

The Transfiguration



Luke 9: 28-36

Presentation Guide
2nd Sunday of Lent



Doctrine (Catechist Reference)

A foretaste of the kingdom: the Transfiguration

CCC 554 From the day Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Master "began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things. . . and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Peter scorns this prediction, nor do the others understand it any better than he. In this context the mysterious episode of Jesus' Transfiguration takes place on a high mountain, before three witnesses chosen by himself: Peter, James and John. Jesus' face and clothes become dazzling with light, and Moses and Elijah appear, speaking "of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem". A cloud covers him and a voice from heaven says: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"

CCC 555 Moses and Elijah had seen God's glory on the Mountain; the Law and the Prophets had announced the Messiah's sufferings. Christ's Passion is the will of the Father: the Son acts as God's servant; the cloud indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit. "The whole Trinity appeared: the Father in the voice; the Son in the man; the Spirit in the shining cloud."

Also interesting: The symbolism that exists in this event. As Jesus meets with Moses and Elijah, it's recorded that "they spoke of his departure."

Moses had led his own departure -- or Exodus -- out of Egypt about 15 centuries earlier.

2 Kings records that Elijah departed this earth in a flaming chariot.

Jesus had miraculously provided bread for the multitudes in the story of loaves and fishes, just as Moses provided bread -- or "manna" -- in the wilderness to the Israelites.

And when Moses came down from the mountain with the Ten Commandments his face was shining with the glory of God, just as Jesus' face was now shining with the same glory.

Materials

- Diorama for the Transfiguration
- Magnet maps

Note: if you do not have these figures, select suitable ones from those you have available.

Presentation

Transfiguration of Jesus: A moment when Jesus' appearance became radiant: transfigured in the presence of three of his apostles.

Mount Tabor: This mountain is not mentioned by name in the passage, but it is believed to be the place of this event.

Moses: was the person that lead the people out of the land of Egypt and to whom God gave the ten commandments.

Elijah: was a great prophet and his appearance represents all the prophets.

This very special event took place some time before Jesus died.

Light the candle.

Read from Luke 4:14-20.

28 [Jesus] took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.

Move the Jesus, Peter, James and John onto the scene

29 And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white.

Move Jesus to a position to pray apart from the apostles.

30 And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Bring in Moses and Elijah, one on either side of Jesus.

32 Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep but kept awake, and they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him.

Move the apostles place on side and then raising them up again.

33 And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said.

Move Moses and Elijah up and away and then Peter towards Jesus a little.

34 As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.
35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"

Use hands to indicate a cloud. Move the apostles as if in fear.

36 And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

Move them together away from the scene.

Extinguish the candle.

I Wonder...

- why Jesus chose only these apostles to witness the event of Moses and Elijah meeting him, and God the Father speaking.
- what Jesus, Moses and Elijah may have been speaking of: his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.
- what impact the words of God the Father would have had on the apostles: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"
- why the apostles kept quiet about the event for some time to come.

Pondering through Choices

Children can respond by:

- using the diorama themselves to retell the event
- engaging in a simple craft activity
- locating where the event took place on the map of Israel

