

Like Advent, Lent is a season of preparation—in this case, for Jesus' ultimate sacrifice and the glory of his resurrection. We prepare our souls through repentance and our bodies through fasting. We prepare our relationship with God through prayer and our relationship with others through almsgiving. In today's reading, in the midst of all our preparation, we are given a preview of Christ's risen glory when he appears transfigured to Peter, John, and James. May the promise of a life transfigured encourage us as we continue to prepare for Easter glory.

As we gather let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

*Profession of Faith* p. 172

**I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow as we say) and by the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*Introductory Rite:*

*Greeting:*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God forever. **Blessed be God forever.**

*Penitential Rite:* p. 12

Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to participate in this sacred celebration.

**I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen**

*Opening Prayer:*

O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son, be pleased, we pray, to nourish us inwardly by your word, that, with spiritual sight made pure, we may rejoice to behold your glory.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Liturgy of the Word:*

First Reading p. 136

A reading from the Book of Genesis

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18

The Lord God took Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. Just so," he added, "shall your descendants be." Abram put his faith in the LORD, who credited it to him as an act of righteousness. He then said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession." "O Lord GOD," he asked, "how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He answered him, "Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Abram brought him all these, split them in two, and placed each half opposite the other; but the birds he did not cut up. Birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, but Abram stayed with them. As the sun was about to set, a trance fell upon Abram, and a deep, terrifying darkness enveloped him.

When the sun had set and it was dark, there appeared a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch, which passed between those pieces. It was on that occasion that the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the Great River, the Euphrates."

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God**Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14.

R/. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

**R/. The Lord is my light and my salvation.**

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?

The LORD is my life's refuge; of whom should I be afraid? **R/.**

Hear, O LORD, the sound of my call; have pity on me, and answer me.

Of you my heart speaks; you my glance seeks. **R/.**

Your presence, O LORD, I seek. Hide not your face from me;

do not in anger repel your servant. You are my helper: cast me not off. **R/.**

I believe that I shall see the bounty of the LORD in the land of the living.

Wait for the LORD with courage; be stouthearted, and wait for the LORD. **R/.**Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Join with others in being imitators of me, brothers and sisters, and observe those who thus conduct themselves according to the model you have in us. For many, as I have often told you and now tell you even in tears, conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction. Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their "shame." Their minds are occupied with earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Luke 9:28b-36

**Glory to you, Lord**

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**Reflection on the Word:

- In the person of Jesus, God becomes vulnerable, ultimately sacrificing his life on the cross for our sins. But God also became vulnerable many centuries before, in the presence of Abram. The ritual we hear described in the first reading, featuring two parties walking between the carcasses of animals that were sacrificed, split in half, and placed opposite each other, was often used in ancient cultures from this era to ratify a significant covenant. The tradition symbolized the seriousness of the covenant: if one party broke their promise, they would meet the same fate as these animals. Note that though Abram constructs the passage, he does not walk through it. Only God passes through it. Only God is bound by the covenant. Only by God's grace can Abram and his descendants keep the covenant.
- God, appearing as fire, consummates the covenant with Abraham and his descendants. As the new covenant, Jesus sacrifices himself on the cross, making possible a communion between God and humankind. At Pentecost, God will again appear in the form of fire: as the Holy Spirit, descending upon the disciples. Out of love for us, God has continually renewed and expanded this foundational promise.
- Luke uses the word exodus to describe what Jesus would accomplish in Jerusalem, recalling the Chosen People's flight from Egypt, for which the book of Exodus is named. As Moses and the Chosen People's exodus from captivity led them to the promised land, Jesus' exodus from his life here on earth led him to life in heaven with his Father. Now we are able to make this exodus as well, in one sense from sin and worldly values, and in another sense when our life here on earth ends. The promise of salvation and new life anchors our ultimate hope in life eternal with the source of all life.

**Question of the Week**

Looking at my Lenten journey as an exodus from sin and worldly values, what specifically is holding me captive and preventing a truly new life in the risen Lord?

Prayer of the Faithful:

Believing that we shall see the bounty of the Lord in the land of the living, we now present our needs and the needs of the world before the Lord.

- For the Church, that through our works of love and mercy we may transfigure the world, giving ourselves and others a glimpse of God's dazzling glory, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For peace among nations, that the landscape of war and terrorism may be transfigured by Christ's gift of peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- That as we make the transition from winter to spring during this Jubilee Year of Hope, we may find hope in the renewal of life in nature and mirror it in our own lives as well, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all those preparing for baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist, that they may recognize and listen to the voice of Jesus wherever they may hear it, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- That we, like Abraham, may respond to God's covenant with faith and commitment, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For what else should we pray? Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God eternal, you sealed the covenant with Abram, giving him land of your creation. Your Son sealed the new covenant with his sacrifice on the cross, giving us eternal salvation. As we live in the hope of these glorious promises, grant the prayers we make today through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

#### Communion Rite

##### The Lord's Prayer: p. 208

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

##### Rite of Peace:

The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ's presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

##### Communion:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

##### Prayer after Communion:

As we receive these glorious mysteries, we make thanksgiving to you, O Lord, for allowing us while still on earth to be partakers even now of the things of heaven.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### Concluding Rite:

##### Final Blessing:

May the Lord bless us,  protect us from all evil and lead us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Go in peace! **Thanks be to God.**