

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³ Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴ Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁵ While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." ⁸ And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. ⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

Each year right before Lent the gospel text whether from Matthew, Mark, or Luke is the Transfiguration of the Lord. While there is a bit variation in how the details are presented by each of the gospel writers, the back story to this seems to be much the same. After spending some time with Jesus, Jesus quizzes them on who they think he is. They confess that he is the Son of God, but before they have time to self-congratulate themselves because they gave the correct answer, Jesus informs them that they are following someone who will be handed over to their religious authorities, be killed and on the third day rise. One wonders if Jesus' statement as to his fate really deflated their enthusiasm or at least made them even more confused as to who they were following.

So Jesus takes a select few on a mountain, and in a spectacular fashion radically transforms before their eyes. They are greeted with the sight of the representatives of the law and the prophets; Moses, and Elijah. Finally they are treated to more of a display of the awesomeness of God witnessing glory and power. While Jesus calms the frightened disciples, he tells them to save this spectacular witness to him until Jesus is raised from the dead.

It is interesting to note that this is really the only time in scripture that while on earth anyone sees the glorified Jesus. Remember that after his resurrection, Jesus bears the marks of his crucifixion on his body. It is even more interesting to note that in 2 Peter 1:16-21(the second reading for last Sunday(March 2) an appeal to Jesus' divinity includes the event of Jesus' transfiguration. Perhaps to really comprehend who Jesus is, this was to say, "don't let the disguise fool you". You may hear about Jesus who walked this earth, but it was God's very son at work bringing salvation, hope and life until he returns again.

While we will most likely not have the same experience of Jesus' divinity as those disciples on the mountain, God will in various ways affirm his presence to us when we follow him, especially in the challenging times in our lives. In the midst of some real struggles in our first year at seminary, a fellow member of the church I came from sent a poem that was entitled "Because I have a Call". I felt it was God's way of telling me to keep on the path He had for me. There are other instances over the years where similar things have occurred, but with the same purpose, to keep on keeping on the path God was leading me.

God loves us, and has a plan for us as well as tasks to do to bring forth God's kingdom on this earth. The best of us however, can get discouraged or confused following such a direction. However be assured that somehow, some way, Jesus will reveal himself to you by the Holy Spirit, so while things look challenging, keep the perspective ,don't let the "disguise fool you" a revelation will come and you will be assured you are following God.

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