



Bringing Home the Word

The Transfiguration of the Lord (A)

August 6, 2023

Resurrection Eyes

Paige Byrne Shortal

Who really changed? Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings, the One who was at the beginning of time and who will be at the end? Or was the change in Peter, James, and John?

I can imagine Jesus walking along the dusty roads of Palestine, shining like the sun, maybe conversing with a long-dead prophet or two. Folks didn't notice. He looked ordinary, just the carpenter's son.

I figure what could have happened up on that mountain is that the eyes of

the disciples were opened to the way Jesus was all the time. They were given a glimpse of a deeper reality. For just a moment they were given Resurrection Eyes.

I think it could have happened like that, because...well, it's happened to me. Sometimes it's when my choir sings. We ordinary, lumpy people begin to glow; our eyes full of light, our faces bright with the joy of harmony.

I've watched people process to holy Communion and they become softer and vulnerable. And the faces of those who come forward to venerate the cross on Good Friday...those faces could break your heart.

Transfiguration is what happens when a baby is brought into the room. It's like falling in love; the arguing couple who kiss and make up; or feuding neighbors who forgive each other; or enemies who finally shake hands in peace.

We need Resurrection Eyes. We need to see others and ourselves as God sees us—shining like the sun and full of light. Perhaps it will happen if we heed the voice from the cloud: "This is my beloved Son...listen to him." †



Sunday Readings

Deuteronomy 7:9-10, 13-14

Know, then, that the LORD, your God, is God: the faithful God who keeps covenant mercy to the thousandth generation toward those who love him and keep his commandments.

2 Peter 1:16-19

We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven while we were with him on the holy mountain.

Matthew 17:1-9

Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

A Word from Pope Francis

Prayer in Christ and in the Holy Spirit transforms the person from the inside and can illuminate others and the surrounding world. How often have we found people who illuminate, who exude light from their eyes, who have that luminous gaze! They pray, and prayer does this: *it makes us luminous with the light of the Holy Spirit.*

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 17, 2019



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Can you imagine seeing yourself and other people as God sees?
- What looks different?

Would I Have Known Him?

Daniel P. Horan, OFM

I have been surprised to encounter a number of people over the years who share that they've stopped going to Mass or participating in the sacramental life of the Church because they felt unworthy to do so. For some reason they came to believe that the sacraments were only for the righteous, the sinless in the eyes of God, the saints. Whether by their own accord or on account of what another person said to them, these individuals announced with no sense of false humility that they were not worthy for the Lord to enter into their lives, so they would save Christ the trouble of rejecting them by, in practice if not by intention, rejecting him first.

No one is worthy to receive the gifts God has given to us...yet the generosity of God's love, mercy, and forgiveness exceeds our imagining. The barrier we face in inviting Jesus into our lives isn't that he would never come, it's that we are too often afraid or ashamed to ask.



I wonder whether I would have really recognized Jesus for who he was if I were around during his earthly ministry. Likewise, even as a Franciscan friar today, I have my doubts about whether I would have joined St. Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century or whether I would have—like many of his peers—simply thought he was crazy and kept my distance from him.

I find these thoughts both comforting and unsettling. They're comforting in that I know there were many people at both times who had this experience of doubt or outright lacked the ability to recognize how God was at work before them. We see that implied in Jesus' words to his disciples in Luke's Gospel. Their eyes are blessed because they are seeing what has long been expected, that for which so many people longed to see. And still they so often didn't get it. Even the disciples deny, betray, and abandon him. They sometimes mistake Jesus for a civil or military leader. They seek positions of influence or power. They exclude others from drawing near.

These thoughts are also unsettling because we know so much more than those early followers....We should know better. I should know better. And I should follow Jesus without reservations. How slow I can be to trust God. †

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A Revelation:

From a Commemorative Marker in Louisville, Kentucky

"In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all those people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers....

There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun."

From Thomas Merton's *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*



*For the grace of open eyes,
that we may see the face of God
in each person we meet this day
and God's will in each task set
before us. Amen.*

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

August 7-13

Monday, Weekday:

Nm 11:4b-15 / Mt 14:13-21

Tuesday, St. Dominic: Nm 12:1-13 /

Mt 14:22-36 or 15:1-2, 10-14

Wednesday, Weekday: Nm 13:1-2,

25-14:1, 26-29a, 34-35 / Mt 15:21-28

Thursday, St. Lawrence:


2 Cor 9:6-10 / Jn 12:24-26

Friday, St. Clare:

Dt 4:32-40 / Mt 16:24-28

Saturday, Weekday:

Dt 6:4-13 / Mt 17:14-20

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