

2nd Sunday of Lent – Luke 9:28b-36 Transfiguration

“While Jesus was praying *his face changed in appearance* and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.”

I have always believed that beginning with our Baptism we go throughout this divine transformation by the Holy Spirit that in the end we become transfigured into Christ but not losing our identity. The Buddhists believe that one is absorbed into God, losing our identity. As Christians, our believe is that God is love, as John the Evangelist reminds us, but also including that other divine attributes that even the ancient Greeks knew, goodness, beauty, just, and truth. Anything less than that takes away from our transfiguration.

We have many saints that model that process throughout their lives by the many transformations they they had to go through, for example, St. Paul, St. Augustin, St. Francis, to name a few of the most popular. What would that person look like if they were towards the end of their transformation? We would certainly be calling them saints, or holy. But not all is visible to the ordinary person. If we were in that process ourselves, such people as we call saints would stand out to us and may even be our role models.

Like attracts like. If we are committed to the journey of Christ, other people along the way will find kindred spirits, those further along way we find attractive in a spiritual sense. Like attracts like. Hopefully the transfigured Christ is an attractive feature In this gospel, but such attractive souls carry a danger to others. Jesus was a danger to those who are not on the way to being transformed into other Christs. Jesus’ own transfiguration was to encourage the apostles for the road ahead which would end in their martyrdoms. Even Jesus was crucified by others who were not only jealous of him but planning to kill him, especially religious leaders. Jesus, plain and simple was a threat to them and path they were on that led them and others away from God.

That is why it is good to have a Spiritual Director that will keep us honest about our spiritual transformation, especially when we wander away and do not even know it. It is at least good to have a spiritual friend to share our spiritual lives with, especially in all honesty and who will tell us the truth. This is where quiet time is crucial, quiet time as part of our prayer life. Notice the gospel passage begins with, “While Jesus was praying.” I am sure he was not just reciting the

Our Father but was also spent quiet time listening to God. It is easy to get caught up in the excitement of good liturgy, especially in public prayer. But notice that they came down from the mountain. Jesus did not take Peter up on his desire to remain on the mountain. The event was to encourage them to continue with their everyday mission.

But what attracts us to make this journey in the first place, this difficult transformation in the way of Christ? Hopefully our pursuit of **Truth**.

"We want to know everything about everything; we won't rest until we find pure Truth. And we want to possess the **good**, and thus we strive for justice, we seek to do what is right, we produce and appreciate **beautiful** things. But once again, our passion for goodness is not satisfied with any particular achievement of justice or act of righteousness or work of beauty. For finally we want **Goodness** itself, supreme **Beauty**. But Truth and Goodness in their unconditioned forms are precisely what we mean by the word "**God**." In a word, we are wired for God. When are we most happy? When we do that for which we are made. We are not meant to remain at the level of inanimate objects or plants or animals. We are meant to realize the deepest longing of our souls, to order our lives to God. When we do this, we are no longer bored, and then there is a thrill and a romance to life." (Bishop Seen)

This is not a journey that we are expected to take on our own, by ourselves, but with the rest of the Body of Christ, beginning with our faith community, our worshiping community. But first we have to get over ourselves and not take ourselves so seriously. Which comes when we know that we are loved, especially loved by God. There is one way that we can realize our own lovable selves and that is through the process of **falling in Love**. Hopefully we all fall in love sometimes in our lives. I have several times. But "falling in love is not true love, that comes later after the effect of falling in love fades away, and for some, quickly! So realizing that, we do not have much time to understand what is really happening in this interesting process, the falling in love phenomenon.

It is simply this, when we fall in love, we project ourselves onto the one we think we have fallen in love with, but it is really a psychological trick. Once we fall out of love, then we have to spend the rest of our lives loving the other person, especially in unlovable times. In the end we transform ourselves into a loving person, or lover. Does this sound confusing? It simply means that the person who we thought we fell in love with is really our own loving projection. Are you saying that we are really that loveable enough and

powerful enough to fall in love with our own selves? Sort of, since this is the loving person that God sees in us. What gift from the God who is love, to know how loving we are to others as God sees us. We spend the rest of our lives trying to live up to that lovable we. That is our transfiguration. "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased."