

Willow River Parish: Clear Lake, Deer Park and Faith Family**Title: Shine Your Light on Our Faces****Lesson: Luke 9:28-43a**

²⁸ Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰ Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. ³⁴ While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” ³⁶ When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

³⁷ On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. ³⁸ Just then a man from the crowd shouted, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; he is my only child. ³⁹ Suddenly a spirit seizes him, and all at once he shrieks. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth; it mauls him and will scarcely leave him. ⁴⁰ I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.” ⁴¹ Jesus answered, “You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.” ⁴² While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. ⁴³ And all were astounded at the greatness of God.

Today is the last Sunday of the Epiphany and Transfiguration Sunday. When we remember the baptism of Jesus at the beginning of Epiphany,

we remember the transfiguration of Jesus at the last Sunday of the Epiphany. And, from this Wednesday, Lent begins. If the Epiphany is the season of light, Lent is the season of Ash. Most Christians focus on a relationship with God, growing as disciples and extending ourselves, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of ourselves for others during Lent. I hope and pray that you will get ready for this Lent.

According to today's gospel lesson, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain to pray. And while Jesus was praying, he was transfigured before them. (29) Jesus already told his disciples about the suffering he would encounter in Jerusalem, but they didn't understand his suffering and his predestinated death. Jesus' transfiguration on the mountain must have been intended to give some enlightenment to his disciples.

In the Bible, mountains are often described as glorious places. In the Old Testament, God brought prophets to the mountains. Moses experienced the light of glory in mount Sinai. And, the place that he received the Ten Commandments was also Mount Sinai. Prophet Elijah experienced the glory of God on Mount Horeb. Likewise, in the Bible, mountains mean the place of glory.

On the high mountain, while Jesus was praying, he was transfigured before his disciples. His face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. (29) More surprising things happened. There appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. (30) They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. (31) Here, his departure means death.

Some Scholars say that the term 'departure' is a translation of Exodus, which is in Greek. So, Jesus was talking with Moses and Elijah about

Exodus, which means God's new way for salvation beyond death. To be specific about Jesus' death, it means the suffering of Jesus on the cross in Jerusalem. The case of Jesus' cross is often compared to the Exodus. Jesus leads us through the cross to the new way for salvation such as Moses' Exodus. Before we join in Jesus' suffering for 40 days, I hope you will choose a Bible chapter or verses to meditate on.

Moses was one of the people talking with Jesus on the mountain. Moses first received God's call on Mount Horeb when he was 80 years old. And after the Exodus, in the wilderness, he receives God's commandment on the mountain. While he was on the mountain for forty days to receive God's commandments, his people could not wait for him, so they made a golden calf, which the Egyptians worshiped, and called it their god.

At this, Moses became very angry and threw the precious commandments of God written on the stone tablets down the mountain and broke them. But later, for the sake of the Israelites, he goes up to Mount Horeb and stays there for 40 days to receive the commandments of God again.

Forty days later, Moses came down. By the way, in Exodus, the Bible says "Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God." (29) People feared him because his face was shining. Moses' shining face means God's glory. But at the same time, everyone, including Aaron, acknowledged the glory of God in Moses' face. In the Middle Ages, the word brightness was incorrectly translated as the word horn. So when Michelangelo made the statue of Moses, he made horns on his face.

Nobody could deny that Moses' face was shining. But Moses was humble and did not use it as a means of power. Rather, he covered it with a veil. (Exodus 34:33)

Let's go back to the gospel lesson. When Peter saw Jesus' transfiguration and Moses and Elijah, he was very surprised. He wanted to capture the amazing scene, so he said "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" (33) While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and a voice said: "This is my Son, my Chosen, listen to him!" (35) And, on the next day, Jesus told his disciples to go down the mountain. Jesus already knew what would happen to him when they would go to Jerusalem, but he wanted to go there to fulfill God's will.

In 2 Cor, Paul states "For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor 4:6) Beloved: Those who live in the light of God are beautiful. Those who live according to the new covenant will walk with God, stay in that love, and live a life of light. Today is the last day of Epiphany, which means the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of a new season. Lent is just around the corner and March is just around the corner.

Wisconsin's winters are long, but March will be warmer than February and April will be warmer than March. A warm spring is coming. May God's grace like a warm spring dwell in you. May the glory of God shine on the faces of everyone here, so that you may have a deep spiritual relationship and fellowship with Him. Amen.