

The Transfiguration of the Lord

CYCLE B

Deuteronomy 7:9-10, 13-14

2 Peter 1:16-19

Mark 9:2-10

Opening Prayer

(The community joins together in singing, "We Walk By Faith", which may be found on the internet. After the song, two members of the community alternate in praying the psalm that follows.)

- I. I can't even see the sun this morning.
The coastland fog has blotted out heaven's light,
and the early hours are cold and damp.
But God is here-in me and around me,
and I will rejoice in God.
- II. I hear no angel choirs,
There are no church bells to summon me to worship.
There are only the thunder of four-wheel vehicles
and the acrid odor of exhaust
as men rush forth to their unnumbered shrines
and pursue their avaricious goals.
But God is here, and I will rejoice in God.
- I. I cannot see the mountains or smell the flowers
or even hear the song of birds.
I cannot love the people who bustle about me.
I see unhappiness and injustice and depravity.
I hear the ear-grating sounds of pain and complaint.
I feel the stifling pressures that suck me
into the stream that rushes by my door.
But God is here - in me and around me,
and I will rejoice in Him.

II. Our great God does care for His creatures.
He secures forever those who relate to Him.
He is here - in us and around us.
Let us all rejoice in Him!

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(The community pauses for some moments of quiet reflection.)

Commentary

In the first reading the prophet Daniel has a vision. The *son of man* comes on the clouds of heaven. All peoples, nations, and languages serve him. His dominion is to be an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away. In the gospel, Peter, James and John also have a vision. Jesus takes them up a high mountain, and there he is transfigured before them. They have no idea what is happening, and, in fact, are afraid. But they are moved deeply by what they see and hear, and decide it would be wonderful if they could stay there with Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Peter offers to make tents for the three.

Have you ever been on such a wonderful vacation that you did not want to come home? Some experiences uplift us in an almost overwhelming way. This mountain top experience captured them so, they did not want to let it go.

These two vision stories serve to relate Jesus to the whole story of his people and to picture him as the fulfillment of the hopes of the people. But the story of the Transfiguration is no story of naïve joy. It is surrounded by stories of the fate that awaits Jesus in Jerusalem. It is a story of affirmation however, a story that affirms that God's purposes for Jesus and for us will be realized. Suffering, rejection and death are part of the story of life, but God's purposes will be fulfilled in and through even these dark experiences. The light on the mountain will overcome the darkness of the deepest valley.

The Transfiguration story pictures a time of prayer, peace, joy and affirmation. It offers us encouragement and consolation. Jesus is God's "beloved son" for us. Let us also heed the voice and listen to him.

Faith Sharing and Integration

- ◆ When and where do you feel absolutely at peace? From where does this peace come?
- ◆ Mention an experience of darkness when you trusted God's light would come.
- ◆ Mention a time when the experiences of prayer and peace and joy and affirmation all came together for you.

Response In Action

- ◆ Make it a point this week to affirm others whenever you are able.
- ◆ Take twenty minutes someday this week to read over this week's gospel. Enjoy being in the presence of God.
- ◆ Be a peace-maker. Be deliberate this week to bring peace into the difficult situations that may arise.

Sending Forth and Closing Prayer

(The community enjoys several minutes of silent prayer, after which individual members pray a portion of the prayer that follows.)

- I. Today...I will live in peace with my God, my neighbor and myself. I will bring peace to my patch of this earth.
- II. Today...I will believe that world peace is possible. I will remember that hope is the most important gift I can give my world.
- III. Today...I will not be a party to pessimism nor join the indifferent.
- IV. Today...I will be happy. I will remember that my joy is up to me. I will carry my confidence to all I touch this day.
- V. Today...I will love my enemies. I will pray for them. I will try to see our differences from their point of view.

- VI. Today...I will disarm myself of rage by extending my hand in help and forgiveness.
- VII. Today...I will know that peace is the child of justice - that peace is more than the absence of war.
- VIII. Today...I will plant a seed of justice in this global village, in my city, in my neighborhood, in my family and in my heart.
- IX. Today...I will pray for peace for all those with whom I come into contact.
- X. Today...I will stand with Christ the peacemaker.

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(The session closes with an exchange of a sign of peace.)

