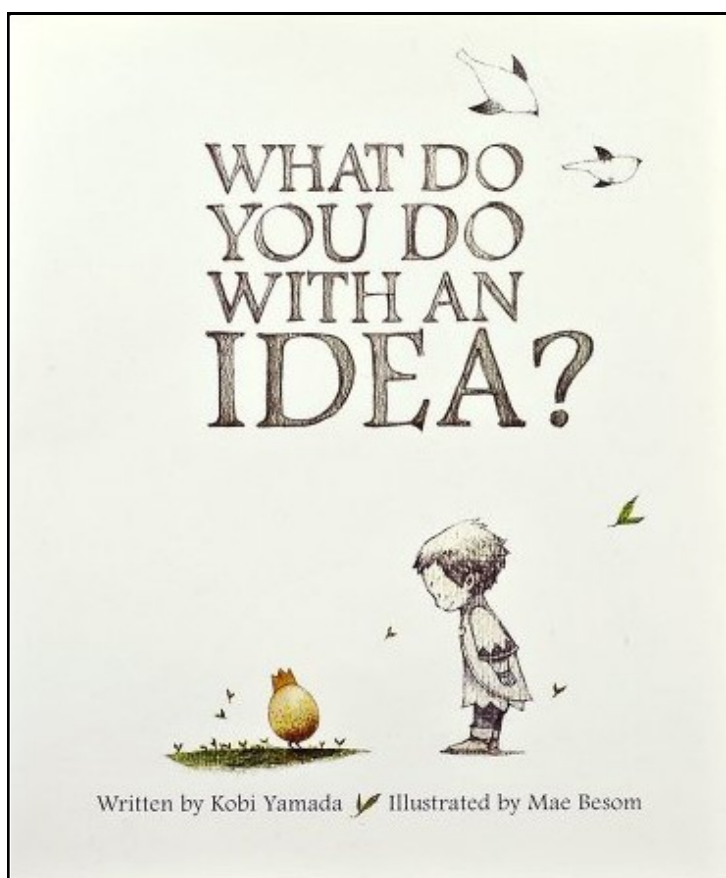


# Living Grace

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT  
CYCLE B

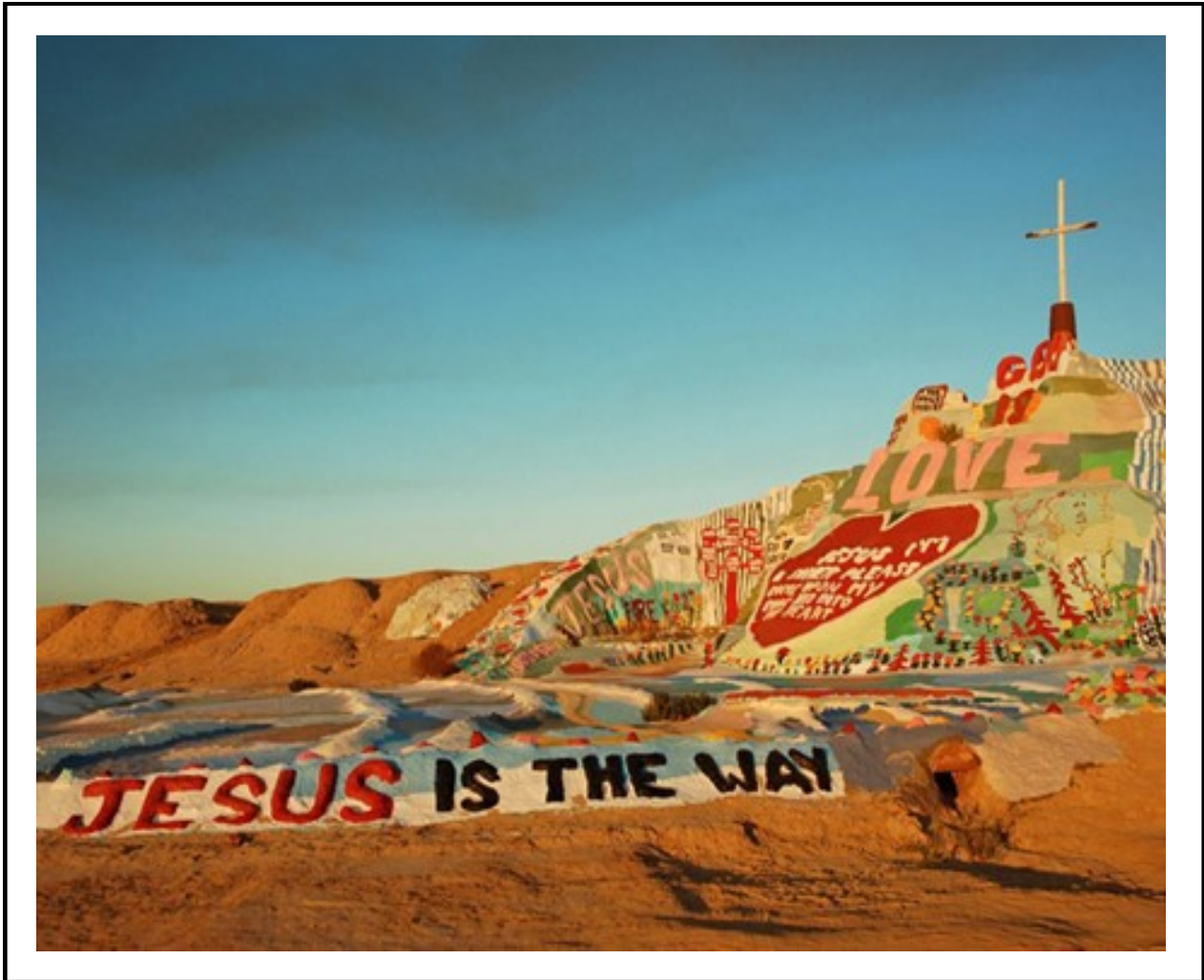
"GOD THE FATHER PLACES A NEW IDEA IN JESUS ~ AND IN US!"



*What Do You Do with an Idea?* Especially an idea that's different, or daring, or a little wild? This is the story of one brilliant idea and the child who helps to bring it into the world. The boy wonders about his idea, its origins, its purpose, its place in the world. The boy was uncomfortable, he was unsure what to do with the idea and so he tried to deny its existence. But the idea was persistent and would not leave, in fact it seemed to be growing and eventually, the boy got used to having this idea around. As the boy becomes more comfortable with the idea, he tentatively starts sharing it with others. Many laughed at the idea, as the boy suspected they would, but the boy perseveres. Becoming more confident, he decides to ignore his detractors and nurture and love the idea, to the point where he can't imagine life without it. The boy discovers his idea gives him the feeling of being alive and also perspective on seeing life differently. With the boy's attention and dedication, the idea beautifully changes the world and permanently becomes part of everything around him.

# Art & Faith

EXPLORING THE BEAUTY & TRADITION  
OF SACRED ART



## *SALVATION MOUNTAIN*

*Mixed Media by Leonard Knight ~ 1993-2009*

*Niland, California USA*

### EXPLORING THE ART:

### A BIG IDEA SPLASHED ACROSS A MOUNTAIN

Leonard Knight spent 16 years creating Salvation Mountain which is located in the lower desert of Southern California, just east of the Salton Sea, about a hour and a half from Palm Springs. Salvation Mountain is Leonard's tribute to God and his gift to the world with its simple yet powerful message, "God Is Love." Leonard's passion has lovingly created this brilliant "outsider art" masterpiece resplendent with not only biblical and religious scripture such as the Lord's Prayer, John 3:16, and the Sinner's Prayer, but also including flowers, trees, waterfalls, suns, bluebirds, and many other fascinating and colorful objects. Salvation Mountain must be seen to be fully appreciated as those who have made the journey will attest. Its 50 foot height and 150 foot breadth is made totally of local adobe clay and donated paint and is truly unique in the United States and probably the world. From its Sea of Galilee at the bottom, to the big red heart in the middle, to the cross at the very top, the reoccurring theme of "Love" is everywhere at Salvation Mountain.

# Living Grace

READ-ALoud STORY



*"Abide in Me" by Vicki Shuck, Esperanza*

*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

*By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*

*As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love.*

*~ John 7:7-9*

Read aloud video link:

**WHAT DO YOU DO WITH AN IDEA?**

Written by Kobi Yamada & Illustrated by Mae Besom

# Sunday Gospel

MARK 9:2-10

Jesus took Peter, James, and John  
and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves.  
And he was transfigured before them,  
and his clothes became dazzling white,  
such as no fuller on earth could bleach them.  
Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses,  
and they were conversing with Jesus.  
Then Peter said to Jesus in reply,  
"Rabbi, it is good that we are here!  
Let us make three tents:  
one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."  
He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified.  
Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them;  
from the cloud came a voice,  
"This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."  
Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone  
but Jesus alone with them.

As they were coming down from the mountain,  
he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone,  
except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead.  
So they kept the matter to themselves,  
questioning what rising from the dead meant.

# Making the Connections

FOR ADULTS

**BIG IDEAS START WITHIN US, BUT THEY ARE FOR EVERYBODY, JUST LIKE JESUS.**

Biblical scholars and theologians have long explored the question about when Jesus knew who he was. Was it as a baby? Or as a toddler when he began to play games and make friends? Was it when he started school? We get some clues when at 12 he was lost in the temple, and he said to Mary and Joseph after being discovered 3 days later, "I am about my Father's business". His mission had been formed in him, and the leaders of the community acknowledged it as Jesus mesmerized them with knowledge and wisdom in the temple. In the gospels of the last few weeks, we have heard God's revealing who Jesus was. First, with his Baptism, when a voice comes from above, "This is my beloved son..." Then, the whole community and religious leaders universally experiences his anointing when Jesus himself proclaims who he is, as he reads the scroll from Isaiah. Now, the very community that he grew up in, begins to SEE who he is. Problems begin to arise as people struggle to believe what they see. Jesus gathers followers, teaches and heals, spreading the BIG IDEA God has for him. God's BIG IDEA is not to come to fruition just for Jesus, but for the whole world.

Our children's story, *What Do You Do with an Idea?*, helps us understand how this BIG IDEA began to grow in Jesus. The little boy in the story is confronted with something brand new, a light that comes to him. He questions in a panic, "Where did you come from?" and "Why are you here?" Very similar questions that Jesus must have struggled with as he began to realize who he was and what he was being called to. Jesus was fully human and fully divine, so the human part of him must have struggled with how anyone would ever going to accept God's BIG IDEA. Like the little boy in the story, the human part of Jesus probably wanted to run away from it, hide it, and find an escape. But the God's BIG IDEA kept following him. Why? Because, like the little boy, this idea was a part of him. For many years, Jesus along with Mary and Joseph, kept this idea to themselves, but God's BIG IDEA for Jesus kept growing and growing. As their ideas grew, both the boy and Jesus accept them as their calling, and they kept growing and growing. Both had to be very fearful to share it. Jesus' life would never be the same, nor would the lives of his friends or family. Big ideas start within us, but they are for everybody.

Both Jesus and the little boy surrendered to the light growing within them, and they began to feel more alive in their preparation to share their idea with the world. They grew to love their idea. They grew to be able to see the wisdom in their idea. It helped them to see the world differently, it would do the same for others. In our children's story the boy explains, "Then one day, something amazing happened. My idea changed right before my very eyes. It spread its wings, took flight, and burst into the sky...it went from being here, to being everywhere. It wasn't just a part of me anymore...it was now a part of everything." Could the experience of Jesus with his best friends, James, John, and Peter in the transfiguration experience be described any better?! In our gospel reading, Jesus is changed and transformed right before their eyes. It is like the bright light that grew within Jesus, burst out into the world, and in that experience his best friends "got it". They began to understand God's BIG IDEA for Jesus, and for the life of the world. Jesus stood filled with light amongst Moses and Elijah. As Moses is the father of the Jewish people and Elijah their prophet, Jesus identity becomes clear - he is one of them. To confirm any doubts they may have had, God speaks from above and makes it clear.

Lent means Spring. Let's make this a Lent to play with the spark of God's BIG IDEA for each of us! Can we allow ourselves to be broken open to the Spirit? Let it in and let it grow!

# Making the Connections

FOR CHILDREN

**YOUR STORY:** What do you think about ideas? Where do you think they come from? What big and brave or small and whispering ideas do you have inside of you? Have you ever had a wonderful idea that you feared everyone would tell you to forget, because it would never work? Did you drop the idea, or did you nurture it, and watch it grow and succeed?

**THE CHILDRENS' STORY:** Can you relate to the boy in the story not being sure about an idea you have? What might you do to help your idea grow? What might you do to help others grow their ideas? What happened when the boy's idea grew and grew within him until it burst out?

**THE GOSPEL STORY:** What did Jesus do with God's idea that was growing within him? Do you think he understood it all at once or gradually? How did Jesus know it was time to let his idea out? What happened when God's idea for Jesus grew and grew within him until it burst out? What was the effect of God's idea for Jesus bursting out on the mountain top? How did it grow? Did it change the world?

Do you think God can place an idea in you that can change the world too? Might that be THE WAY of Jesus that we too are called to walk in?

# Biblical Background

MARK 9:2-10

**GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING:** The Transfiguration takes place on the south slopes of Mt. Hermon, the highest mountain in Israel (then and now) that rises to 9101 feet above sea level. Recall that the disciples began this journey to the foot of Mt. Hermon and the city of Caesarea Philippi from Galilee which sits at nearly 800 feet below sea level. This is quite an ascent and would have taken the better part of a week to arrive at Caesarea Philippi. The disciples and Jesus stay in Caesarea Philippi for six days before Jesus takes three of the disciples, Peter, James and his brother John, to the site of the event. Jesus would not have had to ascend to the very highest point of the mountain and more than likely would have been transfigured somewhere along the route toward the high pass that leads to ancient Damascus further to the north. This fact may be indicated in the statement of Peter that they should build shrines to commemorate the event so that others can make pilgrimage to the site. This would suggest that the event happened along a major road, or perhaps not too distant from the same.

**TERMS:** *Transfigured* The term is seen for the first and only time in the Gospel narrative. The appearance of Jesus is changed in such a dramatic manner that those who witness the event are almost at a loss to describe what they see. The term can suggest a radical change in appearance that we might easily associate with the firefly. Unlike the symbol of Christ rising being transformed from cocoon to butterfly the difference is that here, like the firefly, Jesus is returned to his original state.

*Moses and Elijah* Theologically, Moses represents the Torah (the first five books of the Bible that claim Moses as their author) and the rest of the Bible books that are "prophetic" in the sense that God speaks in the spirit through men in all of these texts. Elijah, as a Biblical prophet, holds a unique position due in that he did not suffer death but was assumed into Heaven. Jewish traditional teaching taught that Moses was also assumed into heaven. This teaching was taught to Jesus as a young man. The fact that Moses appears alongside of Elijah confirms Jesus is one of them, a leader like Moses and a prophet like Elijah. This gives him a separate and unique status.

**CULTURAL INSIGHT:** After this event is completed Jesus tells the three disciples not to tell anyone what they have experienced and, to our surprise, they do not. Normally a secret is shared up and down the grapevine of Middle Eastern cultural expectation. The fact that the disciples did not speak of this event to the other disciples is quite unusual. Why would they literally hold their tongues? The answer is found in the directive of Jesus that they were not to tell anyone about this experience "until" he had risen from the grave. It is the only time in the Gospels that Jesus qualifies his expectations concerning the sharing of a secret.

**INSIGHT INTO MEANING:** The three disciples know that Jesus wants them to keep the experience to themselves so that this new idea can grow in them as it grew in Jesus. It takes time to be transformed by a new idea and to grow in it before one is ready to carry it out into the world. This will be the apostles' task after Jesus leaves them. They will be the ones to bring the news of the New Testament reality - Christ risen. It seems according to scripture, that they kept the secret until after Jesus rose on the other side of the grave. Therefore, we can imagine that it was important to them and to Jesus and for the fulfillment of the mission Jesus had come to do.

# Family Activities

SHARING THE MISSION AT HOME  
AND IN THE WORLD



**QUESTION OF THE WEEK:** What spark of an idea is growing in you? Take time to share your ideas with one another as a family. How can you better support and encourage each other in the ideas growing in each of you?

**CHARACTER QUALITIES:** INNER LIGHT  
SURRENDER TO CALL

**FAMILY ACTIVITIES:** Make a collage of ideas that have changed the world. Who had them, what are their stories? How did their lives change through their idea? How did they change the lives of others? Were the lives of their friends and families affected much like the friends and family of Jesus?