

**LECTIO DIVINA (Holy Reading)**  
**PRAYING WITH THE SACRED SCRIPTURES**  
**Sunday 8 March 2020**  
**Second Sunday of Lent, Year A**  
**For those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours the Psalter takes Week Two**

Before beginning prayer with the Sacred Texts, let us take a look at the week ahead in the Liturgy, the Australian Church and the Social Justice Calendar.

**In the Liturgy:**

There are no Memorias, Feasts or Solemnities this week.

**In the Australian Church:**

March 9: Ukrainian Eparchy – Episcopal Ordination of the Most Rev. Peter Stasiuk CSsR, 1993. On March 13, the Universal Catholic Church celebrates the anniversary of the election of His Holiness, Pope Francis.

**In the Social Justice Calendar:**

March 8: International Women's Day.

March 11: 2011, Earthquake and Tsunami in Fukushima Prefecture Japan, killing 85,000 people and causing widespread contamination.

March 12: Founding of Canberra as Australia's Capital. (1913)

**LET US NOW MOVE INTO PRAYER WITH THE SACRED TEXTS**

**The readings are:**

Genesis 12:1-4

2 Timothy 1:8-10

Matthew 17:1-9

***Lectio:* Let us now move into prayer with the first text.**

***Meditatio:* A little background to the text will help us understand it clearly and respond to it more honestly.**

This is the next stage in Salvation History. Last week was the first stage: the first man and woman alienated themselves from God. In between Adam and Abraham, we should have the Covenant with Noah, which was also an attempt on God's part to help his alienated people return to him.

The call of God to Abraham is the real beginning of what we call Salvation History. God is calling Abraham to a life of faith. The circumstances of Abraham's life are not as important as the call to **faith**.

Take time to ponder on this reading. Only after reflecting will you be in touch with the response that the Holy Spirit is calling forth from you. I share my response to this reading in *Evangelizatio* 1.

**Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 32**

**The response is: LORD, LET YOUR MERCY BE ON US  
AS WE PLACE OUR TRUST IN YOU**

This is a long Psalm of 22 verses, and a joyful song to the God of creation. Since not all the verses are given to us, it will enrich our prayer if we read the entire Psalm from our own bibles.

***Lectio:* Read the Second Text from 2 Timothy 1:8-10**

***Meditatio:* A little background to the reading.**

In early times - back to the 6<sup>th</sup> century, this was the time when monks listened to an explanation on the text, given by someone who was a scholar of the sacred scriptures, - one who knew the ancient languages.

In this text from 2 Timothy, the call is firstly to bear hardships for the sake of the Gospel. Then Timothy is told to rely on the power of God (have **faith**). The grace granted to us from all time has been revealed by the “appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Jesus has proclaimed life and immortality through the Gospel [and the Paschal Mystery].

In the New Testament, grace always refers to the Redemption, and it occurs frequently in the writings of Paul. It implies the “absolute supremacy of God in the work of Redemption.” (Bauer, “Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology), 341.

**PAUSE.** Read the text again.it again. Listen to the Holy Spirit playing on the fibres of your heart like a harpist, in order to bring forth the most authentic melody of your response...  
I share mine in *Evangelizatio 2*.

**The Gospel Verse is from Matthew 17, verse 5.**

**THE FATHER’S VOICE IS HEARD. THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, HEAR HIM.**

God was in Christ to reconcile the world to himself and the good news of reconciliation, he had entrusted to us.

***Lectio:* Take time now to read the Gospel text for this Sunday.**

Pause and ponder.

***Meditatio:* Some background to the text so that we can better respond to it.**

St. John Cassian reminds us that we must till the soil of our hearts every day with the plough of the Gospel. Today, we hear the story of the Transfiguration of the Lord.

We may be familiar with the words: transcendent, transcendental, transformation, transpersonal. But none of these words can accurately describe the Transfiguration, which also means “conversion”. And this is a new and deeper way of being present at this greatest of mysteries. We are the ones converted. Those with Jesus on Mt. Tabor were converted. Just prior to this narrative, Jesus had shared with his apostles, his immanent passion and death. And now, the scene changes. It is the Father who appears and opens the eyes of the apostles in faith, to the glory of his son, Jesus.

Stand back from this text. Later, read it again, until something leaps out, and then stay with that. Go to a quiet corner of your garden or a nature reserve, or your own home, or a church which is open for prayer. Hear the words: BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD. Allow the Holy Spirit to play on the fibres of your heart like a harpist in order to bring forth the most beautiful melody of your response to God. I share my response in *Evangelizatio* 3.

***Evangelizatio* is my LIVED RESPONSE to the sacred scriptures given to me each week by the Church for my formation as a Christian. If I don't respond, they are merely texts on a page. When I do respond, they are my life.**

**1. My response to this text from Genesis is to reflect on "Faith".**

The word faith can be one of those words that we can't always grab hold of or understand. We know the "word" and as believers, we also know that from the cradle to the grave our faith will sustain us. We may even use the term "cradle Catholics", if we have been born into a Catholic family. Pope Francis says that prayer is the breath of faith. In a relationship of love, dialogue cannot be left out. And prayer is the dialogue of the soul with God. (October 6:2013). Prayer is the breath of faith. May we not preserve our faith in a jar on the mantelpiece. Rather, may we keep in mind that prayer is the breath of faith. What better time than Lent for us to become more than we are through Lectio Divina. May we not use Lent as a time to give up "things". Giving up "things" is helpful, but it must not be an excuse for neglecting the real call to deepen our relationship with God, through the power of the Word of God.

**2. My response to the reading from 2 Timothy.**

My response is probably not popular, but it is to the words of Bauer: "...the absolute supremacy of God in the work of Creation." It is God's work, not my work. I was brought up in the Catholic Church of the late 1940s and into the 1950s. I don't remember at what point in time I stopped doing this and doing that so that God would love me. At some point I gave up being the good Catholic girl, involved in everything Catholic, good or bad. But there was a time when I became a woman of the new Church emerging from the Second Vatican Council. In that milieu, I knew in my heart "the absolute supremacy of God in the work of Creation." It had very little to do with me and what I might do in order that God would be pleased. Rather, it took the shape of an invitation to be a co-creator with God, working to bring about God's kingdom of life, love, truth and justice in our world. I purchased my first bible, and I began a belated start to a journey with the Word of God. I am pleased to say I have never looked back.

**3. My response to the Gospel text.** Fr. Keating is the one whose writings I turn to for a response to Tabor. He says: "This Sunday is the continuation of the invitation of Lent to undertake the inner purification that is required for divine union." We can recall the first text, with its message of faith, the gift of faith which called Abraham to become God's child. It can also echo the second reading from 2 Timothy, the "absolute supremacy of God in the work of redemption." On Tabor, the divine source of Jesus' personality poured out through every pore of his body in the form of light.

His face became dazzling as the sun. (“The Mystery of Christ”, 43.) Since Fr. Keating’s death, his writings have taken on a deeper dimension for me. Our glorious God is the God of DIVINE LIGHT. This Divine Light shines on Tabor, and brings us in humility to our knees. “And when they raised their eyes, they saw no one, only Jesus.”

*Lectio divina is a way of life, not a method of prayer.*

*We read the text from the sacred scriptures.*

*We take time to understand the text by way of a commentary.*

*We respond to the text and listen to the prayer of the Holy Spirit within us.*

*Such a response is taking place from the beginning of our prayer.*

*The Spirit will place unction on the word/words we are meant to hear.*

*We ponder as we go...*

*Like the Mother of God, we treasure all this in our hearts.*

