



GOSPEL GOSSIP

Jesus was transfigured before them...

Mark 9. 2-9

Sunday 11 February

The story in St Mark's gospel of Jesus being transfigured comes just after he tells his disciples that he will be killed, and the rise again. Jesus takes his three closest disciples with him when he goes up a high mountain to pray. While he is there, his clothes became an unearthly, dazzling white, and his disciples saw two of the 'greats' of the Old Testament, Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. A cloud appeared, and a voice was heard coming from it, saying: 'This is my Son, my Beloved; listen to him.' Then Jesus was on his own with them once again.

There are many accounts of Jesus praying. And his disciples asked him to teach THEM to pray, as he did in the Lord's Prayer. It was a way of life for him. He may pray in synagogues or in the Temple in Jerusalem. He may pray in solitude, in the wilderness or atop a big hill; he may pray in the early hours or at any time during the day. But pray he did, seeking to determine his Father's will, and the strength to fulfil it. But what of us?

- Is prayer a natural part of our daily routine?
- Is prayer limited to a certain time of day or place?
- Is prayer all us talking without letting God getting a word in?
- Is prayer seeking God's will or his approval or help in what we've already decided?
- Are we comfortable with being alone with God?

St Mark tells us that Jesus was transformed in his praying. Differences in time and space became immaterial. Moses lived up to 1600 years before Jesus; Elijah 900. None of them was a contemporary of the other. One led God's people to freedom in the Promised Land; the other was the one who was to foretell the coming of the Lord.

- How much attention to we pay to tradition?
- Is ours the living faith of the dead or the dead faith of the living?
- Do we see ourselves as part of an ongoing 'Israel' – seekers after God – or does it all begin and end with us?
- Is Jesus truly God's final word for our salvation?
- Do we see Jesus merely as a past event, like Moses and Elijah?

But what about the voice that was heard? It reminds of Jesus' baptism, at which Mark records that the same message was given, but addressed to Jesus, not those around him.

- Do we hear the words but don't recognise the voice?
- Are we afraid to hear God's voice?
- Do we ignore or mis-hear God?
- Do we truly see Jesus as God's Beloved?
- Do we truly accept Jesus as God's Son?

Some questions we all need to consider, especially as Lent shortly begins, and we are reminded of our wilderness journey with Jesus and with him look to death – and resurrection.