

# The transfiguration

Richard Llewellyn *reflects on* Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]

Some things from the earthly ministry of Jesus are given to us to wonder at and enjoy rather than understand – the transfiguration is one of them.

Luke tells us that Jesus went up on the mountain to pray, taking with him three of his disciples. This was a critical moment, just before he set out on his last journey to Jerusalem. We know about his prayer in Luke 22 (where there was no “transfiguration”, but where he sweated drops of blood, such was his fear). There, in the hills, with his friends, he prayed: “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.”

Yes!

Here, on the mountain, among friends, as he prayed, “the appearance of his face changed,

and his clothes became dazzling white”. Then Moses and Elijah – those two great men of the Hebrew scriptures – came to be with Jesus, as though to assure him that the whole history of the people of Israel from Abraham onwards had been leading towards this moment.

Yes!

The more open to God our prayer becomes, the more the spirit of the risen Jesus has the opportunity to pray in us to the Father. No wonder that St Paul can write that “all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another”.

Yes! ☺



Majcino Selo, Medjugorje, Bosnia Herzegovina

**Heavenly Father, help us to understand that Jesus was and is available to us. He was transfigured, and our own lives can also be transformed more and more into his likeness by the work of his Spirit within us. Amen.**

## Looking towards Lent

by Caroline Hodgson

Once Lent begins on Wednesday, flowers and decorations will be removed from churches, the Gloria will not be said or sung, and the celebratory “Alleluia” will not be used in the liturgy. You might think of it as the Church’s way of decluttering.

We are told that we are Easter people. We know that it will end with celebration on 17 April, when churches will again be adorned and the joyful “Alleluia!” will go up from Christians the world over.

But in the meantime, as the season deepens, as we follow Jesus through his pain and passion, it can feel very dark and lonely at times. Because, taken seriously, the observance of Lent takes us, not only on a journey towards Jesus’ death, but our own.

When we leave behind the baggage of an addiction or bad habit, we are doing our own decluttering, enabling us to travel light as we venture into the unknown. At times we may get completely lost. It is in those moments that we must rely on the guidance of faith and love. ☺

“**The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.**”

Psalm 28:7

## Ways of praying Post-communion

by Richard Greatrex

Once we have received Holy Communion there are two prayers relating directly to receiving bread and wine. The first, prayed by the minister, affirms God’s pre-eminence, acknowledges the gift of bread and wine, then asks for God’s grace to illuminate an aspect of our lives and faith, before concluding in Christ’s name.

The second prayer is said by the congregation. One option for

this prayer, beginning “Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us...”, echoes well-known phrases from the Book of Common Prayer. After giving thanks for the holy nourishment of Christ’s body and blood, we offer our souls and bodies to God’s will, to be sent out, strengthened by the Spirit, to work for the kingdom. The alternative, starting “Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home”, was written for *Common Worship*. Its rich language resonates with many congregations.

The common theme running through all post-communion prayers is to prepare us to be sent out to share the sacrament of God’s love. ☺