



Embrace the Darkness

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

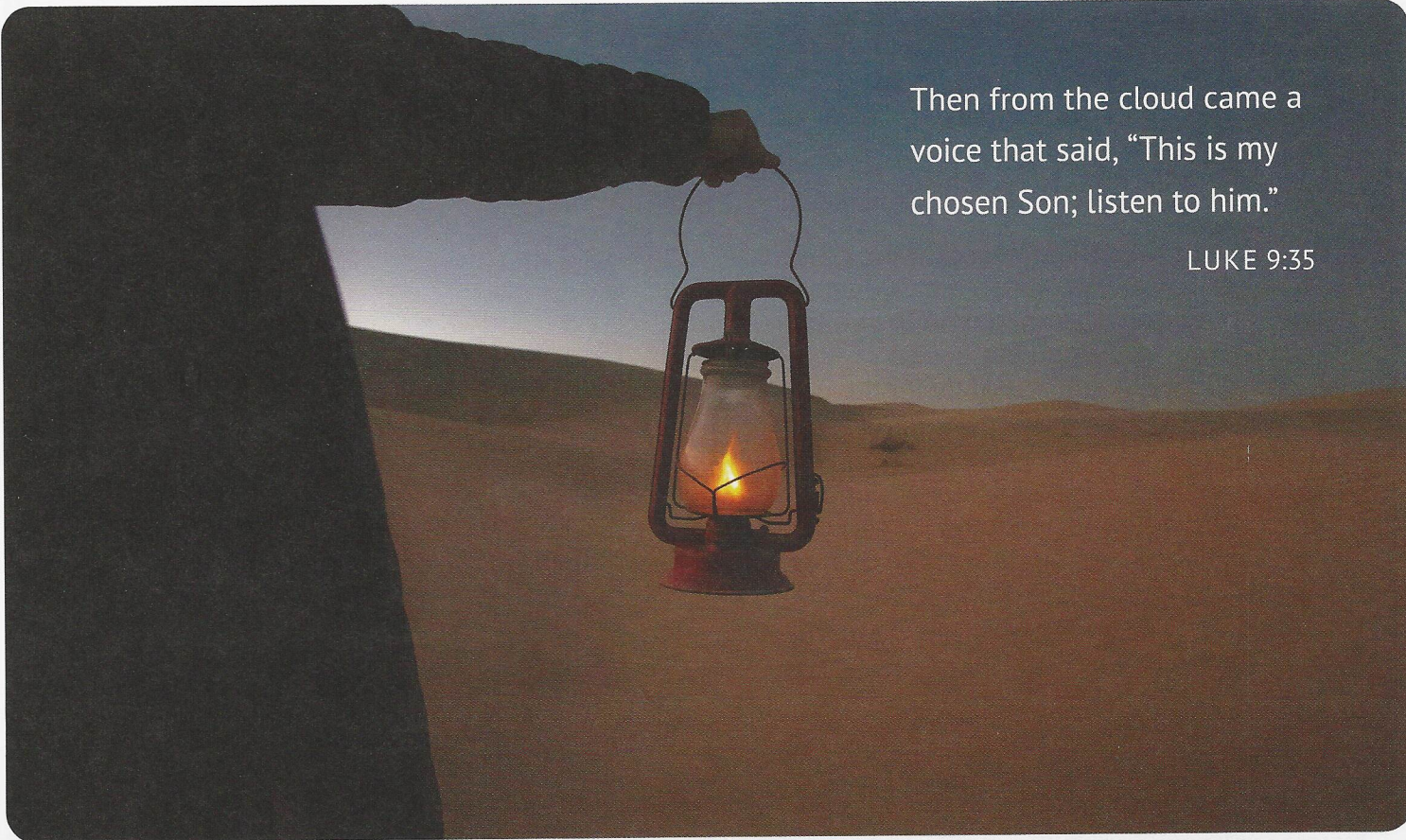
The darkness can be unsettling. As a child, my nightly bedtime ritual included checking beneath my bed as well as in the dark hall closet. One could never know what denizens of harm might be lurking there, hidden in the shadows. As adults, the darkness we fear is no longer what lies hidden about our home. Rather, the darkness we attempt to escape is the unknown forces that have the power to overturn our lives. It is the death of someone we love that plunges us into fear and loss, forcing us to somehow make our way, alone and unsure. It is the frightening medical diagnosis that has the ability to dismantle our planned future. It is the financial security that dissolves before our very eyes. In such darkness, we grope blindly to find our way.

The Book of Genesis notes that a trance came upon Abram, a terrifying darkness that enveloped him. The gospel relays how Peter, James, and John became frightened atop Mt. Tabor when they found themselves in a cloud that obscured their sight. Yet, the darkness became for each of them a place in which they came to know their God in a totally new way; it set them on a new path of faith. It is then that we, too, are forced to surrender trust in our own wisdom.

Unable to see clearly what is in store for us, we can only rely on a new path, trusting that we will be accompanied by our God. ●

Reflect

When has life's darkness brought me to a new and deeper faith in God?



Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him."

LUKE 9:35

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REFLECTIONS

The event we call the Transfiguration comes about mid-point in the Gospel accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus. With a selected group of disciples, Jesus ascends a height and is subsequently 'transfigured.' The scriptures declare that Jesus' "face changed and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly, two men were talking with him - Moses and Elijah. They appeared in glory and spoke of his passage which he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem."

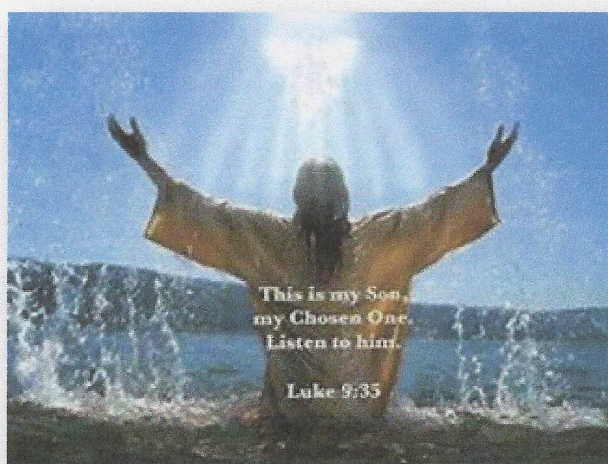
What actually occurs here is challenging to grasp, although it is clearly a personal epiphany for Jesus. Indeed, the primary intent is to provide both knowledge and courage to Jesus as he continues his earthly ministry which clearly will lead to the Cross. That Jesus is willing to undertake this mission, despite its challenges, goes without saying. After all, Jesus comes from God to do the will of the Father.

Scripture tells us that Peter and the other disciples had earlier "fallen into a deep sleep" but they awaken in time to see the Lord's glory. Although the actual transfiguration event is clearly for Jesus' benefit, the disciples are necessarily included, although they clearly misunderstand. Indeed, Peter's response about building earthly 'booths' or sites of worship clearly misrepresents God's intent. The disciples hear God's corrective comment. "This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to him".

Jesus communes with God in this transfiguration event. The disciples, despite that fact that they do not yet understand, have also been transfigured, changed. That's what an encounter with God is intended to accomplish - to change us so that we are more closely aligned with God's plan. We do not have to go to a mountain height to encounter God. God is present with us always, waiting for us to awake from sleep so that he can transfigure us. The words of the hymn summarize it all:

Transfigure us, O Lord, Transfigure us, O Lord. Break the chains that bind us, Speak your saving word, and where you lead, we'll follow, Transfigure us, O Lord."

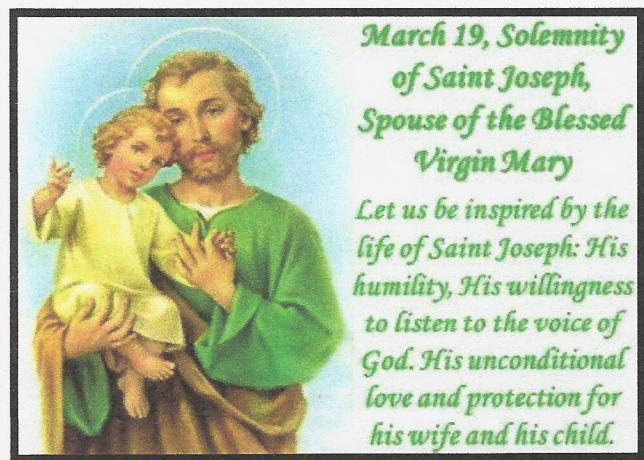
From Father Ken



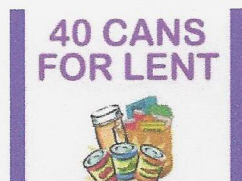
My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Second week of Lent is upon us. This coming week on Wednesday we have the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, spouse of the Virgin Mary. Joseph has been honored on March the 19th since the 10th Century. He was declared a patron of the Universal Church in 1870 by Pope Pius IX, and guardian of the redeemer in 1989 by Pope John Paul II.

On Wednesday, when we celebrate the Solemnity of St. Joseph, we will have a table set up at the front of the Chapel for donation of food going to those in need in our community.



Thanks to all who are contributing to the 40 Cans for 40 Days of Lent. Your donations of canned food make a big difference for many at St. Francis Village.



On Tuesday March 25th at 7:00 PM, we have the opportunity to assist the Knights of Columbus in making 500 sandwiches for the Presbyterian Night Shelter. Please consider joining us at the PAX Center.



The following is a list of opportunities during this Lenten Season:

Mass daily Monday-Friday at 9:00 AM
Adoration after Mass on Wednesdays and Fridays
Stations of the Cross on Fridays at 9:30 AM during Lent
Prayer Group gathers at 8:30 AM for Morning Prayers Monday thru Saturday and Afternoon Prayers at 3:00 PM Monday through Friday
Bible Study on Thursdays at 1:30 PM in the Video Room
Confessions on Fridays from 10:15 AM to 11:30 AM

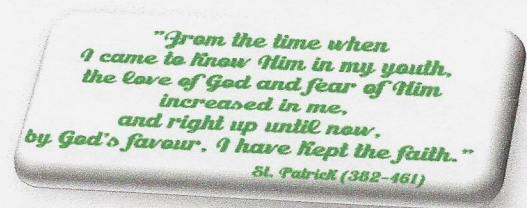
In closing this week's updates and reflections I came across observations made by Pope Francis and Sister Theresita of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Sister Theresita said:

It seems odd to use the word Happy and Lent in the same sentence. But it is a matter of how one looks at Lent. It is a time to deepen our relationship with God. There is no Alternative. Lent is a time we are called to come back to God. It is a time to stop and listen to the Lord's desire for us.

Pope Francis encourages us that Lent is a time to transform the Fast of Lent. He suggested that:
We Fast from judging others, Feast on the knowledge that Christ is dwelling in us. Fast from words that pollute; Feast on words that purify. Fast from pessimism; Feast on Optimism. Fast from the darkness around us; Feast on the light of Christ. Fast from discouragement; Feast on seeing good. Fast from idle gossip; Feast on spreading good news.

May Christ's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

*God Give You Peace.
Mike Pierson*



Feast Day of St. Patrick – March 17th

Mass Intentions	
Mar. 16, 2025	SFV Catholic Chapel Community
Mar. 17, 2025	Rest of the Soul of Jennifer Kemp By Tom & Ruth Kemp
Mar. 18, 2025	Father Bob Strittmatter
Mar. 19, 2025	Rest of the Soul of Jack Parkhurst By Patty Parkhurst
Mar. 20, 2025	Rest of the Soul of Esther Nieswiadomy By Glen & Mary Gillespie
Mar. 21, 2025	Rest of the Soul of Francis Patrick Gavin
Mar. 22, 2025	Rest of the Soul of Manus Donahue By Pat Donahue (5:00 PM Vigil Mass)

Dear Padre,

Does the Church teach how we should dress to go to Mass? Maybe I'm just old-fashioned, but the way some people dress seems very disrespectful.

Church teaching, dogmas, doctrines, and creedal formulations are not the specific resources to consult in order to answer this question. It is properly a matter of discipline and practice, although the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* does direct that “bodily demeanor (gestures, clothing) ought to convey respect” (1387). There are many commentaries on what exactly “respect” might mean.

It would be very difficult to establish a universal dress code. The many different cultures, climates, and particular circumstances of a specific Catholic community make a dress code unmanageable. It seems that you judge the local practice not up to your standards. Your judgment may be correct, or you may have unreasonable expectations. There was a time when “Sunday best” was the established norm. In other communities, the expectation would be “business casual” as a bare minimum. Now, it seems standards and practices are very fluid and flexible. All of this being said, it is ultimately a pastoral concern, not doctrinal or dogmatic. Try not to allow how other people dress distract you from your purpose at Mass. While they may not look like you imagine they should, their prayer might be genuine and heartfelt. ●



BRICOLAGE / SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

After the labors of each day, it will do us good not to switch off the light in the room without placing ourselves in the light of God.... Wonder at the boundless love of God, who never tires of us and has the power to transfigure our days, to give them a new meaning, a new, unexpected light.

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 13, 2022



UNSPLASH

Monday

March 17
Lenten Weekday
Dn 9:4b–10
Lk 6:36–38

Tuesday

March 18
Lenten Weekday
Is 1:10, 16–20
Mt 23:1–12

Wednesday

March 19
St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary
2 Sm 7:4–5a, 12–14a, 16
Rom 4:13, 16–18, 22
Mt 1:16, 18–21, 24a or Lk 2:41–51a

Thursday

March 20
Lenten Weekday
Jer 17:5–10
Lk 16:19–31

Friday

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

Saturday

March 22
Lenten Weekday
Mi 7:14–15, 18–20
Lk 15:1–3, 11–32

Sunday

March 23
Third Sunday of Lent
Ex 3:1–8a, 13–15
1 Cor 10:1–6, 10–12
Lk 13:1–9

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.