

# Lent 2023

Second Sunday

*Rising by the ways of Hope ...*

*“After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, his brother,  
and led them up a high mountain by themselves...”  
(Mt 17:1)*

I invite you for this prayer time to find a comfortable posture and listen to this music:

[Open my eyes by Jesse Manibusan](#)

What happened on the mountain was not ordinary. Being with Jesus on the top of the mountain was extraordinary.

Recently I had this experience. “Jesus led me up to a high mountain”, when I had my 30-day retreat in Gloucester, Massachusetts, by the ocean.

During the retreat, I had a special experience. On one of the coldest days, the temperature was below 0°F, we saw the phenomenon of “sea smoke”. Formally known as “Arctic” sea smoke, sea smoke is commonly seen in the Arctic, but we could experience it in Gloucester.



*Sea smoke occurs when warm temperatures drop above relatively warm waters. By cooling, the air condenses into fog. The ocean water was frozen on the shore; a gentle steam was rolling in the bay. Despite the sunny weather, we could not see beyond the bay.*

***The newness of an experience can enchant us, or frighten us, and questions can arise...***

It reminded me of the disciples when they fell prostrate and were very much afraid.

***Should it surprise us that the disciples are shaken to the core by an experience of the glory, the splendor, the fullness of God?***

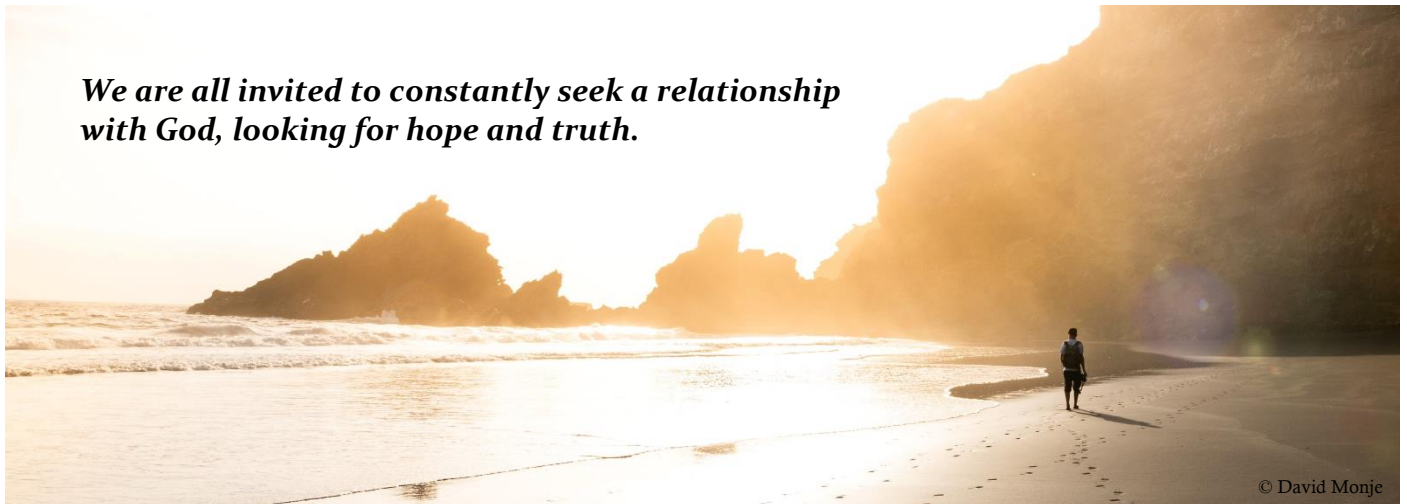
The glory of God they behold, however, manifests in the form of a person – their friend, Jesus, who reveals the face of a God drawn near, always seeking a relationship with humankind.

Jesus comforted his disciples. Jesus came and touched them, saying:

***“Rise, and do not be afraid.” (Mt 17,7)***

The renewed encounter meant that they did not stay the same, something gradually transformed in their hearts, even though they could only understand it partially.

I had a similar transformation on my retreat, experiencing the depth and the height, which I still carry in my heart to this day:



***We are all invited to constantly seek a relationship with God, looking for hope and truth.***

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In Helen Rosenthal RSCJ's blog, I read a quote from Thomas Keating:

“Hope as a virtue does not depend on the past. In other words, hope is not based on what we have done in the past, whether good or bad. No matter who we are, even if we are the greatest sinner on earth, we can always hope, because hope is not based on past actions. It is based on the infinite goodness and mercy of God here and now - a mercy that never changes.”

Sharing:

***What brings me hope?***

***Rising by the ways of hope: How did I make that experience?***

Thomas Keating, O.S.C.O, in “The Gift of Knowledge”, The Fruits and Gifts of the Spirit, says:

***“In our wounded world, we need to make an effort to seek hope and truth, and to take concrete actions here and now.”***

Jesus' transfiguration is an invitation for all of us to remind ourselves of the moments of extraordinary encounters with God and ***“rise by the way of hope.”***

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