

St Pius & St Anthony 2nd Sunday Lent Homily 2026 Year A

Dream it, to bring it! That sounds like something a coach may say to a team about to start a game! A version of this is happening in today's gospel! The Transfiguration is a type of Pep Rally for Peter, James & John. Why them? They are Jesus' inner circle (the executive committee of the first apostles Jesus called), the future leaders of Church—Peter James & John (*they are blessed with several unique moments with Jesus -also only ones allowed to witness the Healing/Raising to Life of Jairus Daughter in Mk 5:37, also only ones here at Transfiguration in Mk 9:2 & only ones who progress deeper into Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus alone the night before He died in Mk 14:33*) St Paul later calls these three 'pillars of the church' in Gal 2:9. So in this Vision Quest up the mountain, Jesus takes them and reveals His Full Divinity to them – His Identity in all its glory!

This Transfiguration Event is the midway point in Jesus' ministry, echoing back to Jesus' revelation as God's Son at His Baptism, and flashing forward to His Resurrection in Glory -raised by the Father to be seated at His Right Hand! Dream Vision Fulfilled! We all heard about a similar one recently in the news over the Olympics. Near the end of the Milan Olympics, we celebrated the Women's and Men's USA Hockey Teams winning Gold! It turns out that the Men's hockey player Jack Hughes, who scored the winning goal in overtime, well, his brother Quinn revealed after the game, revealed that the night before, when he awoke and saw that his brother Jack was still awake in bed, at 12:30 am, he asked him, "You still up?" and Jack answered, 'Yeah... Dreaming about scoring the game-winning goal' Well, he was awake to be able to talk back, so I'd say he was visualizing the dream Like a great golfer on the green, aiming with his eyes the putt ball putted sinking right into the hole – Visualize, to Realize! That's the Transfiguration!

So, Jesus is setting the vision for Peter James and John of what is ahead! The Transfiguring power of change-Resurrection. And as if the 'face shining like sun and clothes as white as light' are not enough, Jesus had the double set of witnesses Moses, Elijah--Why them? (the Wonders of the Old Testament--Both had revelatory theophanies experiencing God in on Mt Sinai-Ex 34:28 & 1 Kings 19:8ff and both had mysterious passages at the end of life—Elijah doesn't die but is taken up in fiery chariot to heaven in 2 Kings 2:11 & Deut 34:6 says Moses dies but no one knows where body is buried, so is he still out there too – hints at resurrection!) But a double set of witnesses is here – not only Moses and Elijah, but also we hear the Father's voice and the Holy Spirit's overshadowing cloud-presence. The apostles are blown away by this and find themselves on the ground prostrate in awe and fear – what an overwhelming experience! And there's a

wonderful little detail here that highlights out Savior's so personal approach to us – the reading says (Mt 17:7) Jesus came to them and **'touched them'**, saying to them 'Don't be Afraid'. So personal – He touches them to comfort and assure them 'It is me and this is real'! Like after a 'shaking' experience, and someone says, 'Hold me-did I hallucinate?' Jesus' touch brings the tangible aspect of reality back to them. It's real! So, Jesus touches them and stands them up, and Matthew says it all when he writes, "the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone" (17:8) That is all that matters – that is what is going to get you through any/everything. Jesus alone-seeing Him-this magnificent breakthrough is available anytime, anywhere that we 'look at Jesus alone!' focus on him – it'll transport us to higher dimension – raise us up – transfigure us. That is what the great announcement of the Father is all about -The Father says 'This is MY-God's-My Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" If that sounds familiar, it is, because that is word for word what the Father announced at Jesus' Baptism (3:17 & then 17:5 here). WITH, the exception of, that now, we hear additional words. What are they? 'Listen to Him'! Listen! Sounds like someone hasn't been doing that? After the repetition of the formula –"Behold my son"! That it needs saying - Listen.

And here we have an almost comical element to the story! So, the Father repeats His claim -Jesus is My Son with whom I am well-pleased – and He emphasizes 'Listen' this time around. And even Matthew includes a detail as to when the Father's voice breaks in to this scene - Matthew 17:5 says the Father announces, "While Peter was still speaking..." Peter, enough! Sit down! So had Peter and the others not been listening? I'd say 'they hadn't been and we see it. This is chapter 17 of Matthew, and what just happened in chapter 16 was the great putting into place of Peter by Jesus, after Peter tried to redefine and talk Jesus out of the cross – when Jesus tells Peter 'Satan, get behind me' (16:23). And what did Peter still up to here in chapter 17, but trying to control Jesus by locking down this Transfiguration scene – Peter throws in the suggestion to "Make three tents here – extend this Divine Conference" (17:4) Peter wants to box God in and make a monument of Tents here. Peter's backward reaction is typical of us humans, we want to control everything -gain control of God -presume to tell God how to be God! But the Father's intervening voice brings our proper focus into view – 'Listen to Jesus-Listen.' Attune yourselves to God's voice. Again, Matthew summarizes this episode superbly, when he writes that after Jesus touched them, "the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone" (17:8). That is it. All we need to do, Jesus alone! To be raised up ourselves-to be transfigured with Him: We need only Attend & Concentrate on Him. What is Jesus telling us this Lent? What is Jesus showing us this Lent? How are we 'listening' to Him?