

Order of Service for Sunday February 14, 2021
Last Sunday after Epiphany ~ The Transfiguration
St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Lebanon, OR
S. Kay Young, Homilist and Doug Young, Lector

A Greeting

Today's Collect: O God, who before the passion of your only-begotten Son revealed his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant to us that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance, may be strengthened to bear our cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

First Reading -- 2 Kings 2:1-12

When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

- Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People
- **Thanks be to God**

Psalm 50: 1-6

1 The Lord, the God of gods, has spoken; *
he has called the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

2 Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty, *
God reveals himself in glory.

3 Our God will come and will not keep silence; *
before him there is a consuming flame,
and round about him a raging storm.

4 He calls the heavens and the earth from above *
to witness the judgment of his people.

5 "Gather before me my loyal followers, *
those who have made a covenant with me
and sealed it with sacrifice."

6 Let the heavens declare the rightness of his cause; *
for God himself is judge.

Second Lesson – 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People
- **Thanks be to God**

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 9:2-9

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

- This is the Gospel of the Lord
- **Thanks be to God**

Good Morning. Happy Feast of St Valentine, Happy Statehood day.

The Gospel today is, fittingly enough, from the very center of Mark's Gospel. It marks the transition from a documentation of Jesus' life as healer and preacher to Jesus' life on the road to Jerusalem, and his crucifixion, death and resurrection. But we're getting ahead of ourselves.

The church where my kids grew up had wonderful stained glass windows. We got to know some of them quite well while we sat trying to be quiet (or at least unobtrusive). When the kids were older I asked if they knew what a saint was and Mousie said it's the ones with the light shining through. And so they are; picture perfect. A shining example of following Jesus.

In science fiction sometimes a picture becomes a portal to another time or dimension. And sometimes we see in some scenes from our own lives or the lives of those around us, we witness something that is so amazing we have to follow and change our lives. I remember when my niece was about to have her son, in California. She sent a picture to her mom and when Carol Ann showed it to me, Her daughter was at the beach, and she glowed. I didn't just see, but FELT my sister's urgency when she said "I have to go. NOW." She moved 9 years ago this Monday. That picture was a portal to a new life for all of us.

So, one week after Jesus asks his followers a big question, "Who do YOU say I am?", he takes three of them with him to the mountain top. Jesus, the new Moses, the fulfillment of the prophets, brings his best friends up to the hill. To get away from it all? To be figuratively closer to God? Did he do this for himself or for the Disciples' benefit? I don't know. Maybe all of the above. And there he stood, with Moses and Elijah: the law and the prophets. He **actually** glowed. And it was a portal type of experience. Of course, Peter wants to DO something. He suggests building three *skenas*—booths or tabernacles such as those in which Jews dwell to observe the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:42-44), which commemorates the Exodus and the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness.

God interrupts Peter's babbling to say, "This is my son, LISTEN TO HIM."

Wednesday, the church asks us to slow down and take inventory. You would think we've been doing this continually since last Lent. Haven't we given up enough? Have we? Crying, complaining, moaning, and mourning, yes. But have we stopped, looked and listened to what Jesus said? We all have questions, worries and misgivings about the times we live in. Uncertainty is all about us. We judge the circumstances; judge ourselves, our material wealth, their health care, how well they can afford to mask or self-isolate. And we worry about our health and others. We know the homeless are hit hardest now that they have not even a place to wash their hands, or to use a clean bathroom. I think we deceive ourselves, though, if we think circumstances dictate our faith. Our picture we see in our lives is not really about any of those things we judge it to be. We all look for God to be present in our picture, to show up and **do** something.

When the cloud lifted there was only Jesus, shining, glowing. Here, right in the middle of the Gospel of Mark, we get our first look at the God who **is**. God beyond the circumstances. Here Jesus is showing us that we are to Follow him, to go to the portal, to Listen, and then, after we stop babbling, to move on into Life, Light, and Love with Him.

It's ok to want the mountain top experience, and I think we need to keep our eyes open for them. It's ok to remember them, too.

Remember :

The time you first held your beloved, your baby, your grand baby.

The grandest sunrise you ever saw.

The music that carried you away.

The best family reunion

Remember them... but don't become Peter. Don't build booths there to live. Those transfiguring moments are all around. They show us who we are and invite us to transform. These moments are happening all around us, all the time. God shows up and does things through us! That glowing picture wasn't just a transformative time for my sister, but for a lot of us. If we spend all of our time gazing at the images and memories, we can get lost and miss our transfiguration. Take time to live a Holy Lent, Look for luminous love around you

We all need that when we come to a place where Jesus is all that there is, when "we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another." (2 Corinthians 3:18, ESV). **Amen.**

Prayers of the People: a special form for the Last Sunday after Epiphany

Let us offer prayers to the living God, whose Spirit gives life.

The response is *People* Lord, graciously hear us.

For the people of God in every place.

Lord, hear us.

***People* Lord, graciously hear us.**

For all nations, their leaders and citizens,

Lord, hear us.

***People* Lord, graciously hear us.**

For all who are oppressed, afflicted, or in need, and for those who work for a just distribution of food.

Lord, hear us.

***People* Lord, graciously hear us.**

For married couples every, and for all those in covenants of love.

Lord, hear us.

***People* Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the sick and homebound of our community, and for those who visit and care for them, remembering especially those on our prayer list and those we name at this time, silently or aloud.

Lord, hear us.

People Lord, graciously hear us.

For all of us gathered at the wedding banquet of the Lamb, and for those who have died, especially Rev. Jerry Jefferies, Delores Mouradian, Socco Fierro, Mike Huycke; Ronda Jo Froemke, Lee Gibson aka "Catfish"; for Jill Namitz, Suzi's sister-in-law, and Jill's brother-in-law Steve; for Kay's sister Donna Bauer, Lois Marrow, and Don Woods; for all who have died from Covid, and for all whose names are known to God. May light perpetual shine upon them.

God, our Lord and bridegroom: You give us the new wine of an everlasting marriage feast: Hear the prayers we offer you this day and take us to yourself in righteousness and justice; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Prayer for St. Martin's

God of Love,
open our eyes and ears
to perceive you at work
in creation, the church, and our parish.
Fill our hearts with your love
that we may reach out in love to others.
Stir up our imagination with your Holy Spirit
that we may find new ways to live into life with you.
Give us a vision of your mission
that we may share your love and your spirit
in all the places where we work and play and worship you.
In Jesus' holy name, **Amen.**

**Blessings and Dismissal: Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God**