

IN EXCELSIS DEO

ADVENT 2024

Friday, December 20

Read: Mark 9:2-8

THE TRANSFIGURATION

Advent is a time of great anticipation. We are looking forward to something important: the celebration of the birth of the Christchild. The Jewish faithful in the first century were anticipating this event as foretold by the prophets. However, the appearance of the Angel to the shepherds was a mystery to them, but they readily accepted the message that the Savior was born that night, and they rejoiced with the heavenly host. (Luke 2:8-14).

At the transfiguration of Christ the three disciples were faced with another event cloaked in mystery. When Peter, James and John accompanied Jesus to the top of the mountain to pray they were suddenly confronted with the glorified form of Jesus. They had only known Jesus in his human form, but now they saw him transfigured into his glorified form and accompanied by Moses and Elijah. Just as the appearance of the Angel and the heavenly host had frightened the shepherds at his birth, the sudden appearance of the radiant Jesus in dazzling white clothing and in the presence of the two major prophets of old, frightened the three disciples. Even Peter, who was rarely at a loss for words, is described as so frightened that “he did not know what to say.” Then the voice of God came from the cloud, identified Jesus as his son, and ordered the disciples to “listen to him.” In his glorified form they had seen a preview of Jesus’ coming glory and enthronement as “the King of Kings.”

As we anticipate his birth we should remember his coming glory as announced by God himself to the three disciples as they gazed upon his glorified form. The mystery of the transfiguration gives to us assurance of his coming diety. What greater gift could we possibly receive as we celebrate his birth this Christmas.

Chuck Morgan