

Lenten Devotional April 1, 2022

Scripture

Mark 9:2-13

2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, 3 and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. 4 And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 5 Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." 6 He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 7 Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" 8 Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. 10 So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean. 11 Then they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" 12 He said to them, "Elijah is indeed coming first to restore all things. How then is it written about the Son of Man, that he is to go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt? 13 But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written about him."

Devotional

The Rev. B.T. Gilligan '11

Imagine being in this event. Imagine being with Jesus as he transfigures, and then two giants of the faith show up in front of you. Elijah and Moses have been dead for generations, and now they are standing in front of Peter, James, and John. If that were you, what would you say? Peter certainly doesn't know what to say. He has nothing brilliant to add to the moment. As a result, he says, "Let's build a monument."

Peter is in an amazing situation and has nothing of value to add. Instead of enjoying the moment and being in it, he decides it is necessary to make noise. Instead of simply being terrified, Peter decides to fake confidence by speaking nonsense that Jesus doesn't even acknowledge. How often do we do the same?

How often do we come face to face with the full beauty of God and our first response is to add noise? Lent is a season of quiet and contemplation, focused on all that Jesus accomplishes in three days; how often is our response to fill it with noisy words and noisy actions? Those actions might even look spiritual, but sometimes they are only a means to cover up the fact that we are terrified by what Jesus is doing in our midst.

During Lent, we are face to face with the divine work of Christ. May we do the opposite of Peter and remain quiet. May we simply allow ourselves to be terrified and quiet in the presence of the holy work of Christ in our midst this Lenten season.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, so often we are terrified of what you are doing in our lives. Help us to be quiet and to hear what you are up to, so that we might more fully experience your presence in our lives. Amen.