



**Transfiguration of our Lord**  
**Mark 9:2-9**  
**Reverend Giuseppe Mattei (February 11, 2024)**

The story of transfiguration tells of Jesus and his disciples Peter, James, and John—perhaps his closest disciples—ascending a “high mountain.” The mountain is not identified. In Scripture, however, mountains signify a place where God is often present.

While there, Jesus’s appearance changes. His clothes become dazzling white—perhaps an indication of God’s presence. Then Elijah and Moses appear, talking with Jesus. Elijah represents the prophets and the prophet who will point to the appearance of the messiah; and Moses, the law giver, the man who leads God’s people to the promised land.

Peter is so stunned, he blurts out that maybe it would be good to build booths, or shrines, to commemorate the occasion. The gospel writer comments that Peter and the others are so terrified they do not know what to say.

While all of these components of the story are important, and offer lessons for the readers, the most significant part of the story comes next. A cloud overshadows the mountaintop and God speaks to those assembled there: “This is my Son, my beloved, listen to him.”

When God finishes speaking, only Jesus remains. Elijah and Moses have vanished.

In the story of Jesus’ baptism, God affirms to Jesus that he is God’s son and beloved. In the transfiguration story, God affirms to the disciples that Jesus is God’s son and beloved. As one theologian has written: “By listening to Jesus, we learn who he is and who we are.”

The stage is now set for Jesus' journey to the cross outside the walls of Jerusalem.

May the Light of God shine freely in us. Amen.