

The Roman Catholic Parishes of
St. Margaret Mary, Herscher
St. James the Apostle, Irwin
Sacred Heart, Goodrich

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

FEBRUARY 24-25, 2024

He was
transfigured
before them
and his clothes became
dazzling white such as
no fuller on earth could bleach them.
From the cloud came a voice.
This is my beloved Son.
Listen to him.



©Religious Graphics, Ltd.

Weekend Masses:

St. Margaret Mary	Sat. 5:00 pm	Sun. 10:30 am
Sacred Heart	Sun. 7:30 am	
St. James	Sun. 9:00 am	

Confessions:

St. Margaret Mary	Sat. 4:15 pm
Sacred Heart	Sun. 7:05-7:20 am
St. James	Sun. 8:35-8:50 am

Church Mailing Address: 207 E. 5th Street Herscher, IL 60941 Phone: 815-426-2550

Quotes: "The Bible is very easy to understand—but we pretend to be unable to understand it, because we know very well that the minute we do, we are obligated to act accordingly."

—Søren Kierkegaard

March 2-3, 2024		Third Sunday of Lent		
Liturgical Schedule	St. Margaret Mary Saturday, March 2 5:00 pm	Sacred Heart Sunday, March 3 7:30 am	St. James Sunday, March 3 9:00 am	St. Margaret Mary Sunday, March 3 10:30 am
Celebrant	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron	Fr. Ron Deacon Ron
Ushers	Gery Wright Dan Hoffman Roger Jensen Dave Emling	Daryl Ferris David Kirkpatrick	Dallas Ferris Dave Ladehoff Dan Forsythe Jerry Ogrentz	Wayne Bisailon Brent Fulton Erik Wheeler Corinn Wheeler
Lector	Hillary Webb	Rhonda Berns	Andy Hansen	Diane Long
Servers				Caroline Fulton
Greeters			Greeter—Donna Bernicky R. Leader—Karen Miller	Julie Splear

Mass Intentions for the Week

Monday, February 26 (SMM)
8:00 am +John Andrzejewski (Knights of Columbus)

Tuesday, February 27 (SH)
8:00 am +Connie Dionne (Rhonda/Joe Berns)

Wednesday, February 28 (SJ)
8:00 am +Joan Smith (Tom/Maureen O'Connor)

Friday, March 1 (SMM) First Friday
8:00 am +Aldine O'Brien (Russ/Kathy Bone)

Saturday, March 2 (SMM)
5:00 pm For All the Parish Family

Sunday, March 3
7:30 am +Dorla Cooper (Ray/Ruth Landry)
9:00 am (SJ) +Joe & Darlene Peerbolte (Ron/Vjcki Peerbolte)
10:30am (SMM) +Francis O'Brien (Roger/Margaret Jensen)

Question of the week:
 How do I think God would want my life to be transfigured this Lent? Am I willing to say "hineni" to accept that change to my life?

A Look Ahead

Monday, February 26—K of C meeting 7 pm at SJ
Friday, March 1—First Friday at SMM
Friday, March 1—Stations of the Cross SMM 3pm
March 2-3—K of C Food Drive
Saturday, March 9—
 1st Reconciliation at SMM 10 am
 Confirmation Retreat 11 am at SMM
 Youth Mass at SMM followed by Family Night
Sunday, March 17—Youth Mass at SJ

Pastor— Fr. Ron Neitzke- 815-426-2550
 Deacon – Ron Gagnon— rjgckg@aol.com
 Home—815-933-4077
 Parish Email – smm_sja_sh@yahoo.com
 TriParish web page – www.triparishcatholics.org
 Like us on Facebook triparishcatholic communities
Tri Parish Church office –Barb Riker 426-2550
 Julie Bisailon 426-2550
Bulletin – Debbie Jensen - 426-2550
 debjen04@gmail.com
Religious Education –
 St. MM – Jill Fulton jfulton.stmm@gmail.com
 Sacred Heart – Rhonda Berns – 426-5015
Parish Nurse – Jackie Eberle – 815-421-4048
Prayer Line– SMM—Pat Wagner 815-592-0773
 SMM -Janice 815-426-2574 Jdstreeffarms@aol.com
 St. James— Mary Offerman–602-670-8888 (call or text)

Collections Week of Feb. 17-18, 2024

St. Margaret Mary—\$1,487 E. Europe—\$441
St. James—\$1,265 E. Europe—\$240
Sacred Heart—\$1,149 E. Europe—\$215

Thank you for your generosity!

Gospel Shorts Human Things

Peter and Jesus had conflicting views on what the Messiah should be all about. Peter's view was "human"; he expected the Messiah to be a "winner." We too are obsessed with winning in our culture. We pay a high price for this, both psychologically and spiritually. We come to believe that we are defective and don't measure up. Deep inside, we feel like losers. But this was not Jesus' message to us. Quite the contrary. Jesus did not berate us for not measuring up. Rather, he called to the hero inside of us, and called us to do great things in his name. When we follow Jesus, we are "losers for others," as he was, and in so doing, we become the heroes he has called us to be.

Reflections To Tell the Difference

Len Livelightly was defending his lack of action to old Sam Elder, saying, "I don't intend to become seriously involved in the church. I have so many, many more interesting activities."

"Len, your aim is way off target! Christians aren't INVOLVED in the church. They are COMMITTED to God and the church of Christ," explained Sam.

"Now, you're just toying with words, Sam. What's so special about the difference between INVOLVEMENT and COMMITMENT?" asked Len.

Sam began, "People who are merely involved are like spectators at a game. They come when they want they leave when they want. Perhaps, they sometimes remember a little about the game. However, the players in the game have committed themselves to learning the rules and strategies of the sport; have labored to develop their skills; have conserved their health and have practiced with others to develop an amazing teamwork. Churches need more COMMITMENT; INVOLVEMENT is for mere spectators."

"But Sam, there must be an easier way of illustrating the difference," protested Len Livelightly.

"Yes, Len! The next time you order ham and eggs, observe that one or more chickens was INVOLVED with the eggs," said Sam, "But the poor pig was COMMITTED; he gave his all."

Parish News:

St. Margaret Mary—

Sacred Heart—

- ◆ The week of February 25th, the Blessed Virgin Mary candle burns in prayer for persecuted Christians throughout the world.

St. James—

- ◆ Please join us for our Spring Forward event on Sunday, March 10th. We'll be doing a soup/chili lunch in the St. James hall at 11:30 am. Free will donations will be accepted. If you would like to bring a dish the sign-up is on the bulletin board in the foyer. We'll see you there!
- ◆ See pg. 6 for the illustration of the new landscaping project for the front of the church. We appreciate your help with this project.

All Parishes—

- ◆ We are preparing for a security audit and need an accounting of keys to parish buildings. If you have a key to any of the parish buildings, please let us know. We will also need to know the purpose for you having keys.
- ◆ There will not be the sacrament of reconciliation on Saturday, March 9 as this time will be reserved for those preparing for Confirmation.
- ◆ Adult Ed will meet on Wednesday, February 28 at 7:00 at St. Margaret Mary.
- ◆ The Knights of Columbus meeting will be held on Monday, February 26 at 7 pm at St. James.



Eucharistic Adoration

Friday, January 5 at Sacred Heart 8:30am—3:00 pm. It will conclude with Benediction at 3:00 pm

"There is no other food for the soul than the Eucharist."

~Blessed Jean Baptiste Fouque (1851-1926)



Old eyeglasses sitting around? This agency collects old eyeglasses, makes the necessary repairs, then sends them

overseas to people in need. The Knights of Columbus will be placing collection boxes in the back of each church. Please consider helping with this project by donating your unused glasses. Prescription and reading glasses are needed. Please do not include glass cases.



The next Knights of Columbus next Food for Families collection is March 2-3 at all three parishes. This is a great way to give to help those in need.

"For I was hungry and you gave me food..."
Matthew 25:35



Obscure saint of the week: St. Callistus Caravario (Feb. 25) was known as a pious and prayerful child. He was a Salesian missionary priest. He worked at Macao, China, then in Timor, and then in 1929 in Shiuchow, China. On February 25, 1930, while travelling with his bishop, Saint Luigi Versiglia, his ship was boarded by Bolshevik pirates who planned to abduct and enslave the girls on their ship; Callistus and Luigi fought to prevent this from happening. He was one of the *Martyrs of China*

Obscure saint of the week: St. Luigi Versiglia (Feb. 25) studied at Don Bosco's Oratory from age 12. He was ordained a priest in the Salesian order on December 21, 1895. A missionary to China in 1906, he was appointed vicar apostolic of Shiuchow, China, and titular bishop of Carystus, on April 22, 1920. On February 25, 1930, while travelling with Saint Callistus Caravario, his ship was boarded by Bolshevik pirates who planned to abduct and enslave the girls on their ship; Callistus and Luigi fought to prevent the abduction. He was one of the *Martyrs of China*.



©Religious Graphics, Ltd.

Questions Catholics Ask

Where did Lent come from?

The celebration of Lent is a long-established tradition in the church—and I use the word *celebration* deliberately. The prayers of the liturgy refer to Lent as “this joyful season.” Though the character of the season is penitential, the intent of Lent is to prepare our dispositions for the greatest feast of the church year, the always-jubilant Easter. With all that to look forward to, Lent could hardly be a mournful time.

So where did Lent come from? Let's start by saying that Christianity embraces one key belief: the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

This central article of faith shapes everything we do as Christians, how we live and die, and certainly how we express our faith in worship. Easter is therefore the primary day of rejoicing. Every Sunday is considered a “little Easter,” a commemoration of how Jesus triumphed over sin and death through the power of God for the sake of humanity's emancipation from those ancient twin evils that bound it. The entire church year spins on the axis of Easter faith.



The entire church year spins on the axis of Easter faith. (photo: phhere.com)

In the first three centuries of the church Christians prepared for this mother-of-all-feasts by fasting—between two days to a week depending on local custom. In Rome the “paschal fast” may have lasted as long as three weeks. This extended fast was linked to the preparation of new members for baptism at the Easter Vigil.

By the 4th century a full 40-day period of preparation was observed, imitating the 40-day fast of Jesus in the desert before undertaking his great mission. Fasting and prayer were natural components of the season because that's how Jesus prepared himself. Almsgiving was added to the practices of Lent as it, too, was a traditional way of making sacrifice to God in the wake of sinfulness. Following a calendar of feasts and seasons dependent on one's faith is an idea rooted in Judaism. The Law of Moses established fixed times annually to recall the saving actions of God, centered on the commemoration of Passover. A liturgical calendar allowed Israel to practice gratitude and thanks, repentance and conversion, each in accord with the natural seasons, rains, and harvests. A cycle of liturgy also provided a way to instruct new generations about the faith in ritual and storytelling.

Easter, the Christian Passover, was fixed by the Council of Nicaea in 325 to coincide with the first full moon after the vernal equinox. That makes Lent the annual “springtime” of faith, quite literally, as the word *Lent* means “spring.”

Scripture

• [Mark 1:12-13](#); [Matthew 4:1-2](#); [Luke 4:1-3](#); [Leviticus 23](#)

Catholic Snacks, Get Fed

Why is Lent Forty Days Long?

Forty is a number with ancient biblical significance.

Lent is forty days long because Jesus fasted in the wilderness forty days and forty nights before embarking on His public ministry.

But Jesus did not select the length of His fast at random. Throughout the Old Testament, a stretch of forty days (or years) has always carried a deep meaning often related to punishment, penance, and/or preparation.

Here are a few examples:

During Noah's time, God sent rain for forty days and forty nights to punish the earth with flood

In consequence of their lack of faith, the Israelites wandered in the desert forty years before reaching the Promised Land

The people of Nineveh fasted and repented to avert the wrath of God which the prophet Jonah predicted would come upon them in forty days

Both Moses and Elijah fasted forty days before or during important conversations with God

When the time came for Jesus to begin His public mission, He utilized this tradition. His mission was of an all-encompassing nature that taps into—and fulfills—all the biblical reasons for forty day events.

As the God-Man, He was embarking on His mission to be our Mediator—to converse with God on our behalf, as Moses and Elijah did in a prefigurative way.

As the one Man Who came to bear the punishment due to all men, He evokes the repentance of Nineveh that averted the punishment of God.

His time in the desert—reminiscent of the Israelites' forty year sojourn—proffers the idea that He is deliberately taking on the punishment due to our faithlessness, which otherwise would keep us away from the Promised Land of Heaven.

The season of Lent is our great opportunity to enter into the desert with Christ. Do you have a plan for how to approach these days and gain the incredible graces they offer us?

One way to enter into the desert with Christ is by meditating on our own death. Lent is a time when we remember the death of Christ and the sacrifice he made to give us eternal life.

-reprinted with permission The Catholic Company www.thecatholiccompany.com



The Sunday Gospel in Everyday English

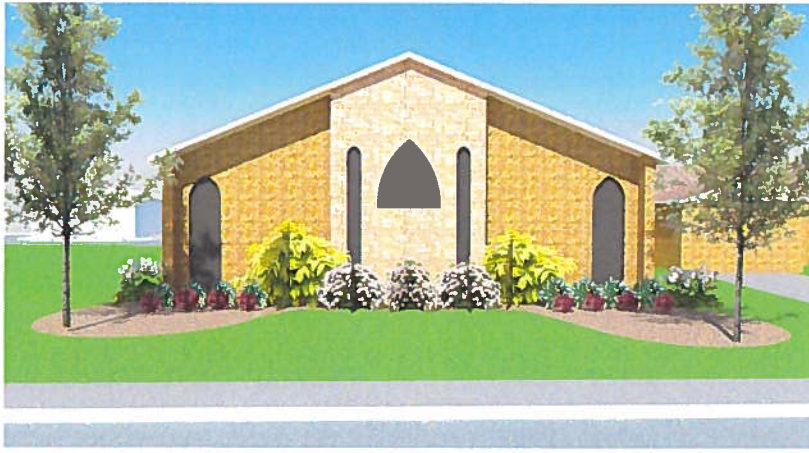
Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain. His appearance changed from the inside out, right before their eyes. His clothes shimmered, glistening white, whiter than any bleach could make them. Elijah, along with Moses, came into view, in deep conversation with Jesus.

Peter interrupted, "Rabbi, this is a great moment! Let's build three memorials—one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah." He blurted this out without thinking, stunned as they all were by what they were seeing.

Just then a light-radiant cloud enveloped them, and from deep in the cloud, a voice: "This is my Son, marked by my love. Listen to him."

The next minute the disciples were looking around, rubbing their eyes, seeing nothing but Jesus, only Jesus.

Coming down the mountain, Jesus swore them to secrecy. "Don't tell a soul what you saw. After the Son of Man rises from the dead, you're free to talk." They puzzled over that, wondering what on earth "rising from the dead" meant (*from Mark 9*).



St. James Landscaping Project

There will be a second collection on the following Sundays:

March 3

April 7

to help cover costs for the landscaping project. We would appreciate your generosity!

BISHOP MCNAMARA WELCOMES
MAGGIE CRAIG

LIVING THE FAITH



"Maggie Craig is wise beyond her years and gifted beyond belief! Brimming with zeal and passion, she uses hilarious anecdotes and profound truth-bombs to invite her listeners into the adventure of surrendering to God's love and to the Church's truth."

— Fr. Agnes + Staff, Parishes of St. James + St. Michael, St. Charles, IL



MARCH 7TH

BMCS Kankakee Site
550 W Brookmont Blvd

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

Examine the courage to combat loneliness, how to ground relationships in Christ, and how true friendship leads to deeper intimacy with God.

LIVING THE FAITH

Explore the role of the earthly members of the Church, the necessity of actively participating in communal and sacramental life, and what to do if we have questions about the Church.

8:50AM

Junior High
"True Friendship"

1:15PM

High School
"True Friendship"

6:00PM

"Living the Faith"
PARENTS AND FAMILIES
ARE WELCOME!

BISHOP MCNAMARA ASSEMBLY 202—

VOCATIONS DINNER/AUCTION

MARCH 9, 2024 AT THE
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL

COCKTAILS/ APPETIZERS—6:00 PM
DINNER: 6:30 PM

PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING THIS EVENT THAT SUPPORTS OUR FUTURE PRIESTS—THIS EVENT IS OPEN TO ALL.

PLEASE COMPLETE A DINNER RESERVATION FORM AND RETURN IT TO DEACON PAT SKELLY PRIOR TO MARCH 2, 2024.

FORMS CAN BE FOUND AT THE BACK OF EACH CHURCH OR IN THE PARISH OFFICE.



He was transfigured before them...
MARK 9:2

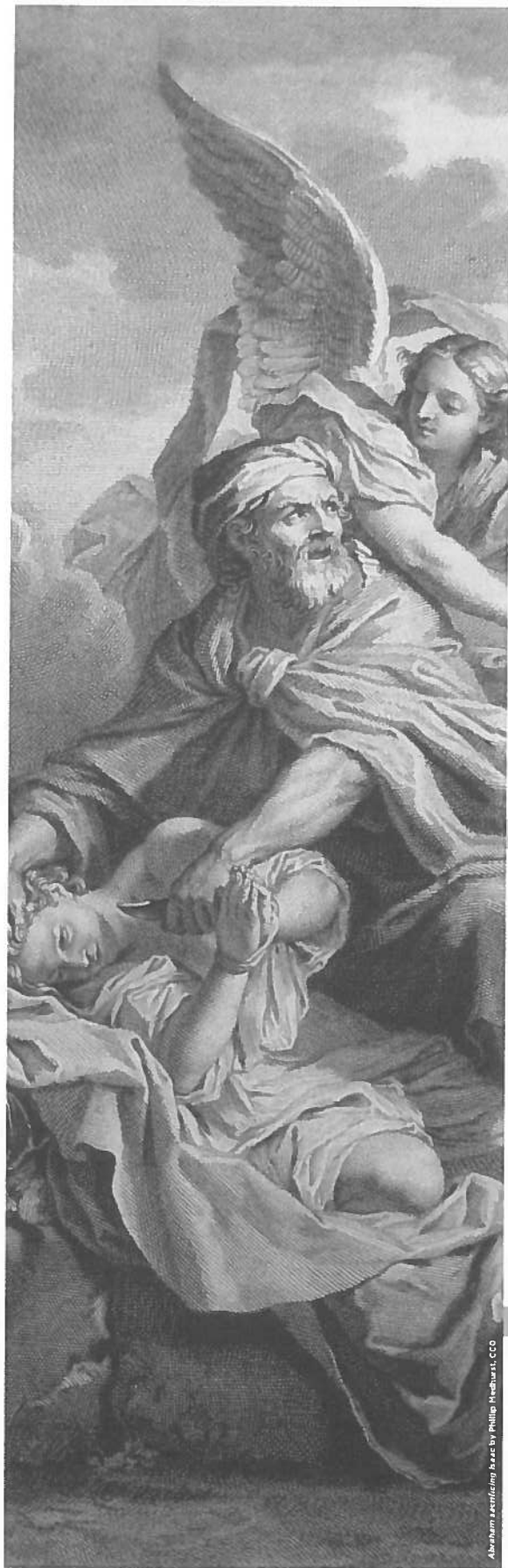


St. Patrick's and the Dwight Knights of Columbus host Lenten Fish Fries

Mark your calendars! St. Patrick's and the Knights of Columbus will again be having their Annual Lenten Fish Fries at St. Patrick's Hall in Dwight. This year they have scheduled 6 Fish Fries, all the Fridays during Lent except Good Friday, March 29th. Fish Fries will held on Fridays February 16th, 23rd, March 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd from 5 to 7 PM. The price includes your choice of baked cod, fried pollock, breaded shrimp or grilled cheese sandwich, baked potato or french fries, cole slaw or apple sauce, rolls, beverage and a dessert, while they last.

Adults/High School—\$13.00 Grade School—\$6.00

Preschool—free



February 25, 2024

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Second Sunday of Lent

Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18 | Rom 8:31b-34 | Mk 9:2-10

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Just two weeks ago, when Christians walked around all day with a cross of ashes on our foreheads, we may have received puzzled looks. Who bothers with fasting and almsgiving for 40 whole days? Many of us live with great abundance in this country; the only time we actually *need* to fast might be for lab work. With this in mind, it's helpful to remember the *why*: because Christ sacrificed himself for us, and he calls his followers to participate in his redemptive mission through our own sacrifices. Without sacrifice, we simply cannot be like Christ, nor will we see our own transfiguration in the resurrection to come. So Lent is a blessed season of reorienting our lives to Christian sacrifice: that of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Perhaps this season can also dispel some of the complacency that has a tendency to creep into our lives. The poor and hungry and disenfranchised still exist, and Christ depends on us to be his hands and feet to serve them. But how can we serve them if we do not embrace Christ's example as a living sacrifice? Ask the Lord for the grace to see and hear what he is asking us to do for him.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Today's readings show an incredible arc from Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son for God to Christ's Transfiguration after his Passion. Without Abraham's willingness to give up that which he wanted most and finally obtained, he would not have earned his greatest blessing from God in having countless descendants; and without Christ's sacrifice on the cross, all of mankind would not have been saved. Maybe we aren't called to great sacrifices such as these in our own lives, but we as Christians are called to offer our lives as a living sacrifice to our family, our neighbor, those in need, and God himself. Lent is a reminder not only to help us reorient our lives to God and his call for our lives, but to live it, too. By our own witness and prayer we have the ability to help bring others to the Lord and his promise of eternal life.

ACCOMPANY What is something you have always appreciated being done for you? What is a specific sacrifice, large or small, that you know has been made on your behalf? Make an effort this week to identify a specific need you know someone has, pray for that person/need, and offer to God a sacrifice of treasure, time or even your suffering for the fulfillment of that need.



Invest time each week to
expand your vocabulary and
deepen your faith.

25 February 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Agnus Dei |äg-nūs-'dā|

Latin term for "Lamb of God." A title given to Jesus by John the Baptist (John 1:29); the litany sung or said by the assembly at Mass before Communion ("Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world . . .") introduced into the Roman Rite in the seventh century by Pope Sixtus; an image of a lamb often with a halo and a banner and cross used as a symbol of Christ; a wax disc sacramental.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-agnus-dei>

CONTEXT

Either sin is with you, lying on your shoulders, or it is lying on Christ, the **Lamb of God** [Agnus Dei]. Now if it is lying on your back, you are lost; but if it is resting on Christ, you are free, and you will be saved. Choose what you want.

—Martin Luther

The address to the **Lamb of God** does not refer to Christ simply, but rather to Christ present in the Eucharist as a sacrificial offering.

—Joseph A. Jungmann, S.J., *The Mass of the Roman Rite*

WHY IT MATTERS

The Passover lamb is the symbol of God's people passing over from slavery and death to freedom and life (Exodus 12). A "lamb led to slaughter" is Isaiah's prophesy of God's faithful servant (Isaiah 53:7). The victorious Lamb in Revelation is the light of God's holy city (Revelation 21:9-22:5). With all of salvation history as its backdrop, the **Agnus Dei** epitomizes the sacrifice of Jesus who achieves our freedom from sin and death. "It is love to the end," says the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "that confers on Christ's sacrifice its value as redemption and reparation, as atonement and satisfaction (616).

RELATED WORDS

Sacrifice | Paschal Lamb | Expiation | Fraction

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What is the meaning of the Transfiguration?

Gospel Greek deliberately avoids the term *metamorphosis* in this account, an attempt to sever any "pagan" comparison. The brilliance of Jesus' face; the enveloping cloud, and Peter's suggestion of pitching tents evokes significant encounters Moses had with the Holy Presence. The simultaneous appearance of Moses and Elijah, representatives of Law and Prophecy, reinforce these anchors to the Hebrew story.

So what's it doing in the New Testament? Scholars offer three possibilities. One is that this event is the Gospel of Mark's misplaced Resurrection story. The second idea is that this story is a theological reflection of the first-generation church: a symbolic way of reconstructing what Jesus means to them. The third theory is that the Transfiguration is a private vision of Peter in which the truth about Jesus "came together" for him and shaped his understanding of the Second Coming before or even well after Easter. What's our final takeaway? Saint Paul declares that we will all be transfigured if we keep our sights trained on Christ.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-transfiguration>

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT (FEBRUARY 25)

For the love of God

One of the deepest spiritual longings is to know ourselves as the beloved of God. Maya Angelou, in her memoir *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*, recalls being asked by her teacher to read a section from a book that ended with the words, "God loves me." He instructed her to say the passage again and again. Eventually it dawned on her there might be truth in those words: "I suddenly began to cry at the grandness of it all," she writes. "I knew that if God loved me, then I could do wonderful things."

READINGS: Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Romans 8:31b-34; Mark 9:2-10 (26 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/022524.cfm>). "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."

FAITH IN ACTION

Make a Lenten practice of repeating "God loves me," and share the Good News of God's love with others.