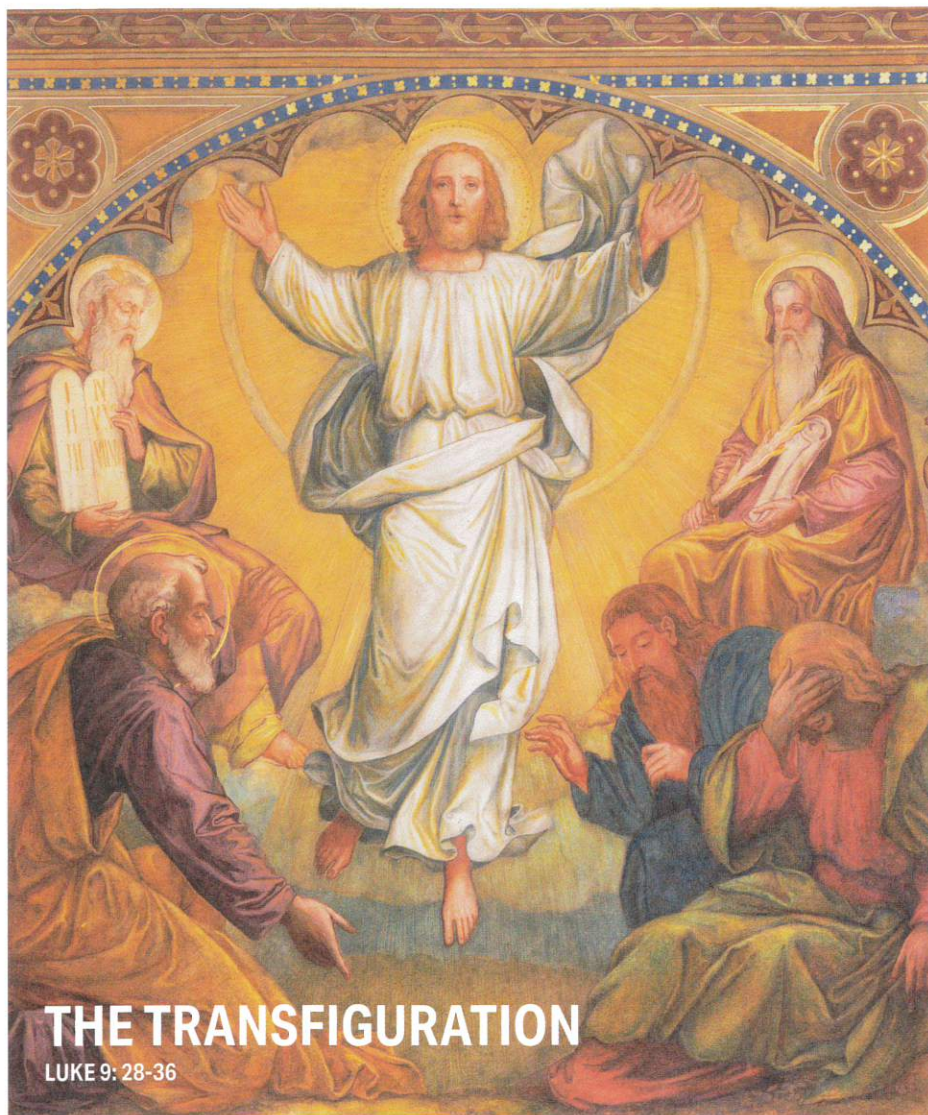


Sunday Message

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT

THE WORD

Year C • 16th March 2025 • Psalter Week 2



THE TRANSFIGURATION

LUKE 9: 28-36

The story of the transfiguration is told each year on this Sunday. This is because, in each of the gospels, it comes after Jesus has warned his disciples that he will be rejected in Jerusalem and suffer the ultimate penalty.

There are, therefore, two aspects to the story of the transfiguration. One is that it affirms Jesus' identity as the beloved of God despite the shadow of the cross that now hangs over his ministry. The second is that it serves as a reminder to the disciples that their task as they accompany Jesus on the road to Jerusalem is to really listen to him. This puts our Lenten efforts into the right context as the sole purpose of the season is to bring us to a closer relationship with Jesus and to understand more fully the meaning of his passion, death and resurrection.

This gospel challenges all the easy reductions that we make about Jesus: Jesus the inspiring teacher, Jesus the compassionate preacher, Jesus the friend of the poor. He is all these, but he is also the One who comes from the Father, the One who, we believe, was prepared for by the prophets, the One who stands at the centre of history. The transfiguration calls us to expand our labels or definitions we might have of Jesus. The Lord of history is transfigured with these earlier prophets each side of him, and Peter wants to set up a campsite! This shows the intimacy with which the human and the divine are present in Jesus: he is with his friends and interacts with them; he is present in the glory of God. God is always greater, and what we can say about God is what we can see in Jesus. ■

REFLECT

After reading this Gospel passage, we can very easily be drawn to our own mountain top experiences. The last mountain I climbed was in Newcastle in County Down and I reached the top of Slieve Donard by lunch time. A climb that's surrounded by beauty is an experience that stays in the mind for some time. You have your own experiences of beauty and connection to nature that you can share and places I'm sure you return to time and time again to reenergise the mind and body. Some of us might talk about a real sense of God's presence as we encounter the peace and beauty and stillness of being on a mountain.

You could probably say the same about the followers of Jesus in today's Gospel. They were energised by what they saw, the beauty of the scene was striking on top of the mountain as the clothing of Jesus changed to a brilliant white. They are transformed by the presence of God, which shone through Jesus. This journey with Jesus is an intimate one and the memory of their encounter with God will nourish their lives and their ministry forever. ■

DO

Take some time in silence this week to reflect on how you imagine the scene of the Transfiguration.



SAY

Transform us into the likeness of the love of Christ,
Who renewed our humanity so
that we may share in his divinity.

LEARN

"Lord you have made us for yourself, therefore our hearts are restless until they rest in you."
(Saint Augustine)

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

*Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face.
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face from me.*

Or

*Remember your compassion, O Lord,
and your merciful love, for they are from of old.
Let not our enemies exult over us.
Redeem us, O God of Israel, from all our distress.*

COLLECT

O God, who have commanded us
to listen to your beloved Son,
be pleased, we pray,
to nourish us inwardly by your word,
that, with spiritual sight made pure,
we may rejoice to behold your glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

FIRST READING Genesis 15:5-12. 17-18

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

In those days: God brought Abram outside and said, 'Look towards heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

And he said to him, 'I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess.' But he said, 'O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?' He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.' And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking firepot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying,

'To your offspring I give this land,
from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 27(26):1. 7-8b. 8c-9c. 13-14. R. 1a

R: The LORD is my light and my salvation.

1. The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
whom should I dread? **R.**
2. O LORD, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer me.
Of you my heart has spoken,
'Seek his face.' **R.**
3. It is your face, O LORD, that I seek;
hide not your face from me.
Dismiss not your servant in anger;
you have been my help. **R.**
4. I believe I shall see the LORD's goodness
in the land of the living.
Wait for the LORD; be strong;
be stout-hearted, and wait for the LORD! **R.**

SECOND READING Philippians 3:17-4:1

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.

(For shorter form read between > <)

>Brothers and sisters: <join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But >Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

The word of the Lord.<

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL Matthew 17:5

R: Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father.

From a bright cloud, the Father's voice was heard:

'This is my beloved Son, listen to him'.

R: Glory to you, O Christ, Wisdom of God the Father.

GOSPEL Luke 9:28b-36

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

At that time: Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah' – not knowing what he said. As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!' And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

May this sacrifice, O Lord, we pray,
cleanse us of our faults
and sanctify your faithful in body and mind
for the celebration of the paschal festivities.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased;
listen to him.*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

As we receive these glorious mysteries,
we make thanksgiving to you, O Lord,
for allowing us while still on earth
to be partakers even now of the things of heaven.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.