



Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday of Lent (A)

March 1, 2026

Once Upon a Mountaintop

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

Many people, perhaps most people, have had a religious experience of some sort, something akin to that of Peter, James, and John atop the mountain with Jesus. It may or may not have included hearing a voice. Most often, it is a deep sense of God's presence beyond anything they have ever known, like a profound realization of what life is about or how it is laced through and through with God. It usually occurs as we are idle, not doing anything in particular, and often when we are younger, yet it is also something that changes our understanding of what life and God are about.

Most people do not talk about such experiences for any number of reasons, partly because there do not seem to be words to describe such a moment in a way anyone would understand, like trying to describe falling in love. Partly because, if we tried, we fear others would think us strange. And partly because we can find ourselves wondering whether it was real or simply our imagination. Yet, we always remember the moment and know it to be true.

One additional characteristic of such moments is that they tend to take us to a new place in life, as with Abram in the first reading. For him, it was to pack up his life and move. More likely for us, it is to a life of service, caring, and treasuring all of life now in a new way. †

Sunday Readings

Genesis 12:1-4a

The LORD said to Abram...I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you.

2 Timothy 1:8b-10

Bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.

Matthew 17:1-9

And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light.

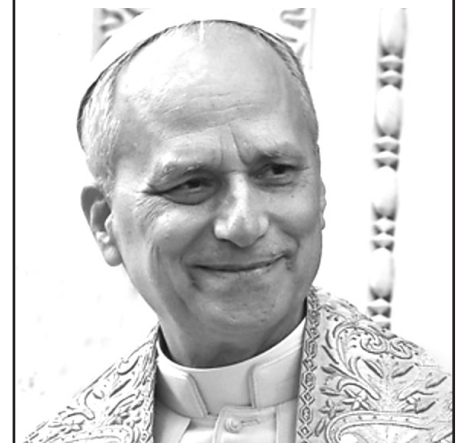


**Religious experiences
change our understanding
of what life and God
are about.**

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

We must also cry out for peace in the world. Let us all say, "We want peace in the world!" Let us pray for peace. Let us pray for peace and be witnesses of the peace and reconciliation of Jesus Christ, the light that we are all seeking for today's world.

GREETING TO YOUNG PEOPLE,
ROME, JULY 29, 2025



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- Have you had a religious experience?
- Is there someone you can talk to about how it changed your faith?



Ad Multos Annos! (To Many Years!)

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR

When people celebrate one hundred or more years of life, they're often asked the secret to their longevity. Some attribute it to abstaining from alcohol; others insist it's because they drink a glass of Chianti every day with dinner. One centenarian recalled an agreement with his wife when he got married at age twenty. The newlyweds decided that, after any argument, the loser would go for a long walk to let go of the anger. Consequently, the husband attributed his long life to eighty years of fresh air.

Medical science provides sound advice on how to add years to our lives, although it often contradicts its findings from previous studies. For example, red meat, eggs, coffee, and dark chocolate are not as bad as we were once told. Cigarettes and soda are worse than we thought. Alas, after giving up red meat for decades, I'm inclined to agree with the saying, "Abstinence is a wonderful thing, but only in moderation." While the commonsense advice to live a life of "moderation in all things" originated in ancient Rome and Greece, the spirit of moderation is implied in Scripture, especially in St. Paul's

words of caution about excess, as when he lists "self-control" as a fruit of the Spirit. (See Galatians 5:22–23.)

Hundreds of medical studies have also shown that being spiritual can help us live longer. Even if these studies were to reverse their findings and say that being spiritual can't extend our lifespan, faith can still add fulfillment to our years of whatever number.

St. Paul cautions about excess; he lists "self-control" as a fruit of the Spirit.

Prayer, altruism, and a sense of belonging to a community are a combination for holistic health.

A prescription for long life: Meditate, donate, and congregate regularly (and safely) to improve your health this Lent. If your condition weakens, consult your Divine Physician.

From *Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Lent and Easter* by Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR, Liguori Publications (828362). To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "A Lenten Guide: From Ash Wednesday to Easter" by Paige Byrne Shortal

Who really changed? One can imagine Jesus walking along the dusty roads of Palestine, shining like the sun, but folks didn't notice. They only saw the carpenter's son. We see what we expect to see. Maybe what happened up on that mountain is that the eyes of the disciples were opened to see Jesus as he was all the time. For a moment, they were given "resurrection eyes." This week, let's ask God to help us see others without the dark filters of resentment or negative expectations. Then, we might see each other as we really are—full of light.

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.



So that the world may know you by our words and actions, we pray—Lord, let us be like you.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

March 2–7

Monday, Lenten Weekday: Dn 9:4b–10 / Lk 6:36–38

Tuesday, Lenten Weekday: Is 1:10, 16–20 / Mt 23:1–12

Wednesday, Lenten Weekday: Jer 18:18–20 / Mt 20:17–28

Thursday, Lenten Weekday: Jer 17:5–10 / Lk 16:19–31

Friday, Lenten Weekday: Gn 37:3–4, 12–13a, 17b–28a / Mt 21:33–43, 45–46

Saturday, Lenten Weekday: Mi 7:14–15, 18–20 / Lk 15:1–3, 11–32



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