

Take-Home • Session Ten

Eyewitnesses of His Majesty • 2 Peter 1:12-21

What We Found

A dying man chose his anchors: memory and Scripture. He named his death with the Transfiguration's own word, exodus, and staked the faith on testimony rather than cleverly devised myths: we were with him on the holy mountain. Set beside Luke 9, his account quietly omits his own embarrassing cameo, the signature of an honest witness. Scripture is the lamp issued for the dark stretch between the comings, and prophecy, which never came by the impulse of man but was spoken by men moved by the Holy Spirit, is rightly read in the same Spirit, within the living Tradition of the Church (CCC 113); the Ethiopian's honest answer, how can I unless someone guides me, was met not with a book but with a guide.

Voices of the Church

Voices of the Church

St. Leo the Great (d. 461), Sermon 51 on the Transfiguration

Preaching on Tabor, St. Leo teaches that the Transfiguration's great purpose was to remove the scandal of the cross from the disciples' hearts: the brightness of his hidden majesty was shown in advance so that the coming humiliation would not shatter their faith, and the hope of the whole body of Christ was anchored, since the members are promised a share in the glory that blazed in their Head. The Church reads this sermon in the Office of Readings each Lent; it is Peter's 1:16-18 preached by his successor.

Voices of the Church

St. Vincent of Lérins (d. c. 445), Commonitorium 2

St. Vincent asks why, if Scripture is complete and sufficient, the Church's interpretive tradition is needed, and answers: because Scripture's very depth means all do not receive it in one and the same sense; the same texts are read one way by one man and another way by another, so the line of prophetic and apostolic interpretation must be directed according to the standard of the Church's universal understanding. He is answering, in the fifth century, exactly the situation 2 Peter 1:20 and 3:16 describe.

Voices of the Church

St. Jerome (d. 420), Commentary on Isaiah, Prologue

The Church's great translator declares that ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ, a line the Catechism enshrines (CCC 133) in its plea that the faithful read the Bible frequently and prayerfully.

Hold St. Jerome beside St. Vincent and you have the full Catholic posture: maximal devotion to Scripture, read within the Church's living understanding, never one without the other.

Live It This Week

Live It This Week

This week: (1) Memorize 2 Peter 1:16. (2) Read Luke 9:28-36 once more, slowly, on your own, and then tell your Transfiguration story, the anchor moment of God's reality in your life, to one person. (3) Begin, or restart, a daily lamp habit: even ten minutes of the Gospel of Mark, traditionally rooted in Peter's preaching, would carry you through both letters' world. (4) Pray for the grace to love Scripture like St. Jerome and to read it with the Church like St. Vincent.

Scripture Memory

"For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (2 Peter 1:16, RSV2CE)

Before next session: Read 2 Peter 2:1-22 before Session Eleven.

Go deeper in the Catechism: CCC 85-87; 105-107; 113; 133; 554-556