

2nd Sunday of Lent – Year A: Glory in the Obedience of Faith: Gen 12:1–4a; 2 Tim 1:8b–10; Mat17:1–9

Joke: 2) *“I have decided to give up drinking for Lent.”* An Irishman moves into a tiny hamlet in County Kerry, walks into the pub and promptly orders three beers. The bartender raises his eyebrows, but serves the man three beers, which he drinks quietly at a table, alone and orders three more. As this continued every day the bartender asked him politely, *“The folks around here are wondering why you always order three beers?”* *“It’s odd, isn’t it?”* the man replies, *“You see, I have two brothers, and one went to America, and the other to Australia. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we drank.”* Then, one day, the man comes in and orders only two beers. As this continued for several days, the bartender approached him with tears in his eyes and said, *“Folks around here, me first of all, want to offer condolences to you for the death of your brother. You know-the two beers and all...”* The man ponders this for a moment and then replies with a broad smile, *“You’ll be happy to know that my two brothers are alive and well. It’s just that I, myself, have decided to give up drinking for Lent.”*

On the First Sunday of Lent, we stood with Jesus in the desert, watching Him resist temptation. Today, the Church takes us up a high mountain and shows us His glory. Lent moves from struggle to light, from testing to revelation. But the message today is very clear: glory is found in the obedience of faith.

In the first reading, God says to Abraham, **“Go from your country... to the land I will show you.”** Notice what God does not give him. He gives no details, no directions, no guarantees — only a promise. Abraham is not yet blessed. He has no land, no descendants, no visible future. He has only a Word from God. And he moves. **That movement is faith.**

Faith is not a feeling. Faith is not clarity. Faith is obedience based on promise. Abraham walks into the unknown because he trusts the One who speaks. As Hebrews 11:8 says: **“By faith Abraham obeyed... not knowing where he was going.”** This is the foundation of salvation history. Salvation history begins not with power, but with trust. We see a deep biblical contrast here: **In Genesis 3, Adam grasps and disobeys. In Genesis 12, Abraham trusts and obeys. In Matthew 17, Jesus obeys perfectly.** Salvation history is the story of restored obedience.

Lent asks us the same question God asked Abraham: Are you willing to go? Are you willing to leave what is comfortable? Leave sin, pride, resentment, spiritual laziness. Without departure, there is no promise fulfilled.

The apostles also leave. In today’s Gospel, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up the mountain. This happens right after He tells them that He must suffer and be killed. A suffering Messiah confuses them. It does not fit their expectations. So, Jesus gives them a revelation before the scandal of the Cross.

On the mountain, His face shines like the sun. His garments become dazzling white. Moses and Elijah appear — the Law and the Prophets — and they speak of His coming “exodus,” His Passion. Even the Old Testament points toward Jerusalem. Here we must notice something profound: **Moses reflected God’s light. Jesus radiates it.** The glory comes from within Him. He is not merely a messenger of God; **He is the beloved Son.** Then the Father’s voice is heard: **“This is my beloved Son... listen to Him.”** That is the center of today’s message. Listen to Him — especially when He speaks about suffering, about the Cross, about surrender.

Because here is the heart of the Gospel: the glory revealed on the mountain is the same glory hidden on the Cross. Soon the disciples will see: **The shining face — bruised. The radiant garments — stripped away. The beloved Son — crucified.** Without the Transfiguration, Calvary would destroy their faith. Without Calvary, the Transfiguration would become sentimental. The mountain and the Cross belong together.

In the second reading Saint Paul says, **“Bear your share of hardship for the Gospel.”** He reminds us that Christ **“destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light.”** Notice the pattern: hardship, then life. Obedience, then glory. Philippians tells us: **“He humbled himself... therefore God exalted him.”** Exaltation comes through obedience. Glory comes through surrender.

Peter’s reaction reveals our own hearts. “Lord, it is good that we are here.” Of course it is good. Who would not want to stay in that moment of light and peace? Peter wants to build tents. He wants to remain in consolation. He wants glory without descent.

This is our temptation too. We want the joy of faith without the cost. We want resurrection without Good Friday. We want spiritual comfort without sacrifice. But Jesus leads them down the mountain. Because Christianity is not about escaping suffering. It is about transforming it.

The light of Tabor is given not to avoid the Cross, but to endure it. The glory shown for a moment strengthens them for the obedience that lies ahead.

In our own lives, obedience often looks small and hidden. It is forgiving when it is painful. It is remaining faithful when ministry feels heavy. It is carrying illness, misunderstanding, or loneliness with trust. The world sees defeat. Faith sees hidden glory.

Lent is not simply about giving up small pleasures. It is about learning to trust the promise more than our security. It is about moving when God says, “Go.” It is about listening to the Beloved Son, even when His path leads toward Jerusalem.

When we walk through our own Calvary — personal suffering, family burdens, pastoral challenges — we must remember the mountain. The face that shone like the sun is the same face that hung on the Cross. And it is the same face that rose in Easter glory. Glory is not the absence of suffering. Glory is obedience lived in love. May this Lent deepen in us the obedience of faith — the courage to move, the humility to trust, and the grace to see divine light even in the shadow of the Cross. Amen