



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Transfiguration of the Lord, Year B, Catechist - RCLB Lectionary



### Catechist Background and Preparation

To prepare for the session, read all the readings.

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 9

2 Peter 1:16-19

Mark 9:2-10

Spend a few minutes reflecting on what these readings mean for you today. Was there a particular reading which appealed to you? Was there a word or image that engaged you?

Read the Word in Liturgy and Catholic Doctrine sections. These give you background on what you will be doing this session. Read over the session outline and make it your own. Check to see what materials you will need for the session.

### The Word In Liturgy

The feast of the Transfiguration celebrates an event in the life of the Lord, and thus draws the Church into a deeper appreciation of his identity and mission. When the Church proclaims the story of the transfiguration on the Second Sunday of Lent, as it does each year, it looks toward specific ways in which that event prefigures the glory of Easter, and leads the faithful to a renewal of their baptism during the Lenten season. Here the focus is rather on the glory of God seen in Jesus. We behold God's glory through the apocalyptic vision of the prophet Daniel, we celebrate it through the psalm, along with the apostles we are dazzled by it as we behold the face of Jesus on the high mountaintop, and we affirm it along with the second letter of Peter as a promise of the second coming.

The Book of Daniel, written in the mid-second century B.C., is a combination of edifying stories and apocalyptic literature. The book promotes faithfulness to Judaism and resistance to Hellenizing influences. In it the God of Israel is presented as the Lord of all human history. Today's reading is part of an apocalyptic vision in which the Son of Man, who represents the kingdom of the holy ones of God, comes down from heaven and is given dominion by the "Ancient One," who represents God. The Son of Man in the passage was later taken to be a messianic figure.

Mark's story of the transfiguration is patterned after the stories of Moses' experiences of God on Mt. Sinai (see Exodus 24 and 34). But Mark's version of the disciples' "vision" of Jesus' glory is best understood in light of its position in the overall literary plan of his gospel. The disciples have repeatedly shown themselves blind to Jesus' true identity. Now, at the midpoint of his gospel, Mark tells of how they glimpse the true glory of Jesus. The narrative is deliberately placed between two stories of blindness: the cure of the man in Bethsaida (8:22-26) and the cure of Bartimaeus (10:46-52). Yet even though these two people are

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granted sight, the disciples' blindness is not cured; they miss the point.

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Significant visions of the glory of God have caused apostles, saints, and holy people throughout the centuries to experience religious awe, know their own frailty, and glimpse a future that inspires hope. The feast of the Transfiguration—that vision of Jesus that foreshadowed the resurrection—is an appropriate occasion to reflect on God's immediate and personal revelation to human beings, which may be the subject of today's catechesis.

### **Catholic Doctrine**

#### ***God's Revelation to Us***

The starting point for our stance on visions and private revelations can be found in what we believe Jesus himself reveals. The Catholic Church teaches that Jesus Christ alone offers the fullness of God's revelation to us. The mystery of Christ illuminates the mystery of creation. Indeed, in his life, his mission, his suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension, God's Son reveals to us the love of the Father through the Holy Spirit. The apostles witnessed to the truth of the resurrection and, in time, the gospels were set down in writing. Together, Scripture and Tradition form one single deposit of revelation which the Church preserves, preaches from, and interprets in the light of present-day needs. Thus, the Second Vatican Council, citing 1 Timothy 6:14 and Titus 2:13, taught, "The Christian economy, therefore, since it is the new and definitive covenant, will never pass away; and no new public revelation is to be expected before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (DV 4).

In other words, the Council teaches that everything that God chooses to communicate to us for our salvation has been done so in Jesus and that no new "public" revelation will be given before Christ comes a second time in glory to this world of ours. This does not mean that the content of revelation as given in Jesus cannot be understood anew or interpreted freshly given the situation of the world. It simply means that nothing will be added.