

May I speak in the name of the Holy One, who calls us from glory into glory. Amen.

The story of the Transfiguration is dazzling and unsettling all at once. We hear of Jesus on the mountaintop, his face and clothing radiating glory.

The word Glory here is no accident and links the two passages we heard together. Glory in Luke means divine presence and majesty, this echoes the Hebrew use of the word in the story of Moses where glory is used to emphasize the substantial presence of God.

The word for overshadowed carries deep significance. This same word is used in Luke 1:35 when the angel tells Mary that the Holy Spirit will overshadow her. In both cases, it signals God's presence coming close, bringing transformation. Just as Mary's life was changed by that divine overshadowing, the disciples'

understanding of Jesus is forever altered by their encounter on the mountain.

At the top of the mountain, we hear the voice of God declaring: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (Luke 9:35).

The disciples are overwhelmed, terrified even. The original Greek word suggests not just fear but a sense of being shaken to the core in encountering something beyond human understanding.

Likewise, the word **terrified** reminds us that encountering God is not always comfortable or easy. It shakes us, unsettles us, calls us beyond what we think we know. The disciples fall silent, in awe, but later, they will speak, but later, they will speak. The unveiling of Christ's glory is not meant to remain hidden in fear but to be proclaimed in courage and joy.

But back to the story, Peter, ever eager, tries to capture the moment, to contain it by building dwellings. But before he can act, the cloud descends, and they are left in awe and silence.

Glory. Terrified. Veiled and unveiled. Overshadowed. Changed. These words leap from our readings today and challenge us to ask: *What do we do when we encounter God?*

Peter's impulse is very human. When we experience something extraordinary, something holy, we want to preserve it, to hold onto it, perhaps even to keep it for ourselves. But the Transfiguration is not meant to be contained. It is not a private vision or a relic to be kept safe. It is an encounter with the living God that calls the disciples—and us—not to build shrines, but to bear witness.

Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, speaks of transformation: “And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of God as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another” (2 Corinthians 3:18,).

This transformation describes not just a surface change but a deep, essential transformation—being made into something new.

The unveiling here is significant. Paul contrasts the veiling of Moses, who covered his face after encountering God’s glory, with the unveiling that comes through Christ. In Christ, we are invited not to hide but to reflect the divine light. We are being changed—from glory into glory.

This transformation is not for personal elevation or private spiritual experience. It is so that the world might see and know God’s goodness

through us. Glory is not something to be hoarded; it is to be shared. When we encounter God, whether in moments of prayer, in the beauty of creation, in the love of community, or in the cry of those in need, we are not called to build tabernacles and remain there. We are called to go down the mountain and carry that encounter into the world.

Despite their fear, the disciples do not stay on the mountain. They come down, changed. They carry the light of what they have seen, and that light does not diminish. It shines on, transforming the world.

We see in the Transfiguration a glimpse of the Holy Trinity at work—Jesus revealed in divine glory, the voice of God affirming him as the Chosen One, and the cloud, echoing the presence of the Holy Spirit. Though the text

does not explicitly name the Trinity, it is here, in motion, in relationship. This reminds us that our encounters with God are never isolated; they always call us into deeper connection—with the divine and with one another.

If we truly listen to Christ, as the voice commands, we will not remain as we are. We will be changed, drawn into the life and love of God, and called to reflect that love in the world.

And what does this look like in our world today?

It requires each one of us to be leaders. To leaders of change, to be leaders in example the life of God in our world today. Our world is in desperate need of a leadership that reflects divine glory, one that is not about power, control, or self-preservation, but about truth, justice, and humility. We see troubling examples of leadership that seek to distort

reality for personal or political gain. We need a leadership that stand in solidarity with nations that are under attack rather than blame them for global instability.

But we also see examples of leadership that show integrity—small nations, standing firm in the face of oppression, lead by their resilience and courage. Their leadership is not in grand displays of dominance, but in perseverance, truth-telling, and the unwavering pursuit of justice.

As a nation, we may be small, but we can still model leadership that others can follow. The Transfiguration reminds us that true power is not found in earthly dominance but in the radiant truth of God's love, which transforms us and calls us to transform the world.

What does this mean for us?

It reminds us that encountering God is never a solitary experience. The life of faith is one of relationship—of being drawn into the divine love that is always reaching outward. Just as Jesus stands in divine communion on the mountain, so too are we invited into communion with God and one another, carrying the light of transformation into the world.

Like the disciples, we cannot stay on the mountain. We need to carry the light of truth, we need to be transfigured people of God, showing that shine God's light shines on, God is and will transform the world.

So, as we stand in this moment of Transfiguration, we ask ourselves:

- Are we trying to contain God's glory, keeping it for ourselves, or are we reflecting it outward?

- Are we open to being changed, unveiled, transformed, from glory into glory?
- Are we ready to listen to Christ, not just with our ears but with our lives, letting that encounter shape who we are and how we love?

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May we be people of unveiled faces, reflecting the light of Christ into the world, so that all may see and give glory to God. Amen.