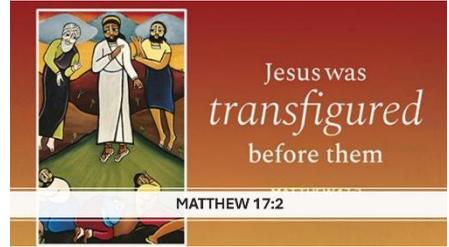


The Readings on This Day

****Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)*

Transfiguration of Our Lord, Last Sunday after Epiphany



The Sunday before Ash Wednesday is a celebration of the mystery of Christ. Jesus' divinity is shown forth on the Mount of Transfiguration, and by next Sunday we are in Lent, when his humanity is seen as he goes to die upon Mount Calvary. Historically the Transfiguration was celebrated on August 6, which date is now marked by the memory of the bombing of Hiroshima.

[Exodus 24:12-18](#)

In describing the transfiguration experience as a mountaintop theophany, Matthew assumes that his readers know this Exodus passage, and in hearing Exodus 24, we understand more of Matthew's theology. The church now assembles on the mountain of the church to receive the word of God for the forty days of Lent.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

The first option for the psalm for the day is [Psalm 2](#), a royal psalm perhaps composed for the coronation of an Israelite king. Since the first century, Christians have seen this psalm as background to the transfiguration: perhaps this psalm provided the original inspiration for this narrative. Verse 6 refers to a holy hill, and verse 7 includes the words of God cited in the gospels' accounts. Like the disciples, we too tremble before the majesty of God.

The optional [Psalm 99](#), perhaps used at an enthronement festival, praises God as majestic and righteous monarch. It is especially appropriate for this Sunday since it mentions Moses, the pillar of cloud, and the holy mountain.

2 Peter 1:16-21

Not only the author of 2 Peter, but now also we affirm the mystery of Jesus Christ transfigured by divine majesty. We are now on the holy mountain, and we will stand to receive the gospel account.

Matthew 17:1-9

In the narrative of the transfiguration the church sees testimony to Jesus' status as the eschatological Son of Man and the beloved Son of God. Just as God spoke on a mountaintop in ages past, so now Christ speaks, first in the Sermon on the Mount, and now from the Mount of Transfiguration. Matthew's message: "Listen to him." This Sunday, through these readings, we stand to do so. The church becomes the dwelling that Peter thinks to erect.