, James, and John to glimpse his divine glory before leading them back down the mountain toward suffering and sacrifice (Matthew 17:1-5):

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. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." 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."

Peter wants to preserve the moment. He wants to stay in the light and avoid what lies ahead. For those recovering from lust addiction, this can mirror our desire to hold onto spiritual highs. We may recall early days of sobriety when clarity felt strong and temptation seemed

distant. When struggle returns, we can feel discouraged, as though something has gone wrong.

The Transfiguration reminds us that mountaintop moments are gifts, not destinations. They strengthen us for the path ahead, but they do not replace it. Jesus does not remain in glory. He descends the mountain and continues toward the cross. Recovery works in a similar way. We are sustained by moments of grace, but transformation happens through consistent honesty, accountability, and surrender.

The voice from the cloud says, "Listen to him." For those healing from lust addiction, listening to Christ may mean turning away from the false promises of fantasy and returning to truth. It may mean choosing prayer over isolation, confession over secrecy, or connection over withdrawal. These daily acts of listening reshape our desires over time.

Taking up our cross daily in this context can involve sitting with uncomfortable emotions rather than escaping into compulsive behavior. It can mean accepting limits, honoring boundaries, and embracing humility. These choices are not dramatic. They are faithful.

The Transfiguration assures us that our struggle does not define us. The light revealed on the mountain points toward the deeper identity we carry as beloved children of God. Lent invites us to trust that even when temptation persists, Christ remains present.

We do not cling to fleeting spiritual highs, nor do we despair when difficulty returns. We continue listening. We continue surrendering. And we trust that the same Lord who revealed his glory on the mountain is at work in our steady, daily recovery.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you experienced a "mountaintop" moment in your sobriety that strengthened your hope?
- How do you respond when the intensity of early enthusiasm fades and ordinary struggle returns?
- What does listening to Christ look like in moments of temptation today?

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Genesis 12:1-4

RESP. PS. Psalm 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22

SECOND READING 2 Timothy 1:8b-10

GOSPEL Matthew 17:1-9

