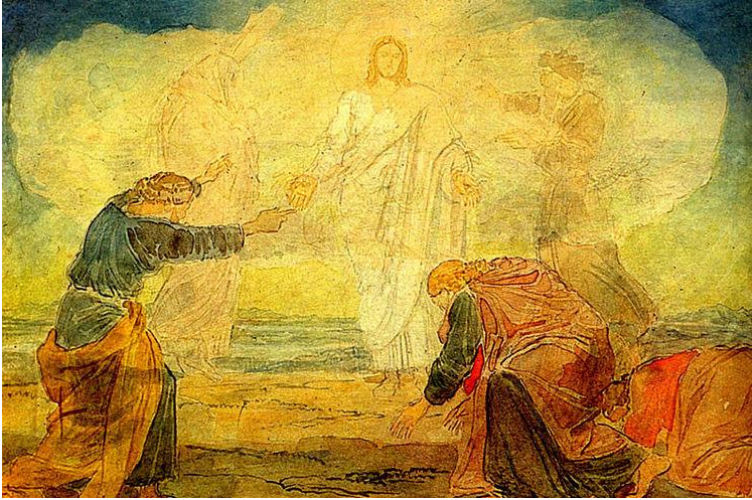




ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

THIS SUNDAY February 11 & BEYOND

“All Glory or None, Some Say”



Fairly soon in Jesus' public ministry in the north of Israel, he took James and John and Peter up a mountain or high hill and there took place what is known as “The Transfiguration.” The name comes from the translation of the word to describe what happened, and in the English it comes out “and he was transfigured before them.” What it

was was the literal Glory of God shining through Jesus and all of his clothing. That Glory moment affected everything and everyone there. Just the four of them, well, until Elijah and Moses appeared (they had left this earth centuries before), and there they were talking with Jesus. It was so much that the 3 disciples either “fell asleep”, or some say “fainted”, or even “knocked over by God's Spirit.” And then the voice of God the Father spoke from a cloud which enveloped all of them there on the mountain top!. Kinda wish I had been there, too, you know?

So much to reflect upon. God's glory. An occasion for a testimony from heaven itself about who Jesus was as the Son of God! An absolutely unforgettable moment, not only for Jesus as the Son of Man, but also for those three disciples.

Although the bible has certain “moments of God's glory”, they don't always seem to come about just because someone prays, “Lord, give me a glory moment!” There are wonderful stories of God's glory being manifested in worship services, and in the lives of the saints, and personal moments of God's revelation of his Presence (such is the story of the taking up into heaven the prophet Elijah by fiery chariot!) And certainly, we have the capacity to indeed pray, “Lord, send forth your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth” (which includes renewing us ON this earth)! I don't have a problem with that prayer. But the transfiguration of Jesus, that one's not going to be repeated – at least not until we see Jesus, the Son of God, the Lamb of God, the Lord of Lords, in heaven.

Still, there is something we can learn for ourselves here. On the other side of this story is the very practical matter of the disciples and Jesus coming back DOWN the mountain and to the valley below. The reality is that even though God's Glory was seen and felt and experienced, it is in fact for the moment, and then comes the valley below. Most of us realize this as the courses of life itself, and that a balanced life, especially a balanced devotional life in prayer, bible reading, and fellowship, will take the glories and the valleys into consideration for their daily lives. If that is you, then, wonderful. Keep your eyes and ears on Jesus, and you can be considered to be “running the race” as St. Paul said, of faith in Christ.

There are, however, the extremes to which Jesus would also have been speaking. These would be those who are thinking that their entire life was meant to be one glorious ride; and there are those who cannot see that there ever has been any glory, and expecting there never to be any glorious moments for the rest of their lives. If those sound familiar, then allow me to gently warn you. I'm not going to warn you that your salvation is in jeopardy, so let that one be set aside. No, the warning is that both of these extremes lead those persons to lives of depression and desperation – if you haven't already gotten there. This depression and desperation is insidious. It not only affects the person in question, but it also- as they used to say – comes out sideways, and eventually quite often very directly, towards others, and in every life gathering. That person's demeanor infects their job community, their family, their friends, their social groupings, and their church fellowship.

Jesus' life is our model. Here is the Son of God, also equally the Son of Man, who knows the Father in Heaven, hears from him, is moved directly by his Spirit, receives revelation no one else does. At the same time, he has people who want to kill him, crowds and individuals who make enormous and outrageous demands on his energies and time, strong leaders who are constantly challenging and confronting him. And of course, an inglorious death on a cross. I do not see any expectation from Jesus that he expected a constant cloud of Glory to be attending and visiting him 24/7. Neither should we.

And on the other hand, this same Jesus spends time with God the Father in reflection, quiet time, prayer alone wherever, and even in the Garden with sweat like drops of blood, knows and expects Him to be present to him. Even when he is dog tired, he will pray for crowds of individuals and expect that when he touches them or speaks to them they will be healed and demons leave them. The key promise that he even says out loud gives us his insight, “My Father knows me.” Yes, and the Father knows you, too.

To bring yourself back into a balance of devotional life as a Christian, let me suggest to you these solutions to these two extremes (as simplistic as they sound) when you

are in the valley; look for the Glory of what has been, what is now, and your hope for things to come; when you are expecting nothing as the matter of course for your life, look for God's ear, and his presence will follow; get somewhere alone and start talking to God about you and what you need from him. Just give him some time to talk to you. These are matters to practice and practice again. Soon, though, the extremes can be modified as the Holy Spirit works his glory in you.

Father Rob Eaton, Interim Rector

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Last Sunday after the Epiphany

8:00a Low Mass (Church)

10:30a Solemn Mass (Church)

—*The entrance to the church is on 6th Avenue—*

Note: Coffee Hour & Fellowship follow the Mass in the Parish Hall.

MONDAY: 7:00p (AA) Doctors' Group (Fireside Room)

TUESDAY: Noon Mass (St. Mary's Chapel)

WEDNESDAY: Ash Wednesday

7:00am MASS with Imposition of Ashes (St. Mary's Chapel)

12:10pm MASS with Imposition of Ashes (St. Mary's Chapel)

7:00pm SOLEMN MASS with Imposition of Ashes (Church)

FRIDAY: 6:15pm Stations of the Cross (Church)

AA Meetings

8:00p Ladies' Group (Fireside Room)

8:15p Men's Group (Parish Hall)