

## GOSPEL

LUKE 9:28-36

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up the mountain to pray. As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah appearing in glory, and they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As these were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' - He did not know what he was saying. As he spoke, a cloud came and covered them with shadow; and when they went into the cloud the disciples were afraid. And a voice came from the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, the Chosen One. Listen to him!'. And after the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. The disciples kept silence and, at that time, told no one what they had seen.

The Gospel of the Lord.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you suppose in both this story and at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, that God speaks powerfully to those gathered, to Jesus and to us, about the sonship of Jesus?
2. How does it make you feel, that God also regards you as a precious son or daughter.
3. Like the Apostles in this transfiguration story, we are urged to listen to Jesus. How do you listen to what God is saying to you in your life?

## A REFLECTION BY POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT

On this Second Sunday of Lent the Liturgy is dominated by the episode of the Transfiguration which in Luke's Gospel immediately follows the Teacher's invitation: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me". This extraordinary event is an encouragement in the following of Christ.

Luke does not speak of the Transfiguration but describes what happens through two elements: the face of Jesus which changes and his clothes that become a dazzling white in the presence of Moses and Elijah, a symbol of the Law and of the Prophets. The three disciples who witness the scene are heavy with sleep: this is the attitude of those who, although they have seen divine miracles, fail to understand. It is only the struggle against drowsiness that enables Peter, James and John to "see" Jesus in his glory. Then the rhythm quickens: while Moses and Elijah take their leave of the Master, Peter speaks and as he speaks a cloud envelops him and the other disciples in its shadow. This cloud, while it covers them, reveals the glory of God, just as happened for the pilgrim people in the desert. Their eyes can no longer see but their ears can hear the voice that comes out of the cloud: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (v. 35).

The disciples no longer have before them a transfigured face or dazzling garments or a cloud that reveals the divine presence. They have before them "Jesus... alone". Jesus is alone with his Father while he prays but, at the same time, "Jesus... alone" is all that the disciples and the Church of every epoch have been granted; and this must suffice on the journey. The only voice to listen to, the only voice to follow is his, the voice of the One going up to Jerusalem who was one day to give his life to "change our lowly body to be like his glorious body".

"Master, it is well that we are here" are Peter's ecstatic words, that often resemble our own desire before the

Lord's consolations. However, the Transfiguration reminds us that the joys sown by God in life are not finishing lines; rather they are lights he gives us during our earthly pilgrimage in order that "Jesus alone" may be our Law and his word the criterion that directs our existence.

In this Lenten period I invite everyone to meditate assiduously on the Gospel. May the Virgin Mary help us to live intensely our moments of encounter with the Lord so that we may follow him joyfully every day.

## REFLECTION QUESTION

- What has struck you from this reflection by Pope Emeritus Benedict?

## PRAYER

*Spend some time in prayer with one another*

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/ describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. "Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray")
3. Move to prayers of thanks and praise to God
4. Prayer for each others' prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps reciting the 'Glory Be' or similar prayer.