

# Sunday Message

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

THE WORD

Year A • 6 August 2023 • Psalter Week 2



Over the next few weeks, we are going to witness some extraordinary events in Matthew's Gospel.

Up to now, Jesus has preached at length to crowds of followers about the kingdom of heaven and the responsibility we have as believers to bring about the kingdom here on earth. But today, we're getting a glimpse of something astonishing. As Peter, James and John climb a mountain with Jesus, the appearance of their Lord changes and his face shines like the sun, his clothes a dazzling white. This is one particular event in the Gospels at which I would love to have been in attendance. The true nature of Jesus is being revealed and in case there is any doubt, God the Father speaks from the clouds: 'This is my Son.'

Understandably, the disciples are terrified and the gentle touch of Jesus brings with it some peace and reassurance. I wonder was their first instinct to run down that mountain and never return? If you were to place yourself in this particular scene, how would you have responded? The disciples simply fell to the ground, terrified. Their reaction to what they had seen and heard is an indication of the truth of this event. Jesus is revealed as both human and divine.

Despite the dramatic way this message is revealed to the disciples today, they are consoled by the words of Jesus, 'Do not be afraid.' They look up into the eyes of Jesus and they see their friend. ■

## REFLECT

The words 'be not afraid' are ingrained in us as baptised members of the Church. As children, we grew up listening to Gospel stories read to us by our parents and teachers, where Jesus tells us to be calm and at peace, 'I will be with you always..... be not afraid.' It could also be said, that whenever we prayed to Jesus as children, we formed this trusting bond with him, where we believed in his protective presence. So it's little wonder, that as we grow up into adulthood, these protective images of Jesus never leave us. The constant refrain 'be not

afraid' is a hymn that is silently sung within us when we pray.

This refrain is what keeps the disciples firm in their faith and in their mission of preaching and teaching. It is no accident that Jesus' reassurances were repeated at various occasions during moments of trial and stress in the lives of the disciples. The disciples will have to delve deep into their well of memories after the death of Jesus, to recall those wonderful moments of intimacy with him, where he often said, 'Courage, be not afraid.' Let us take this refrain from today's Gospel and allow it to help us in our prayer and our daily lives ■

## LEARN

When the late Pope John Paul II found out he had just been elected Pope, the first words from his lips were: 'Be not afraid.' He then addressed the world by saying:

'Why should we have no fear? Because we all have been redeemed by God. The power of Christ's cross and resurrection is greater than any evil which we could or should fear.'



## SAY

God our Father, I cling to you and I trust in your promises. You have told us not to fear and so I choose to hold your hand for I know I am sheltered by your grace.

## DO

After today's encounter with Jesus, the disciples see him in a new way. He is both human and divine. He is the Son of God. Take a little time this week to reflect on your own image of Jesus. How do the Gospels shape this image for you?

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

In a resplendent cloud the Holy Spirit appeared.

The Father's voice was heard: This is my beloved Son,  
With whom I am well pleased. Listen to him.

**GLORIA**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

**COLLECT**

O God, who in the glorious Transfiguration of your Only Begotten Son confirmed the mysteries of faith by witness of the Fathers and wonderfully prefigured our full adoption to sonship, grant, we pray, to your servants, that, listening to the voice of your beloved Son, we may merit to become co-heirs with him. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

**FIRST READING** Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

A reading from the book of Daniel.

As I watched:

Thrones were set in place  
And one of great age took his seat.  
His robe was white as snow,  
The hair of his head as pure as wool.  
His throne was a blaze of flames,  
Its wheels were a burning fire.

A stream of fire poured out, issuing from his presence.

A thousand thousand waited on him, ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.

A court was held, and the books were opened.  
I gazed into the visions of the night.  
And I saw, coming on the clouds of heaven,  
One like a son of man.

He came to the one of great age and was led into his presence

On him was conferred sovereignty  
Which shall never pass away,  
Nor will his empire ever be destroyed.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**PSALM**

Psalm 96:1-2, 5-6, 9. Rv. 1

Response:

The Lord is king, most high above all the earth.

1. The Lord is king, let earth rejoice,  
Let all the coastlands be glad.  
Cloud and darkness are his raiment;  
His throne, justice and right (R.)
2. The mountains melt like wax  
Before the Lord of all the earth  
The skies proclaim his justice;  
All peoples see his glory. (R.)
3. For you indeed are the Lord  
Most high above all the earth  
Exalted far above all spirits. (R.)

**SECOND READING** 2 Peter 1:16-19

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

It was not any cleverly invented myths that we were repeating when we brought you the knowledge of the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We had seen his majesty for ourselves. He was honoured and glorified by God the Father, the Sublime Glory itself spoke to him and said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour.' We heard this ourselves, spoken from heaven, when we were with him on the holy mountain. So, we have confirmation of what was said in prophecies; and you will be right to depend on prophecy and take it as a lamp for lighting a way through the dark until the dawn comes and the morning star rises in your minds.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Alleluia, alleluia! This is my son, the Beloved,  
He enjoys my favour. Listen to him. Alleluia!

**GOSPEL**

Matthew 17:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone. There in their presence he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light. Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking to him. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Lord', he said, 'it is wonderful for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and from the cloud there came a voice which said, 'This is the Son; the Beloved; he enjoys my favour. Listen to him.' When they heard this, the disciples fell on their faces, overcome with fear. But Jesus came up and touched them. 'Stand up,' he said, 'do not be afraid.' And when they raised their eyes, they saw no one but only Jesus. As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them this order, 'Tell no one about the vision until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**PROFESSION OF FAITH**

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with  
the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

*(all bow during the next three lines)*

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the  
Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under  
Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored  
and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and  
apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the  
dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Sanctify, O Lord, we pray,  
These offerings here made to celebrate  
The glorious Transfiguration of your Only  
Begotten Son  
And by radiant splendour  
Cleanse us from the stains of sin.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

When Christ appears, we shall be like him,  
For we shall see him as he is.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

May the heavenly nourishment we have  
received, O Lord, we pray,  
transform us into the likeness of your Son,  
whose radiant splendour you willed to make  
manifest  
in his glorious Transfiguration.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
Amen.