

'BEING TRANSFIGURED BY GOD'S LOVE AS WE LIVE OUR DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVES'

2nd Sunday Lent Year C – 17th March 2019

CHRISTCHURCH

On Friday night, the people of Christchurch, New Zealand, and especially those who were killed that day, and the survivors and their families and Muslim community were a special **focus** of our prayer at the evening Stations of the Cross.

Over this weekend we continue to pray for them. A prayer for them is available on our [parish social media](#). We sent a message of support to both mosques, though only one of the email addresses there was working. Also a message of support was sent to the Christchurch Diocese.

LEADING UP TO THE GOSPEL PASSAGE

Even among the challenges and hardships of life, Jesus reaches out to bless us in love.

Let us recall part of the parish homily three years ago to set the scene. By the time of the Transfiguration in Luke chapter 9, Jesus has already been *baptised*, faced the *temptations* in the desert, announced his *mission*, been *rejected* in his home town, *called the apostles* to follow him, *healed* several people, *challenged* the Pharisees and scribes, *preached* the Beatitudes and *taught* in parables, *grieved* for the death of John the Baptist, been *recognised* by Peter as the "*Christ of God*", is *training* his followers as disciples, *declared* to his disciples that he will *suffer*, *die* and on the third day *be raised* from the dead.

Luke's Gospel tells us of moments when Jesus was in prayer. However, the transfiguration is one of those times when we get an insight into the prayer of Jesus because Peter, James and John are witnesses.

The Transfiguration comes *during* the mission of Jesus. During our lives, our daily lives, have we been transfigured by God in any way, in many ways? Perhaps it has been when God has shone the **LIGHT** on our secrets, on our inner-most *thoughts*, on our past *deeds* or what we *did not do*. on the *love within us*.

But it is not just a light. It is a revealing light of wonder, a light that dazzles because it heals and uplifts and gives us the courage to continue, a light that recognises that God has already held us and supported us, a light that reveals the intimate love of God for you and me, *the light of God that loves us fully, deeply*.

It is this light of God that shines on Jesus
and reveals God's love during his mission,
his exodus, as today's Gospel states, his journey, his service.
Lit up in love, the *voice of God* reveals:

"This is my Son, my Chosen, listen to him!"

Lit up this *Lent*, on our *Easter* journey,
we too are *called to Love, to Listen, to Act*.
We too have our mountain experiences during our journey in life.
Such moments don't have to be physically on a mountain.
We too find the courage, strengthened by God,
to go back down the mountain and live life as followers and disciples of Jesus
along the winding road before us.

GOSPEL OF LUKE 9:28-36

Let us note in the passage:

- Why go up the mountain?
'to pray'.
Where do we pray? (pause)
- When did the physical appearance of Jesus change dramatically?
'while he was praying'
How do we change when God's intimate love lights us within? (pause)
- Moses and Elijah were discussing with Jesus
his exodus (translated here as 'departure')
and his fulfilling of his exodus (translated here as 'accomplish')
*'were speaking of his departure,
which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.'*
What are we fulfilling in our lives? (pause)
- Cloud comes over them and the disciples become afraid, terrified.
*'a cloud came and overshadowed them;
and they were terrified as they entered the cloud.'*
The image of 'overshadowing' has several Old Testament examples.
When God calls us into the unknown and invites us to trust in God,
do we become frightened? (pause)
- Making the effort. They are very, very tired yet they stay awake and witness
*'but since they had stayed awake,
they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him.'*
We too are to make the effort as disciples, as part of carrying the cross.
What are some examples from our own lives? (pause)
- We note what did the Voice said.
*'Then from the cloud came a voice that said,
'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!'*
The mission of Jesus is crucial. But we need to go further.
We need to understand who Jesus really is – Son of God. My Chosen.
In our lives and in our prayer,
we are called to an intimate loving relationship with God.

What are some of those intimate moments? (Pause)

READING THE GOSPEL PASSAGE FOR OURSELVES

Let us now read the Gospel passage.

*'Now about eight days after these sayings
Jesus took with him Peter and John and James,
and went up on the mountain to pray.*

*And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed,
and his clothes became dazzling white.*

*Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him.
They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure,
which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.*

*Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep;
but since they had stayed awake,
they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him.*

*Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus,
'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings,
one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'
—not knowing what he said.*

*While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them;
and they were terrified as they entered the cloud.
Then from the cloud came a voice that said,
'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!'*

*When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.
And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.'*

INSIGHTS FROM PARISH MEMBERS DURING THE WEEK

On Monday night, one of our parish ministry groups reflected on this Gospel passage. Some insights were:

- Jesus must have been so affirmed by the experience
- We can identify with Peter at those times when we talk but don't understand what we are saying.
For example, Peter asks for three tents, recognizing three holy people, yet not recognizing that Jesus is different from the prophets Moses and Elijah as Jesus is human and divine, the Son of God.
- In Mark's Gospel we are not told what Jesus, Moses and Elijah were discussing. In Luke's Gospel we are told what the topic was.
- The importance of listening to Jesus – not just doing my own thing.
For example, the way Mary, the mother of Jesus listened
Another example, the disciple Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus.
- Listening to God – not just hearing but absorbing it, to take it in.

COMING BACK DOWN THE MOUNTAIN INTO DAILY LIFE

Coming down the mountain, what we will do and be, is *connected* to the wonder of the mountain experience – the revelation.

We are connected. A part of God's plan. We are not alone.

God empowers us to go down the mountain again – back into everyday life.

Jesus leads us down. Jesus accompanies us down and into life.

Changed through the intimate mountain experiences of God,

To love more fully, see more clearly, witness more genuinely.

If we were in a parish community in Christchurch, how would we be living out today's Gospel in reaching out to the local Muslim community and to the wider community of Christchurch?

Remembering and treasuring our transfiguration moments of love, how will we live our lives this week?

Let us pray.

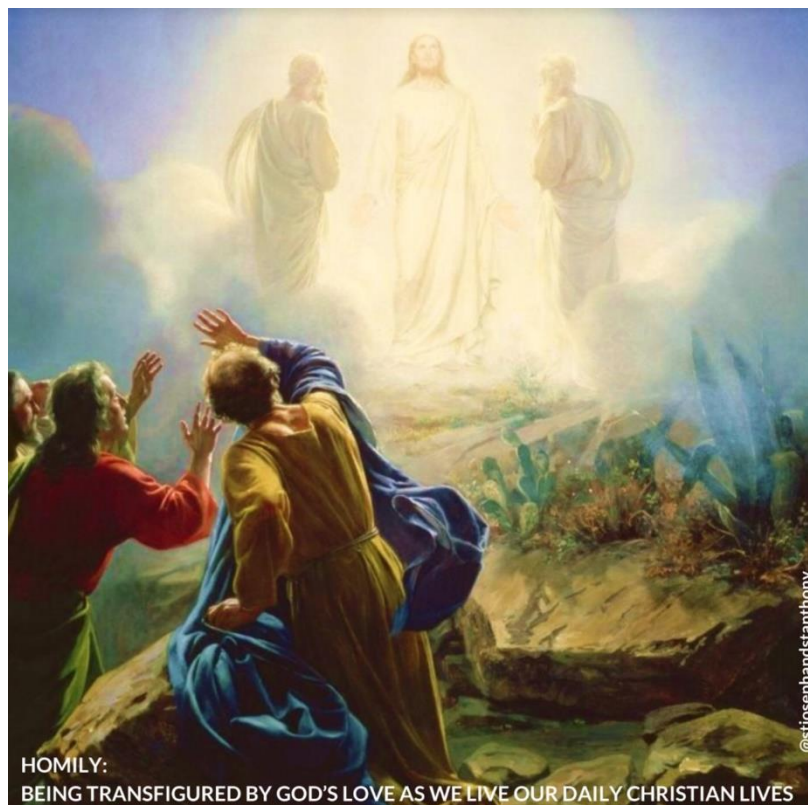
Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/031719.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook17032019>]

Prayer for Christchurch: <http://bit.ly/ChristchurchPrayer15032019>

The Transfiguration of Christ by Carl Bloch | public domain



HOMILY:
BEING TRANSFIGURED BY GOD'S LOVE AS WE LIVE OUR DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVES