



25. February 2026

## LENTEN SPIRITUAL RETREAT

### Day 8: “Hand in hand with Moses and Elijah, towards an authentic witness”

In today's two readings (Ex 24:12–18 and 1 Kgs 19:3–8), we encounter the two great prophets of the Old Covenant. On the one hand, there is Moses, who freed the people of Israel from the yoke of the Egyptian pharaoh and led them through the desert on behalf of the Lord. God has great plans for Moses. He calls him to climb Mount Sinai and says to him: *“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tables of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.’”* (Ex 24:12).

Moses obeyed, and when the glory of the Lord appeared on the summit like a consuming fire, he climbed the mountain, where he remained *“forty days and forty nights”* (v. 18).

A decisive event was about to take place, for which God prepared Moses during that time, introducing him even more deeply into the mission He had entrusted to him. The other great prophet is Elijah. His name means *“Yahweh is my God.”* Elijah lived during the reign of the wicked King Ahab, who ruled over ten tribes of Israel from 871 to 852 BC. He had a pagan wife named Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians (1 Kings 16:31). Jezebel was devoted to the god Baal and led the people of Israel into worshipping him. As a result, Elijah announced a three-year famine, which indeed came to pass.

During this great drought, the conflict reached its climax on Mount Carmel. There, Elijah rebuked not only King Ahab but also the entire assembled people: *“How long will you go limping with two different opinions?”* (1 Kings 18:21). He fearlessly confronted the 450 prophets of Baal as the only prophet of the Lord and challenged them. Since God gave a clear sign by sending fire from heaven upon Elijah's sacrifice, while the prophets of Baal received no response from their god, the people of Israel converted to the Lord (1 Kings 18:20–39).

In today's reading, we find Elijah exhausted and discouraged, fearing the vengeance of Jezebel, who had already threatened him (1 Kings 19:2). In this state, he even begged God for death. However, his mission was not yet complete. While he was sleeping, an angel woke him twice and said, *“Arise and eat, else the journey will be too great for you.”*

He got up and ate, and with the strength of that food he walked forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God (vv. 7–8).

Two great prophets who went through an intense period of forty days and forty nights, each in his own way. Moses was enveloped by the glory of the Lord and was able to remain in His presence; Elijah, strengthened by the food given to him by the angel, was able to continue on his way. Perhaps we can apply both elements to our own journey of forty days and forty nights: may the light of the Lord enlighten us to understand more deeply His holy laws and precepts, and to pass them on to those whom the Lord places in our path. On the other hand, may the bread of the Lord—which for us is His holy Word and the Eucharist—strengthen us to continue on our way when we feel exhausted and perhaps discouraged from moving forward.

But what is our mission?

We can deduce it from today's Gospel, where the Lord declares:

*“The men of Nin'evah will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.”* (Mt 12:41–42)

Therefore, our mission is to bear witness that God has entrusted His Church with the fullness of truth and that Jesus is the Savior of all men. This is more than Jonah, more than Solomon, more than anything the Old Covenant can attest to, more than the “seeds of truth” that can be found in other religions along with the errors that eclipse them, more than what other Christian denominations that do not belong to the Catholic Church possess. Are we aware of the treasure that has been entrusted to us?

Recognizing it has nothing to do with pride or arrogance, as some might think. It is about the truth that has been entrusted to us and for which we will have to give an account to the Lord. Yes, this is the great talent—even more, the immense talent—that we have received as Catholics and that must not be hidden in the ground (cf. Mt 25:18).

This awareness that there is “*something greater than...*” should shine in our lives so that it attracts people and they begin to seek the Lord. It is a great task that falls to all of us who love Jesus. When we find the treasure in the field, we do not keep it for ourselves. On the contrary, we must share it, and everyone will be enriched by it, becoming capable

of leaving behind those goods that are only an obstacle to obtaining the true treasure.

The flowers we gather from today's meditation are: asking the Lord to enlighten us, moving forward on our journey strengthened by His nourishment, and giving authentic witness to Jesus Christ and His Church.

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**Meditation on the reading of the day:** <https://en.elijamission.net/lenten-itinerary-day-8-the-conversion-of-nineveh-2/>

**Meditation on the Gospel of the day:** <https://en.elijamission.net/the-sign-of-the-lord-and-his-church-3/>