

The Transfiguration gives us a glimpse of the future. Peter, James and John witness the glorified Body of Christ in the present in the presence of Moses and the Prophet Elijah. Although they have this advance information, they don't know what to do with it. I am reminded of the outset of World War II, the U.S. had intercepted messages telling them of the attack of Pearl Harbor, but they could not connect the dots. In the absence of the ability to put all the information together, the U.S. suffered terrible losses on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941.

Jesus is trying to prepare for the future so that when his death and resurrection happen, his disciples will be able to understand more readily. Prior to the Transfiguration, Jesus made his first prediction of his Passion:

Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised.

Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do" (Mt 16:21-23).

Revealing his future glory at the Transfiguration is one way Jesus tries to help the Apostles to think as God does. Their immediate reaction is one of fear. So, they don't get it at first. In time they will understand.

In our second reading, Pope Peter speaks after the resurrection when he fully understands the big picture: "'This is my Son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased.' We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven while we were with him on the holy mountain" (2 Pt 1:17-18). As an eyewitness, Peter has a persuasive argument to help the faithful understand since he possesses the prophetic message. Living the Christian life was difficult in a hostile, secular environment. One may argue that what was true 2000 years ago, also holds true in modern times. Secular humanism declares its values superior to the wisdom of God and the Christian perspective. In a world that believes truth is self-defined, the Christian perspective is often ridiculed and scorned.

What would you do if you knew the future? How might that alter the way you act today? Just as Moses and Elijah conversed with Jesus in a vision of the Kingdom to come, one day we will be called to stand alongside Jesus on a holy mountain talking with him. Jesus suffered his passion and death that we might come to "share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity" (Roman Missal, pg. 529).

A sneak peek of the future should inform our present actions. Knowing that the scandal of the cross could not thwart God's plans, we should not be afraid to pick up our own cross and follow in the path of Jesus. When we see people hurting, we should respond in compassion. Saint Barnabas said it this way:

- Share with your neighbor whatever you have... If you both share an imperishable treasure, how much more must you share what is perishable.
- Preserve the traditions you have received, adding nothing and taking nothing away. The evildoer will ever be hateful to you.
- Be fair in your judgments. Never stir dissension, but act as a peacemaker and reconcile the quarrelsome.

The path to our future with the Risen Lord involves carrying our cross today with a sense of urgency. Our acts of kindness can help build the Kingdom of heaven here on earth. Daily self-sacrifice is the proper response to our glimpse into the future.