



SECOND
SUNDAY
OF LENT
YR. B

Mark 9:2-10

2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: **3** his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. **4** Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. **5** Then Peter spoke to Jesus: 'Rabbi,' he said, 'it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' **6** He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. **7** And a cloud came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.' **8** Then suddenly, when they looked round, they saw no one with them any more but only Jesus. **9** As they came down from the mountain he warned them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. **10** They observed the warning faithfully, though among themselves they discussed what 'rising from the dead' could mean.

Other readings: Genesis 22:1-2,9-13,15-18 Psalm 115 (116) Romans 8:31-34

It is an ancient tradition that the story of the transfiguration of Jesus is read on the Second Sunday of Lent. This mysterious story tells of a strange transformation in the appearance of Jesus which profoundly affects the three chosen disciples. In addition, they see a vision of Moses and Elijah and they hear the voice of God.

To understand this gospel and its place in the early days of Lent we need to observe that this experience comes as Jesus begins his journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. All three 'synoptic' gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke highlight this journey of Jesus and relate how, even though he foresees his death and resurrection, he remains determined to go to Jerusalem where he will face arrest, trial and crucifixion. The disciples accompany him in a state of reluctance and bewilderment.

The strange vision gives the disciples a glimpse of the future which lies beyond suffering and death. Both Moses and Elijah are said in ancient writings to have been taken up to live in the presence of God. Their testimony confirms the hope of the resurrection.

God's voice recalls the baptism scene as once again Jesus is proclaimed to be the beloved Son of God. There the Father had commended him as Jesus, the sinless one, began his ministry by sharing in the baptism 'for the forgiveness of sins'. Now the Father again approves of the Son as he courageously begins his journey to the place of martyrdom.

What does this story teach you as the season of Lent progresses?

What is the most important feature of the story in your understanding?

Let us pray for all Christians that we may keep sight of the hope of resurrection.

Let us pray for all those preparing to be baptised at Easter.