

REFLECTIONS FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT ~ 13 March 2022

The Mount ~ The Residence at Littledale

In the Hindu tradition, there is a gracious bow of greeting and farewell accompanied by the Sanskrit word *Namaste* that is usually translated as, “The divine light in me bows to the divine light within you.” Today’s readings in the Liturgy of the Word reflect that same sense of the oneness, the connection, of all creation in the light that comes from God.



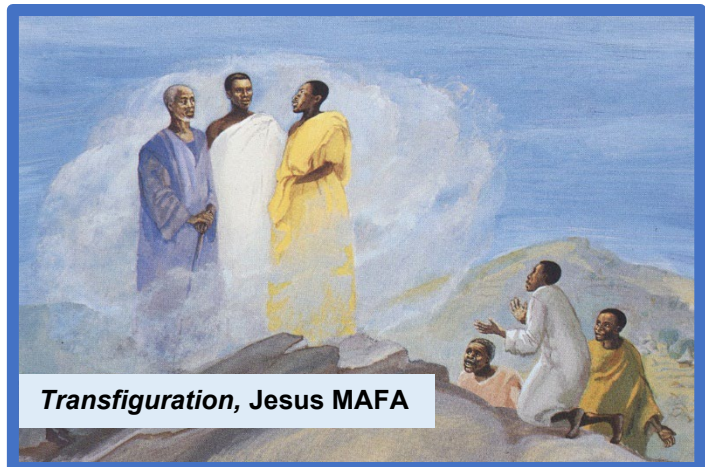
In the first reading, we learn more about the growing relationship between God and Abram. In Genesis 12, God calls Abram from his home in Ur in the Chaldees and promises that all “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Gen 12:3). In today’s reading from Genesis 15, God promises that Abram’s descendants will be as many as the stars of the heavens (Gen 15:5). God then “cuts” a covenant with Abram, appearing as “a smoking fire-pot

and a flaming torch” (Gen 15:17) and promising Abram the land “from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates” (Gen 15:18).

Later in Genesis 22, when God has renamed Abram Abraham and his wife Sarai Sarah, God will bring all this together, “I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore” (Gen 22:17). These images of both light and oneness – the stars of heaven, the flaming torch, the sand on the seashore, the land from the river Nile to the river Euphrates – are threaded through the covenant, the relationship between God and Abram, between God and Abram’s descendants (including all of us), and between God and all creation.

In the first verse of Psalm 27, we sing “The Lord is my light and my salvation.” And the second last verse of the Psalm reminds us that this is not a future happening. Rather “I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Ps 27:13). And, as descendants of Abraham and Sarah, we must not only see but be the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

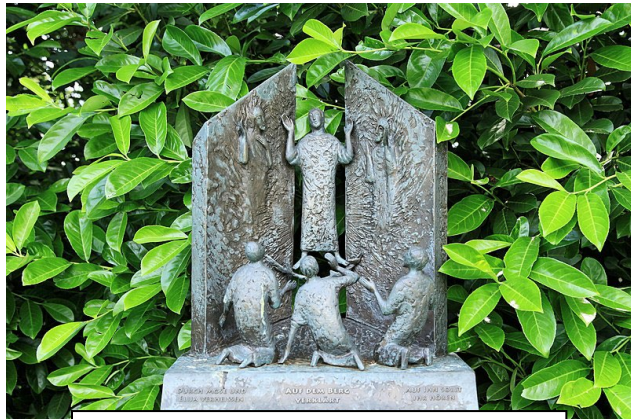
This sense of the light of God as present among us and within us, intimately and vibrantly connecting us with God, with each other, and with all creation is at the heart of the story from Luke’s Gospel as Jesus goes up the mountain with his disciples. This story we name the Transfiguration, “while Jesus was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white” (Lk 9:29). We have seen this before, “When he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his



Transfiguration, Jesus MAFA

face shone because he had been talking with God. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him” (Ex 34:29).

We read in Wisdom that Woman Wisdom is “a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of God’s goodness” (Ws 7:26). So, too, Jesus “is the image of the invisible God” (Col 1:15), “the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of God’s nature” (Heb 3:1), and “the image of God” (2 Cor 4:4).



Transfiguration of Jesus Christ

Frank Vincentz

[GFDL](#)

Peter, James and John see Moses and Elijah speaking with Jesus, thus visually connecting the Old Testament and the New Testament as our founding story. Then, after Moses and Elijah leave, there is a voice from the cloud saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” (Lk 9:35). A little while earlier, at the time of Jesus’ baptism, the voice from the heavens had said, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased” (Lk 3:23). Now, not only does God declare oneness with the Beloved Son, but God invites us to listen to him, to become one with him.

The English poet and Anglican priest, [Malcolm Guite](#), describes this so beautifully in a poem,

The Love that dances at the heart of things
Shone out upon us from a human face
And to that light the light in us leaped up,
We felt it quicken somewhere deep within,
A sudden blaze of long-extinguished hope
Trembled and tingled through the tender skin.

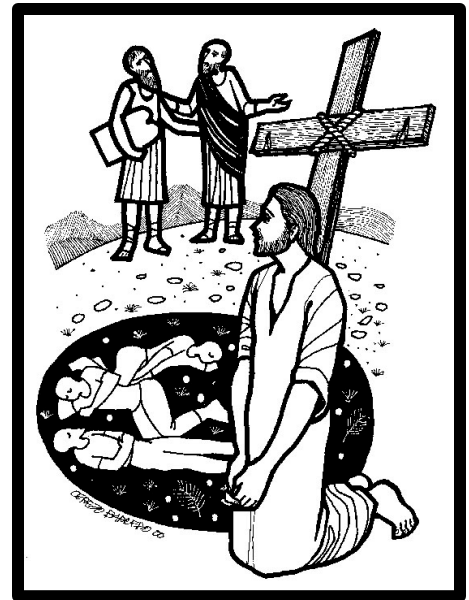
Where do you and I see God every single day? Where do you and I “catch” the light that comes when we see God and reflect it to one another? The poet, [Andrew King](#), gives us some hints of where we glimpse God every day:

Awaken us.

Awaken us in the fall of the snow, the drop of the rain, the crash of the rolling thunder.
Awaken us in the song of the bird, the laugh of the child, the gentle hug from another.
Awaken us in the flick of the fish, the leap of the fox, the lean of the weeping willow.
Awaken us in the sift of the breeze, the lift of the hymn, the gift of a bed and pillow.
Awaken us in the peal of the bell, the coffee’s smell, the feel of running water.
Awaken us in the starlight’s gleam, the hot meal’s steam, the flash of the diving otter.
Awaken us in the eagle’s flight, the mountain’s height, the joy of the talk with a friend.
Awaken us in early morning calm, the medicine’s balm, the quiet of evening’s end.
Awaken us in the sip of wine, the warm sunshine, the colour of leaves in autumn.
Awaken us in the caring word, the truth that’s heard, the fragrance of spreading blossoms.
Awaken us far, awaken us near, awaken us with your story.
Awaken us from where we have come to be here, awakened to all your glory.

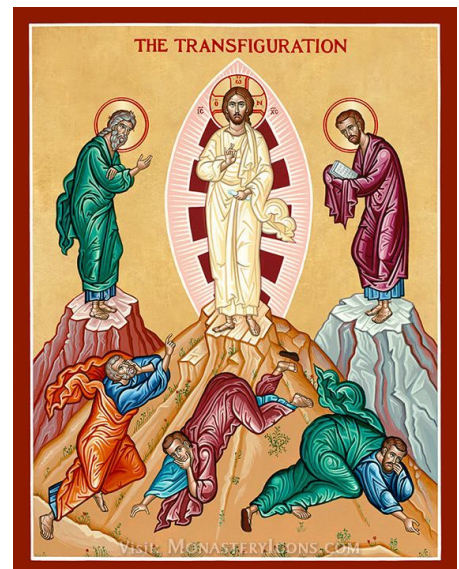
Yes, we glimpse God in the most amazing ways every single day. If we truly believe and trust, our faces will shine, reflecting the light of God now flowing through us to others. And, if we truly believe and trust, that same light of God will shine in the faces of others (human and other-than-human). Ruth Burrows (Rachel Burrows ocd) says it so simply, “If I let God take hold of me more and more; possess me, as fire possesses the burning log, then I give off light and heat to the whole world even though the influence be completely hidden.”

Like Jesus himself and Peter, James, and John, we cannot stay on the mountain and enjoy the glory of experiencing God’s light. Instead, they and we must return to the everyday, to our ordinary lives, so that our shining faces will be signs of hope and love for those with whom we journey and so that they in turn will build up our hope and love with their faces also shining in the reflection of God’s light. [Jan Richardson](#) shows us the beauty and the wonder of this blessing you are I are given, not to hold to ourselves, but to share with all creation:



Transfiguration, Cerezo Barredo

Believe me, I know how tempting it is
to remain inside this blessing,
to linger where everything is dazzling and clear.
We could build walls around this blessing, put a roof over it.
We could bring in a table, chairs, have the most amazing meals.
We could make a home. We could stay.
But this blessing is built for leaving.
This blessing is made for coming down the mountain.
This blessing wants to be in motion,
to travel with you as you return to level ground.
It will seem strange how quiet this blessing becomes
when it returns to earth.
It is not shy. It is not afraid.
It simply knows how to bide its time,
to watch and wait, to discern and pray
until the moment comes when it will reveal everything it knows,
when it will shine forth with all it has seen,
when it will dazzle with the unforgettable light
you have carried all this way.



In their Chapter last August, the Sisters of Mercy promised that they would live this commitment, *Mercying: Imaging the Face of God in all Creation ~ Misericordiendo: Siendo Imagen del Rostro de Dios en Toda la Creación*. Today’s readings give them and all of us the confidence of knowing that God’s light, the divine light, is in all creation, in every one of us. Let us bow to the divine light in each other. Let us rejoice in our privilege to have faces shining with the divine light of the One who creates us, who holds us in love, and who gives us the energy to be light for each other. Let us rejoice in the blessing of walking among all whose faces shine with divine light and share that divine light with us. This week let the divine light in me bow to the divine light in you!