

## CALLED TO BE CITIZENS OF HEAVEN!

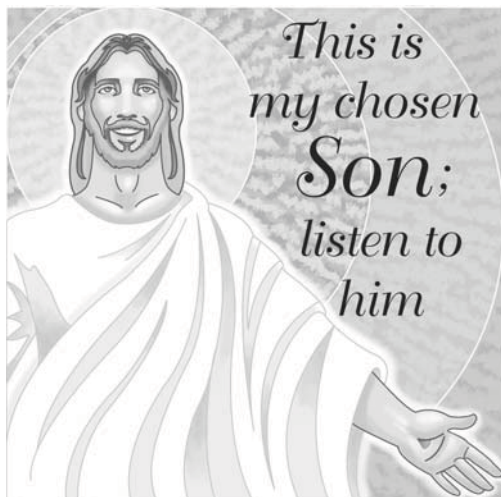
Peter was so enthused about the Transfiguration of Jesus that he wanted to build three tents: one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. He wanted to continue this event that he, James and John were a part of. Yet, this was not the reason for the Transfiguration. God had summed everything up in the words: *This is my chosen Son; listen to him.* We can imagine the disappointment, but innate wonder, that was left in the three men that day.

However, Peter, James and John would one day experience something that was even more wonderful. They would see Jesus, risen from the dead, as he had promised.

The Transfiguration helps us see that, what Paul wrote to the Philippians in today's first reading, is true. Our true citizenship is not here on earth, but in heaven. Ultimately, no matter where we are on earth, we will one day want to be in God's heavenly Kingdom. Like people on earth who try to enter another country and become citizens of that land, we know that life will be much better then. Our striving should be to enter into the Kingdom of heaven. This is because heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness. Our true citizenship is with the Lord in heaven. Our citizenship papers and *passport* were applied for many years ago, when the Lord Jesus shed his blood on the Cross for us.

In fact, our passage to heaven was booked even before Jesus paid for it. The plan for our salvation began to be put into place immediately after the fall of Adam and Eve. It took further shape with the covenant we heard about in today's first reading. God provided for our salvation as he blessed Abram and made him the father to many descendants. This embodied God's goodness, and ultimately, brought us back to himself. The essential link, of course, is Jesus, a descendant of Abram and the Son of God. This link is reinforced for us as we figuratively stand with Peter, James and John at the Transfiguration. In the glow of this vision, God tells us to listen to Jesus. It is Jesus who has the words of everlasting life.

And what is Jesus telling us? As Jesus was obedient and listened to his Father, so he asks us today to do the Father's will. Let us follow Jesus to God's heavenly Kingdom. We can call to mind the Transfiguration on a daily basis and envision Jesus visiting us and helping us while we are here. He who is our light and salvation will always guide us in the happiest and most challenging times of our lives. The Lord God will ever sustain our lives. He only asks that we listen to His Son and heed His words. If we do, one day, we will come to know fully how fortunate we are to be a citizen of the Kingdom of heaven!



*Peter, James, and John witness the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain....Luke 9:28b-36*