

Feb.27th,2022

Luke 9:28-43A.

So, when I first read today's Gospel, I contacted Jane and asked about what parts of the Gospel we would use. The first part of the transfiguration or both the first part and the second part. She informed me that this was at the discretion of the preacher. So today, in the words of the broadcaster, Paul Harvey, I have included the rest of the story.

Given the unprecedented world situation I found myself struggling. So, I contacted one of my spiritual advisors the Reverend John Harper and asked for his guidance. He pointed out that he has only known me to preach from the Gospel. That maybe I should look more closely at the other readings for today and see if I could find something from them.

Of course, both readings deal with other transfiguration stories and people wearing veils because the glow from their skin was freaking out the community and they only take them down when speaking with God. All of a sudden all I could think of is the wearing of mask and face shields for the past two plus years and that the only time when we are in person worship to take our mask down is when reading the word of God, or for prayers of the people, preaching and community announcements. But that didn't really seem like the rest of the story. I have to admit after dealing with the pandemic for two plus years and now one of the most sinister aggressions of war in Europe I find myself weary of being a part of yet another unprecedented historical event. But as I ponder my life there has been a list of many unprecedented historical events. And here is just a few of them: The invention of

the polio vaccine, the Cuban missile crisis, the assassination of JFK, the assassination of Martin Luther King, the assassination of Bobby Kennedy, man landing on the moon, the first heart transplant, the Challenger disaster, the start of the HIV /Aids epidemic, the starting of New Song, the advent of legal gay marriage, the great Iowa floods of 2008 and the insurrection at our countries capital lead in part by the incendiary words of our own Nations leader.

No wonder I am tired and uncertain.

But here is the rest of the story.

This moment for Peter, John and James has to be an unprecedented historical event. The first part of Lukes

Gospel differs in the other versions in the Bible in that it has Moses and Elijah talking to Jesus. So here we have Jesus in Glory but also two other great prophets as well. I don't know about you, but had I been on that mountain top I am not sure I wouldn't be wondering if I had eaten something that was causing me to hallucinate. No matter how many unique and wonderful things I had been a part of by being one of Jesus disciples this had to be the most amazing of all.

Of course this is a fitting Gospel for our last Sunday in Epiphany because it offers us a tremendous amount of foreshadowing of what is yet to come and as we journey into the season of Lent. Moses and Elijah speaking of Jesus upcoming departure was about to be accomplished in Jerusalem. His crucifixion, death, and resurrection. The disciples are heavy with sleep. As they would eventually

be in the Garden of Gethsemane. The other two were silent but Peter decides to speak which appears as to be from some guiding force outside of himself. To build three houses one for each of these transfigured prophets. Foreshadowing of on this rock I will build my church. The very mantra that started New Song two thousand plus years later. Then the terrifying cloud. This is my son, my chosen and the command to listen to him. Who of us would not walk in silence after such an experience?

A long-time friend of mine who is now a retired oncology nurse once commented that there wasn't a doctor or nurse in the department that at some point in time had not experienced some powerful other worldly spiritual experience with one of their patients near or at the time of their death. They were just too afraid to speak of it.

How many of us have had some unique powerful spiritual experience though maybe not trans figurative at least transformative that changed the direction of our spiritual lives? The type that we can not find the right words to describe it or claim it or even identify it that leaves us a bit speechless. I used to think that the disciples were a bit weak not to talk about what they had just witness but now I have come to understand the power of their contemplative silence. For in silence, we can often find the rest of our story.

Jesus also must have felt the incredible power of this experience on the mountain. His identity is confirmed he is a human but also the Son of the Divine. The path of the rest of his story has been laid out and fore told. The path that to complete His worldly task is at the hands of a sinister, evil, and aggressive government. He has

experienced the most powerful experience of the Divines all-knowing light. He has communed with two other great prophets of the past now with his heavenly Father and he has had some of his best friends with him to witness the experience. I can only imagine the sense of tranquility, the feeling of being centered, the feeling of peace and absolute love. The feeling of awesome and amazing and fulfillment. A feeling that I hope each of you can pull up in the form of a sense memory. Such as a hug from a beloved, the laugh of a good joke, the unexpected phone call of a good friend. Those moments we want to linger and savor in. I am sure that Jesus hopes to have a moment of his own silence to contemplate all that has happened and all that is yet to come but bam he runs right back into the everyday and the mundane of human existence. He doesn't have a moment when he needs to get back to casting out demons and healing the sick. No wonder he gets a bit grumpy and blurts out "You

faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you?"

How often can each of us relate to getting grumpy when the everyday world interrupts our moments of peace and tranquility when everything seems to be on track? How do we react when the rest of the worlds story plays out in ways different than that for which we had hoped?

Do we have the strength and the courage to pick ourselves up and get back to our tasks at hand of healing the sick, casting out demons, and living our lives?

As we move from Epiphany to Lent may we all be wrapped up in a terrifying cloud experience. Where silently we can listen to the teaching of Gods Son Jesus. That we can learn what he is telling us to be in this world

of noise that is really no different than the world of noise Jesus faced when he came down from that mountain.

May we not be too heavy for sleep from the burdens of the task at hand to help a terrified and hurting world.

While in that cloud can we commune with the transfigured Moses, Elijah, and Jesus to find new ways to on this rock to rebuild a renewed and vibrant church?

In our cloud experience can we face what it means to be faithless and the fear of God abandoning us because he can no longer bear with us. Or can we listen to him and regain our faith in the listening to the teaching and messages that he shares?

Now that I am in the youth of my golden years. I enjoy the positive moments of history more and worry less about the awful moments of history in my life. Thanks in

part to that moment of Christ Glory on a mountain and the powerful words of his father. He is my son my chosen listen to him, and I think today he would add for you are my chosen as well.

Let us take a moment of silence to pray not only for Ukraine and peace in the world but for the reconciliation of our past, present, and future history in our own communion with the radiant, glorious light of God shining through each of us.

What's the rest of my story? Let's make a plan to meet up in God's kingdom of Heaven and compare notes.

And all of Gods Children say, Amen

