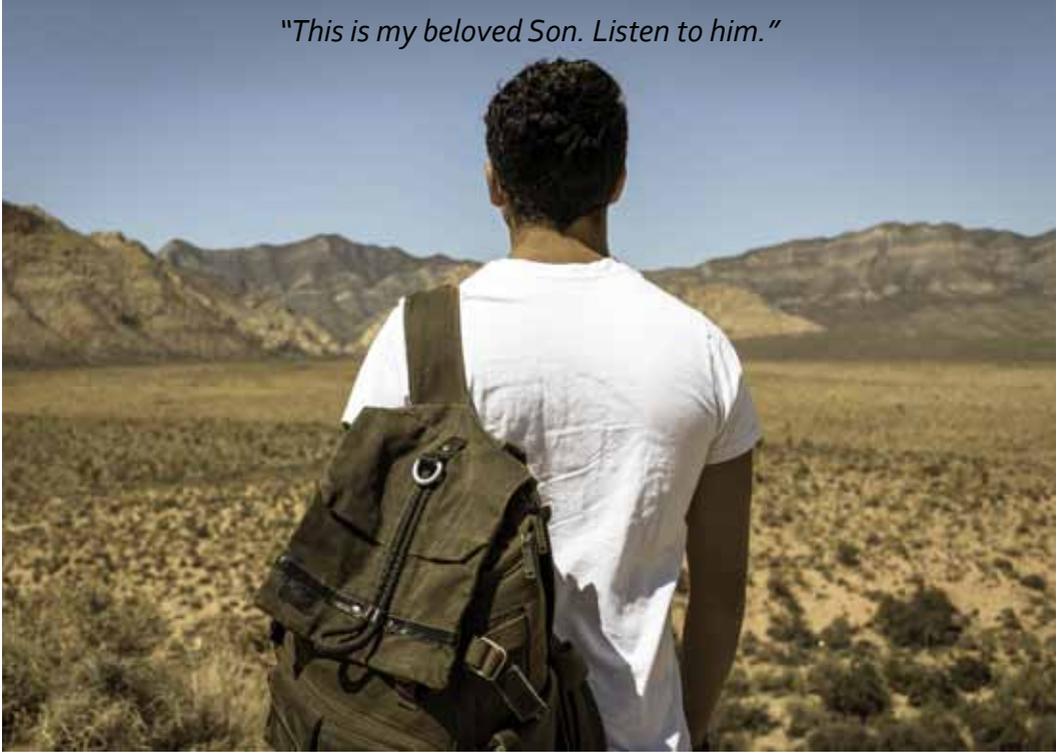


SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT 2018

"This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."



FROM THE READINGS

Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18

God put Abraham to the test

The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven.

".... Because you have not refused me your son, your only son,
I will shower blessings on you ...

All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants – as a reward
for your obedience."

Romans 8:31-34

With God on our side, who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give.

Mark 9:2-10

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them ...

Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."

Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.

REFLECTIONS

Abraham's story is about an encounter with God and it is about trust, trust even when there is risk of losing everything – if you try to do what you feel God may be asking. Abraham becomes stronger and closer to God and the stars of night come to represent hope in the future. Saint Paul says God is always on our side and nothing can separate us from God's love. Peter, James and John experience God's closeness to Jesus and to them. Then they are able to go back down the mountain with Jesus, to share in his ministry.

I have seen too many stars to let darkness overwhelm me.

Macrina Widederkehr, Seven Sacred Pauses, 42

... reflect on the thin places of your day. Recall those moments when you stood very near the glory of God. There may be more than you realise. That's why it's important to take time for solitude. Practise deep listening and deep breathing.

Macrina Widederkehr, Seven Sacred Pauses, 148

**Stay awake, Holiness
may spread its wings for you
at any moment.**

P. A. Lenetta in Macrina Widederkehr, Seven Sacred Pauses, 143

**I believe the truth about myself
no matter how beautiful it is.**

I believe in my power
to transform indifference into love.

I believe I have an amazing gift
to keep hope alive in the face of despair.

I believe I have the remarkable skill

of deleting bitterness from my life.
I believe in my budding potential
to live with a non-violent heart.
I believe in my passion to speak the truth
even when it isn't popular.
I believe I have the strength of will
to be peace in a world of violence.
I believe in my miraculous capacity
for unconditional love.
I will believe the truth about myself
no matter how beautiful it is.

Macrina Widederkehr, Seven Sacred Pauses, 109

FROM POPE FRANCIS

For many people in fact, it is much easier and better to have drowsy and dull kids who confuse happiness with a sofa. For many people, that is more convenient than having young people who are alert and searching, trying to respond to God's dream and to all the restlessness present in the human heart. I ask you: do you want to be young people who nod off, who are drowsy and dull? Do you want others to decide your future for you? Do you want to be free? Do you want to be alert? Do you want to work hard for your future?

Pope Francis in Dear Young Friends, 25

Dear young people, we didn't come into this world to 'vegetate', to take it easy, to make our lives a comfortable sofa to fall asleep on. No, we came for another reason: to leave a mark.

Pope Francis in Dear Young Friends, 26

FOR THINKING AND TALKING

Imagine: Standing with Abraham after his ordeal, hearing God's reassuring words, as he looks at the stars. Imagine being there with the apostles, watching Jesus as he is transfigured while he prays.

Translate to life:

From this imagining, what kind of transformation is needed in your life right now? What can you do to be ready for what God has in store for you?

Express the heart:

Find words or an image for

- Insights gained from these readings and reflections
- A hope or intention for the future.

ONE HOUR FOR A GROUP

- **Begin with a short prayer**, asking God's presence and guidance.
- **Time with the Text:** Allow quiet time for reading and reflecting. ~15 mins
- **Discussion:**
 1. Each person shares a key insight from their reading and reflection. 10 mins
 2. General Discussion. 30 mins
- **Concluding Prayer Together**
eg. 'Prayer' from this leaflet, a traditional prayer, or your own words.

PRAYER

Jesus,

What was it like to go alone to the mountains and be swept up in the Beloved's fondness for you? Was this one of those rare moments when everything in you settled into peacefulness? Did you leave with renewed passion for your work?

Did your heart skip a beat when you realised how much power you had for healing? Did you want to leap for joy when you saw the immense happiness of those who had been restored to good health?

When you experienced men and women changing their lives for the better because of what you taught, were you filled with gratitude?

Jesus, help me to enter into the joyful dimensions of my life and work. May I remember I need balance in my life, that laughter and leisure and quiet times with you are essential for my total health. Amen.

*Adapted from 'Jesus, What Were the Joys of Your Ministry?' in *Out of the Ordinary*, by Joyce Rupp, 130-131*



Prepared by: Adult Faith Education Sandhurst PO Box 201 Bendigo Vic 3552. E: adultfaith@sandhurst.catholic.org.au **Acknowledgements:** Joyce Rupp, *Out of the Ordinary*, Notre Dame Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 2010; Francis McDonagh, *Dom Helder Camara: Essential Writings*, Marynoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009; Macrina Widederkehr, *Seven Sacred Pauses: Living Mindfully Through the Hours of the Day*, Notre Dame Indiana: Sorin Books, 2008; Bishop Brendan Leahy, *Dear Young Friends: Pope Francis in Conversation With Young People* Mulgrave, Victoria: Garratt Publishing, 2017