



LENT *Faith Conversations*

Week of Feb. 21- March 6

Sunday Readings: *Genesis 22:1-18, Psalm 116, Romans 8:31-34, Mark 9:2-10*

ADULT REFLECTION

Our First Reading this week shares one of the most powerful moments in the Old Testament. God calls Abraham to take his beloved child, Isaac, to a high place and sacrifice him. Talk about putting Abraham to a test! Of course, God *never wanted* Isaac killed, and stopped Abraham. But he *did want* Abraham to be “all in” with God’s plan for his life. Fullness of blessing resulted.

The Gospel passage also takes us to a place of higher elevation, an indication of *encounter* with God. The Transfiguration, as we call it, reveals Jesus to his Apostles in dazzling white. God the Father speaks from a cloud, “This is my beloved son. Listen to him.” These powerful words are as much for us today as they were for the Apostles!

Both stories speak to the powerful bond between father and son. The sacrifice of Isaac is averted, but we know that Jesus will soon willingly sacrifice himself for all the world. Abraham and Jesus both reveal a degree of faithfulness to the will of the Father that is beyond heroic. It is only possible with the help of supernatural grace.

Have you ever felt challenged beyond your understanding or ability to cope? How did you respond? Were blessings attached?

What is at the core of God’s asking for your Lenten sacrifices? What does he want from and for you?

Would you like to surrender your hopes and expectations to God and have complete trust in his will? (Ask for this grace.) What holds you back? Don’t wait for perfect, surrender what you can.

FAMILY CONVERSATION & PRAYER STARTERS

God gives Abraham a big test of faith. *What was the test and did he pass it? Are we able to trust God even when difficult things happen? What helps us trust?*

In the Bible, mountains are where people experience God in a powerful way. *Why do you think this is? Individually and as a family, how do (or could) we have “mountain” experiences of God’s presence?*

God the Father says of Jesus “This is my beloved son. Listen to him.” *How can we “listen” to Jesus in our lives?*

PRAYER

Be with us, Jesus, as we try to listen to you and trust completely in your plan for our lives. Open the “ears” of our hearts. Strengthen us to pour ourselves out in love, for we believe that you, yourself, will fill us. Amen.

FASTING

Give up listening to music or your usual podcast one or two days this week so as to better listen to Jesus, and one another.

ALMSGIVING

Practice *seeing* the difficulties and needs of others this week. Talk together about this exercise of empathy and choose one situation where you can actively ease the hardships of another.