



Please Give Generously to the
**Pontifical Good Friday
Holy Land Collection**



Second Sunday of Lent: Listen to Him!

Mount Tabor, in southern Galilee, is a prominent and isolated peak that towers over the beautiful and cultivated Esdraelon Plain. While not named specifically in the New Testament, Mt. Tabor was identified very early on with the events of the Transfiguration. That is why such effort was put into the construction of the Basilica of the Transfiguration, with its twin towers and stunning mosaics.

Many great events in salvation history took place upon mountaintops. We find in the first reading for the Second Sunday of Lent Abraham's poignant willingness to sacrifice his own son, Isaac, upon Mt. Moriah, and in Mark's account of the Transfiguration we see a direct connection to Moses and Mt. Sinai as Christ manifests the same glory of God that was revealed to the Lawgiver.

Peter has just confessed that Jesus is the Christ (Mk. 8:29), and Jesus seeks now to bolster the faith of these three disciples chosen to be important leaders in the coming years. For a brief moment, the true power and majesty of Christ is revealed. The Transfiguration confirms Peter's confession, but it is also a manifestation of the Trinity and the life to which we are called as followers of Jesus. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches, "Jesus' baptism proclaimed 'the mystery of the first regeneration,' namely, our Baptism; the Transfiguration 'is the sacrament of the second regeneration': our own Resurrection" (CCC 556). From now on we share in the Lord's Resurrection through the Holy Spirit who acts in the sacraments of the Body of Christ. The Transfiguration gives us a foretaste of Christ's glorious coming, when He "will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body" (*ibid*).

As Christ's followers, however, we should also remember that we must come down from the mountain and look to Jerusalem where Our Lord was crucified, died, and rose from the dead. We must be willing to face persecution and death for His sake just as God "did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all" (Rom 8:32) as Paul writes in the second reading. As we descend from the mountain to face our daily trials, let us keep the words of the Father in our hearts: "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him" (Mk 9:7).

The Franciscans have served on Mt. Tabor since 1631. Their labors help preserve for all Christians the place of Christ's Transfiguration. Your generous gift for the Pontifical Good Friday Collection will maintain both that presence and the chance for all of us to walk upon the very ground of that momentous event.



Aerial view of the Basilica of the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor

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