

- So many images and things to speak of in the Transfiguration.
- The high mountain, symbolic of the power and majesty of God...a reminder of both Mt. Sinai where Moses received the Ten Commandments, and the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus expounded on God's law and gave us the Beatitudes.
- The mountain and the thunder also symbolize Mount Carmel, where God manifested himself in fire to the Jewish people in response to Elijah's prayer.
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- Jesus uses the transfiguration—this partial “unveiling” of His glory—to Peter, James and John in order to reveal to them that He truly is the Son of God—His face shining like the sun and clothes white as light in fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy, so as to remove all doubt from the three apostles, and to give them strength in the future persecutions they would endure.
- The Transfiguration reflects the prophet Daniel's vision of Heaven we read today, in which he saw: *“One like a Son of Man coming, on the clouds of Heaven...[He] received dominion, glory and kingship...”*—a vision that St. John would go on to echo when he pens the book of Revelation.
- John's older brother James would go on to be the first martyred apostle as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Peter would be the first leader of the Church. John would go on to author one of the Gospels, and be the longest living among the apostles.
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- Here at the Transfiguration the apostles witness Jesus as the fulfillment of both the Law and the prophets—symbolized by appearance of Moses and Elijah together.
- And, of course, there is the voice of the Father Himself—using the same words as He did at Jesus' baptism: *“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased...”*

- ...and yet now adding the command: “...*listen to Him*”...an exhortation which Mary echoed at the wedding of Cana when she told the servants: “*Do whatever He tells you.*”
- And at the Transfiguration, the mercy of God is manifested, for the Jews believed to look upon the holiness of God was death, and thus we read today: “*When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid.*”
- But what does Jesus say? He touches them to reassure them, and says: “*Rise, and do NOT be afraid*”
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- Of course, this might all seem to some readers like perhaps a fantastic story just made up by the Gospel authors, but Peter affirms the Transfiguration in his second letter, which we heard today: “*We did not follow cleverly-devised myths...but we had been eyewitnesses of His majesty...We ourselves heard this voice come from Heaven while we were with Him on the holy mountain.*”
- ...the same Peter who would go on and be crucified himself testifying adamantly to the truth of what he saw.

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- Jesus comes to us NOT to seek to wield power for punishment, but rather in love and concern—so much love and concern that he will not withhold even His own torture and death on the cross to save us and to bring us forgiveness and true life.
- So He also tells us, his faithful: “*Rise, and do not be afraid...for God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.*”
- Christ's Transfiguration aims at strengthening the apostles' faith in anticipation of His Passion: the ascent of the "high mountain" prepares for the ascent to Calvary. Christ, Head of the Church, manifests what his Body contains and radiates in the sacraments: "the hope of glory" (CCC 568)

- The Catechism tells us: “*The Transfiguration gives us a foretaste of Christ's glorious coming, when he "will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body."* (CCC 556)
- And as for the term of this salvation? Daniel reminds us today: “*His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not be taken away...*”
- And so, we remember St. John’s letter—the same St. John who witnessed the Transfiguration: “*Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*” (1 John 3:2 RSV)
- And so, how can we not say with St. Peter: “Lord, it is so good that we are here!”

# Feast of the Transfiguration

4

2017

## Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord

### Reading 1 [DN 7:9-10, 13-14](#)

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As I watched:

Thrones were set up  
and the Ancient One took his throne.  
His clothing was bright as snow,  
and the hair on his head as white as wool;  
his throne was flames of fire,  
with wheels of burning fire.  
A surging stream of fire  
flowed out from where he sat;  
Thousands upon thousands were ministering to him,  
and myriads upon myriads attended him.  
The court was convened and the books were opened.

As the visions during the night continued, I saw:

One like a Son of man coming,  
on the clouds of heaven;  
When he reached the Ancient One  
and was presented before him,  
The one like a Son of man received dominion, glory, and kingship;  
all peoples, nations, and languages serve him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion  
that shall not be taken away,  
his kingship shall not be destroyed.

### Responsorial Psalm [PS 97:1-2, 5-6, 9](#)

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R. (1a and 9a) **The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

The LORD is king; let the earth rejoice;  
let the many islands be glad.  
Clouds and darkness are round about him,  
justice and judgment are the foundation of his throne.

R. **The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,  
before the LORD of all the earth.

The heavens proclaim his justice,  
and all peoples see his glory.

R. **The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

Because you, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth,  
exalted far above all gods.

R. **The Lord is king, the Most High over all the earth.**

### Reading 2 [2 PT 1:16-19](#)

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Beloved:

We did not follow cleverly devised myths

# Feast of the Transfiguration

2017

5

when we made known to you  
the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty.  
For he received honor and glory from God the Father  
when that unique declaration came to him from the majestic glory,  
"This is my Son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased."  
We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven  
while we were with him on the holy mountain.  
Moreover, we possess the prophetic message that is altogether reliable.  
You will do well to be attentive to it,  
as to a lamp shining in a dark place,  
until day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

## **Alleluia** [MT 17:5C](#)

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**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased;  
listen to him.

**R. Alleluia, alleluia.**

## **Gospel** [MT 17:1-9](#)

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Jesus took Peter, James, and his brother, John,  
and led them up a high mountain by themselves.  
And he was transfigured before them;  
his face shone like the sun  
and his clothes became white as light.  
And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them,  
conversing with him.  
Then Peter said to Jesus in reply,  
"Lord, it is good that we are here.  
If you wish, I will make three tents here,  
one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."  
While he was still speaking, behold,  
a bright cloud cast a shadow over them,  
then from the cloud came a voice that said,  
"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased;  
listen to him."  
When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate  
and were very much afraid.  
But Jesus came and touched them, saying,  
"Rise, and do not be afraid."  
And when the disciples raised their eyes,  
they saw no one else but Jesus alone.

As they were coming down from the mountain,  
Jesus charged them,  
"Do not tell the vision to anyone  
until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."