

In Their Midst

Session 12. Show Me Your Glory

The God who judges Israel's idolatry also hears intercession, reveals his merciful name, and renews covenant fellowship.

What We Found

The golden calf is a direct covenant betrayal shaped by impatience, fear, and the desire for worship that can be controlled. Israel's sin threatens the very gift for which the people were delivered, life in the presence of God.

Moses stands between God and the people with courageous, costly prayer, but he cannot finally remove their guilt. His limited mediation directs us toward Jesus Christ, whose enduring priesthood and self-offering truly reconcile sinners to God.

God answers Moses' request for glory by revealing his goodness, merciful name, justice, and covenant fidelity. Mercy does not deny the damage caused by sin. It restores communion that sinners cannot restore for themselves.

Voices of the Church

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, c. 315-386

St. Cyril points to Aaron's making of the calf and Moses' plea to be blotted out with the people as evidence that even very grave sin need not lead to despair when God's loving mercy is sought through repentance.

Catechetical Lecture 2.10.

How this is cited. This is a close summary of St. Cyril's use of Aaron and Moses in his catechesis on sin, repentance, and God's loving-kindness.

For the group. Let the gravity of sin produce repentance, not the hopelessness that refuses to return to God.

St. Gregory the Great, c. 540-604

St. Gregory presents Moses as a model of compassionate spiritual leadership because Moses is willing to be blotted from God's book rather than abandon the people entrusted to him.

Pastoral Rule 2.5.

How this is cited. This is a summary of St. Gregory's explicit appeal to Exodus 32:31-32 when describing the pastoral leader's compassionate solidarity with others.

For the group. Christian leadership does not stand above another person's failure. It carries that person before God in prayer.

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

St. Gregory teaches that Moses' desire to see God is not extinguished by what he has already received. The true vision of God draws the soul onward, following God rather than imagining that the infinite God has been mastered or contained.

The Life of Moses 2.230-239.

How this is cited. This is a summary of St. Gregory's interpretation of Moses' request to see God's glory and the command to follow behind God.

For the group. A real encounter with God should deepen desire, humility, and faithful following rather than produce spiritual self-satisfaction.

Live It This Week

Practices

1. Make a fifteen-minute examination of conscience focused on idolatry. Ask what receives the first claim on your time, money, imagination, loyalty, and sense of security. Name one concrete change and begin it within twenty-four hours.
2. Choose one person who is struggling or distant from God. Pray for that person by name each day for seven days, appealing to God's mercy rather than rehearsing the person's faults.
3. Spend at least twenty minutes before the Blessed Sacrament, if possible. Ask for no practical outcome during the first ten minutes. Simply pray, Lord, if your presence does not go with me, do not let me move ahead.
4. Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation this week if you are conscious of grave sin or have been postponing confession. If you are not Catholic or are unable to receive the sacrament, speak honestly to God about your sin and arrange a conversation with a priest or trusted Catholic mentor.

Scripture Memory

Exodus 34:6

"The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy and faithfulness,'"

Exodus 34:6

Go Further in the Catechism

- CCC 210. God reveals his merciful and faithful name after Israel's apostasy.
- CCC 212. God is everlasting, unchanging, and faithful.
- CCC 2113. Idolatry gives a creature the place owed to God.
- CCC 2576. Moses' intimate prayer grows from his mission and encounter with God.
- CCC 2577. Moses stands in the breach and intercedes for Israel.

Before next session. Read Exodus 35:1-39:43 before we meet again.