

In Their Midst

Session 2. I AM Has Sent Me

The holy and faithful God calls a reluctant Moses, promises his presence, and supplies what his servant lacks.

What We Found

Israel's deliverance begins with God. He hears, remembers, sees, and knows. When he sends Moses, he does not transfer the work to an independent hero. God promises to be present and makes Moses a genuine participant in the deliverance God himself will accomplish.

God's name remains mysterious, but it is not an empty answer. It reveals the living God who is faithful to the patriarchs, present with Moses, and determined to save. Moses' questions gradually become resistance, yet God answers his weakness with signs, instruction, and the help of Aaron.

Voices of the Church

St. Gregory of Nyssa, c. 335-c. 395

St. Gregory reads Moses' approach to the burning bush as a movement toward divine illumination that also requires purification. Removing the sandals signifies that a person cannot approach holy mystery carelessly or remain bound to merely earthly habits.

The Life of Moses, Book II, sections 19-26.

How this is cited. This is a summary of St. Gregory's spiritual interpretation. Section numbering varies slightly among editions, but the interpretation belongs to this portion of Book II.

For the group. Invite the group to ask whether familiarity with holy things has weakened their reverence.

St. Justin Martyr, d. c. 165

St. Justin identifies the divine messenger who speaks from the bush with the pre-existent Word of God. His reading sees the burning bush as part of the scriptural preparation for confessing the Son's divine identity.

First Apology 63.

How this is cited. This is a faithful summary of St. Justin's explicit argument in First Apology 63. His identification is a venerable patristic reading, not a definition that every Old Testament theophany must be explained in only this way.

For the group. The Old Testament should be read in its own setting and also within the fuller revelation of Christ.

St. Gregory Nazianzen, d. c. 390

Summary of his teaching: defending his flight from an ordination he had not sought, St. Gregory argues that the care of souls is the gravest of commissions, that dread of such an office is not the same thing as cowardice, and that a man does well to tremble before he consents.

Oration 2, In Defence of His Flight to Pontus.

How this is cited. Summary of the argument of the oration as a whole rather than a quotation. Its opening sections answer the charge of cowardice and its closing sections record St. Gregory's surrender to the office.

For the group. Moses' questions are not simply faithlessness. Ask where reverent fear of a task should rightly slow a person down, and where it hardens into refusal.

Live It This Week

Practices

1. Choose one time of prayer this week to begin in deliberate silence. Put away your phone, make the Sign of the Cross slowly, and spend one minute acknowledging that you are in God's presence before speaking.
2. Write one task you believe God is asking of you and one objection you keep raising. Beside it, write the help God has already provided, such as grace, truth, a skill, a friend, or the Church.
3. Accept one concrete form of help instead of insisting that you must serve alone. Ask a trusted Catholic friend to pray with you, advise you, or share a needed task.
4. Read Exodus 3:14 aloud on three days this week. Afterward, pray simply: Lord, you are God, and you are with me.

Scripture Memory

Exodus 3:14

"I AM WHO I AM."

Exodus 3:14

Go Further in the Catechism

- CCC 203-204. God makes his name known to Israel, and the fundamental revelation of that name is given to Moses at the burning bush.
- CCC 205-206. God reveals himself to Moses as the God of the fathers who has come down to deliver his people, and the name he gives is as mysterious as he is.
- CCC 208. God's holiness calls for reverence.
- CCC 213. God alone is in the fullest sense.
- CCC 2575, 2577. God takes the initiative and calls Moses from the burning bush, and from that intimacy Moses draws strength to intercede for the people.
- CCC 128-130. Old Covenant realities prepare for fulfillment in Christ.
- CCC 590. Jesus' use of *I AM* belongs to the revelation of his divine identity.

Before next session. Read Exodus 4:18-6:30 before we meet again.