

Transfiguration
Transferred from Saturday August 6, 2022

**Let us Pray: Almighty God, on the holy mount
you revealed to chosen witnesses your well-
beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured.**

**Mercifully deliver us from the darkness of this
world, and change us into his likeness from
glory to glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

**I want to develop the context for this morning's
sermon by pointing out a few things. The first**

is that this feast is celebrated separately only by Anglican, Roman Catholics and Eastern Christians. Secondly, it is viewed as a major feast of Our Lord, on the same par with Christmas and Easter which this gospel precedes. Third this story is a foretelling of both the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth into Jesus the Christ.

So let me begin by reading from The book called "For All the Saints, Its a book of prayers

and Readings for Saints' Days according to the Calendar of the BAS of the Anglican Church of Canada.

It reads: "An account of Jesus' transfiguration on the mount is included in each of the first three Gospels, and, in each one it serves as a epiphany, a manifestation of the truth that Jesus is not only the messenger of salvation but also the saving message itself.

The story: "Jesus took Peter, James, and John up a mountain, where they beheld his figure

clothed in dazzling glory and his conference with Moses and Elijah. Moses was the servant of God who received the divine covenant and delivered it to Israel, while the prophet Elijah was expected to come again and inaugurate the end of the ages, when Israel would be restored and vindicated in the sight of all the nations. The vision of Jesus conversing with these two figures revealed that he was the third founder of Israel and, as God's very own Son, the fulfillment of all the promises made in the Law and Prophets."

So let us look at this manifestation, this Epiphany, this truth that Jesus is not only the messenger of salvation but is salvation itself.

What does that mean for us that Jesus is salvation itself? Where do we fit into this journey with Jesus to Jerusalem where he will suffer, die and be raised from the dead.

This epiphany, this pentecost experience, that Peter, James and John experienced was a deal changer even though it was not conscious to them until after Jesus' resurrection.

Again, I want each of you to remember if you can, a defining moment in your life.(your transfiguration). Think of a time when you reached a point where it became clear to you who you were, why you were on this earth and what purpose your life served for others. Each of us have had such a moment when the direction of our life was clear even if there were no clarity of how to move in that direction. (That's the apostles leaving the mountain)

The Transfiguration is a story that defines who Jesus is. In fact while this story reveals the glory of Jesus, it's not all it is. It is also an experience of Union with God, it is a story that connects that union and experience of God with the suffering of the people and with the cross.

The most important consequence of this experience and union with God is to ask:

What does it mean for us as Jesus' disciples to follow such a leader. The cloud (God, the

creator) said. “ This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him.” How do we listen? If we see and listen to the experience on the mountain we experience a Pentecost. It was an experience where the three of them saw for the first time how we must begin to live on earth, the same we way we will live with God in eternity. It is a blueprint of what we must work toward. It was so short, so joyful. Clearly seeing and experiencing this they didn't want to leave. Peter begins to entertain all sorts of options

that would keep them on the mountain. God allowed Peter, James and John to see the kingdom of God in full force. Since Jesus had made it clear that discipleship involves suffering, tragedy and death. This provokes Peter to say, "this is more like it". but the voice reminds Peter, James and John and us that we should listen to Christ and we are brought back to Jesus' teaching about the requirements for discipleship. The point of this reminder. Basically, you won't find God by looking back or staying put. Do you

remember when you first felt called by God.

The moment you had an irresistible tug

toward being all that God has called you to be.

All of us are called. All of us are transfigured;

although most of us never think about it. And

then it was over, so quickly-the voice, the light,

the heroes of the past-nothing is left but

Jesus, Jesus who is reaching out to Peter and

to us and telling us to "be raised." But, in order

to be r"raised" they had to go down the

mountain back to the world they left behind

but now with a vision of what life can and

should be is implanted. And on the way down the mountain Jesus will again intimate of his impending death and destiny. Peter will struggle to listen, to follow, to be faithful.

Actually he will more than struggle, he will fail. And Jesus will reach out, raise him up again, and send him forth. Each time Peter fell down and got up again, he would look back on this day and recall those words, "Just listen to him!"

This is the moment when our own transfiguration begins - when we fail, fall, and

we are lifted up again and realize that above and beyond everything else, we are called to listen to Jesus. This pattern of failing, falling this pattern shapes the life of every Christian. We, of course, try our best, sometimes succeeding and sometimes coming up short. We, too, have moments of insight and moments of denial. We, too, fall down in fear and dare rise up again to go forth in confidence. We, too, are called to listen. We are called to discern God's way in the world,

called to partner with God and in this way be transformed.

This realization wasn't clear to the disciples until after the resurrection. But nevertheless this vision was planted in their unconscious on the mountain as they experienced God. What was planted; the experience of justice and love, It was the vision of the beloved community.

The transfiguration experience plants the seeds of mutual accountability, mutual trust and mutual work.

Our work as we leave the mountain is to invest and imagine what the beloved community must have in place to sustain itself. On the way down the mountain we re-enter the world of the “isms”, the world of fear and anxiety, the world of war, the world of economic exploitation, the culture wars, the vaccine wars, the world of new birth, the

world of new life, the world of joys and new challenges.

And as we leave the mountain Jesus continues to heal and teaches as he marches to Jerusalem. So like the Messiah we follow we must as we re-enter the world must work to change the structures that enables the world to fear, hate, and exploit. We must inaugurate the Beloved Community by disrupting and replacing oppressive structures, we must heal and we must lead.

We are all called, this story is about us and the part we have to play in God's ongoing drama to save, bless and care for all the world. But if you accept this call and if this call is to work, you have to learn to hear God's voice for yourselves. And while God's voice may not be as dramatic as in this story remember that God often calls to us in and through the ordinary moments and people of our lives.

Remember that it is through Christ that you live; it is through Christ that you are made

new. Your yes to re-enter the world and journey with Jesus to Jerusalem means you have decided to listen to Christ as the voice in the cloud bid you to do. You must then allow Christ to have his way with you. Therefore, my sisters and brothers, my friends, let Christ run rent free in your head and hearts, Amen.