

Rev. Derek Fairman

2nd Sunday of Lent A

This Sunday we hear about the Transfiguration, in which the Lord Jesus led three of His apostles up a high mountain. There, upon the mountain, they saw the Lord's divine light shine before them. This was not just an interesting trick that the Lord played upon them. These three apostles would be changed by the experience. Their faith journeys would be changed by the experience upon the mountain.

For Sts. Peter, James and John, we can see that their calling began in similar ways. They were going about their business, which was fishing, and they had heard the Lord preach. Sometime later they heard the Lord call them to abandon their fishing and follow Him as His disciples. They followed Him and spent time listening to the Lord Jesus and learning from Him during His Public Ministry.

However, their paths were quite different after that. St. James, for instance, during the Lord's suffering, abandoned Him. St. James would come back to the Lord's apostolic company and was there when the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost. He would then go on to spread the Gospel and is traditionally identified as the first apostle to be martyred.

St. Peter's story was a little more complicated. During the Lord's suffering, St. Peter kept close to the Lord at first, but later denied knowing Him. He too came back to the Lord's apostolic company and fulfilled his office to be the rock upon which the Church is built. Eventually St. Peter would be martyred in Rome.

St. John the Evangelist had a different story. He did not abandon the Lord in His suffering but remained with the Virgin Mary throughout, even to the death of the Lord Jesus. His martyrdom took place that day at the foot of the Cross, as he shared in the suffering that the Lord Jesus endured. He would die, not a martyr's death, but after having spread the Gospel throughout Asia Minor.

Even those these three apostles suffered in their own unique ways, nevertheless they had the same destination: Heaven. They desired to be with the Lord Jesus again after He rose and ascended into Heaven, and now we recognize that they are once more with the Lord Jesus in His Kingdom. In the Transfiguration, they caught a glimpse of what their destination was. They saw the divine glory of the Lord Jesus, but they also saw something else.

