

Second Week of Lent, Reflection: Transfiguration

Our Lenten theme is ‘You are that man / woman’ – a call to a direct encounter with our own soul. This week we reflect on Peter, James and John – their moment of encounter with the divinity of Jesus!

Jesus chose only three apostles – Peter, James and John, and stood atop the mountain with them. They were journeying toward Jerusalem, shortly before His passion and death. Although they had followed Him for three years and witnessed His words and deeds, they remained unprepared for His impending suffering. Jesus knew that the cross could scandalize them.

In order to strengthen their faith in him, Jesus chose to reveal a glimpse of his glory. The flesh assumed by the Son of God had concealed his divine splendor from their eyes. He desired that they see the truth of His nature, just as He taught, “The truth will set you free.” He was transfigured before them.

The apostles encountered the divine glory of Jesus. They beheld Moses and Elijah conversing with him and heard the voice proclaim, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.” They were astounded, and the fear of God besieged them. It was an experience both unfathomable and ineffable. For a fleeting moment, they savored the unattainable beatific vision.

Peter’s words gave voice to their inner wonder: “Lord, it is good that we are here.” They longed for the theophany to last for eternity. Yet, when Jesus touched them and said, “Rise, and do not be afraid,” the disciples looked up to find no one there but Jesus alone.

In an encounter with even a glimpse of divinity, we come to realize the truth: the truth about God and our own souls; the truth about the meaning of our lives and their relationship to others and to creation; and the truth about where we come from and where we are going. The truth will set us free.

This Lent, may our encounters with the Divine – before the Tabernacle and in receiving Holy Communion – make us come to our senses, that we may follow the Good Shepherd with contrite hearts.

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