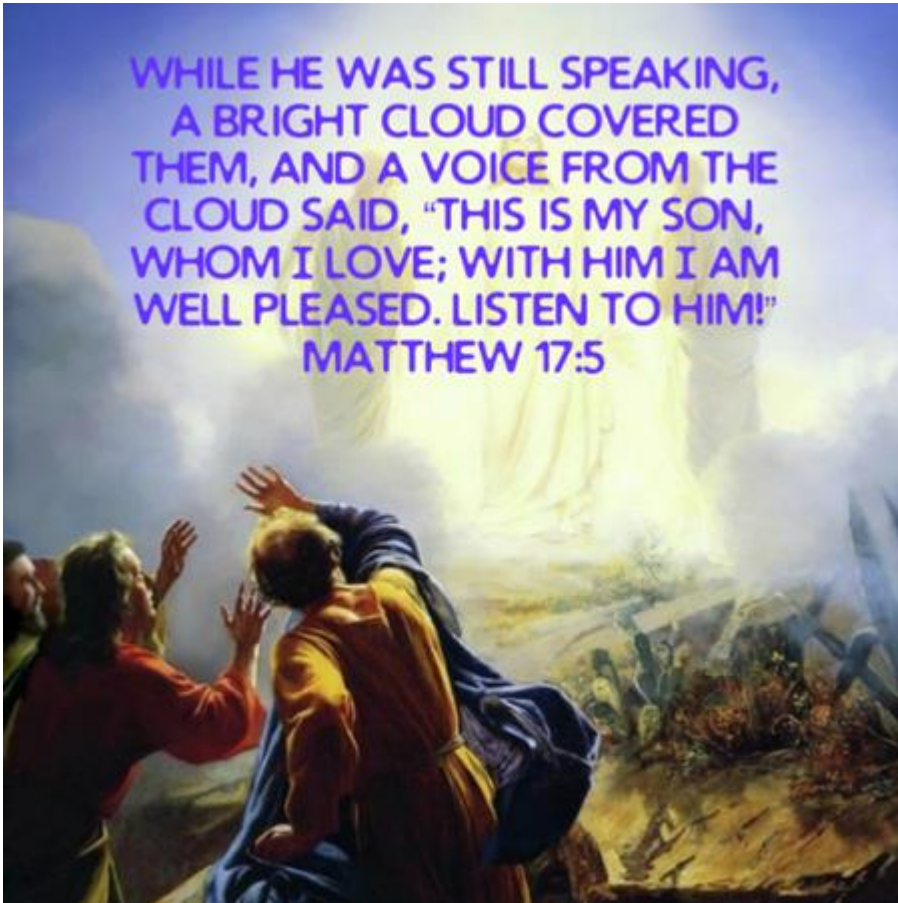


Dear Beloved,

This week we are celebrating the transfiguration of our Lord on the Mountain top. This was the moment when Jesus was encouraged by the two giants of faith, Moses and Elijah, for the horrendous road ahead to Calvary. Sometimes God encourages us with mountain top experiences but we are never meant to take up residence on the mountain top, the real work of bringing his love comes in the valleys.



May you be blessed as you remember your times of blessing and encouragement and may they give you courage to follow even in the valleys.

Wendy

AGMS

Nimitabel 19th February

Adaminaby 19th February

Cooma 26th February

Jerangle 26th February

Parish 2nd April

--

Morning Tea after the Service every 2nd and 4th Sunday
please volunteer for the roster.

--

Wendy has Lent Study Books for group or private use.
They are \$12 each Please see Wendy

--

Autumn Open Garden Day 16th April

Please pot plants up now and tell Nella how you can help

Midweek Services every Wednesday at 9.30
all Welcome

Ash Wednesday 22nd February

--

Please volunteer for the roster, well in advance.

--

Prayer and Praise

Wendy

Edith and Colin Mayhew

--

Glenn Fletcher .. for his recovery

our wardens and Parish Councillors

--

Scott's wife Jennie.

Beattie Russell and Jenni Roberts in Yallambie.

--

Leanne Lowery

Mary Mitchell

--

Peter & Julie Harris from Bredbo

all congregations in Jindabyne

--

The New Catholic priest Father Mark Croker
as he ministers from Bombala through to the mountains

--

for each other that we may be salt and light in this community

--

People everywhere who are living through war or disasters of every kind.

19 February 2023

Hymn TIS

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
And also with you.

Sentence

Your Father in heaven makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Matthew 5.45, Luke 6.36

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, renew us through the gift of your Spirit, that we may always do and think what is righteous in your sight, that we, who can do nothing good without you, may live according to your holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Exodus 24.12-18

¹² The Lord said to Moses, 'Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the law and commandments I have written for their instruction.' ¹³ Then Moses set out with Joshua his assistant, and Moses went up on the mountain of God. ¹⁴ He said to the elders, 'Wait here for us until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are with you, and anyone involved in a dispute can go to them.' ¹⁵ When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it, ¹⁶ and the glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the Lord called to Moses from within the cloud. ¹⁷ To the Israelites the glory of the Lord looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain. ¹⁸ Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Psalm 2

¹ Why are the nations in tumult: and why do the peoples cherish a vain dream?
² The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers conspire together:
 against the Lord and against his anointed, saying,
³ 'Let us break their bonds asunder: let us throw off their chains from us.'
⁴ He that dwells in heaven shall laugh them to scorn: the Lord will hold them in derision.
⁵ Then will he speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury:
 'I, the Lord, have set up my king on Zion my holy hill.'
⁶ I will announce the Lord's decree, that which he has spoken:
 'You are my son, this day have I begotten you.'
⁷ 'Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance:
 the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.
⁸ 'You may break them with a rod of iron: and shatter them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'
⁹ Now therefore be wise, O kings: be advised, you that are judges of the earth.
¹⁰ Serve the Lord with awe, and govern yourselves in fear and trembling:
 lest he be angry, and you perish in your course.
¹¹ For his wrath is quickly kindled: blessed are those that turn to him for refuge.

2 Peter 1.16-21

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ He received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am

well pleased.' ¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. ¹⁹ We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 17.1-9

¹ After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ³ Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. ⁴ Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters – one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' ⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!' ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground, terrified. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. 'Get up,' he said. 'Don't be afraid.' ⁸ When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus. ⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, 'Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'

Sermon

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers

Response Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Jesus said: Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11.28

Prayer of Approach [Let us pray.]

We do not presume to come to your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies.

We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.

But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to have mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Invitation to Confession

Christ the Son of God has been revealed as a light to the nations.

Let us bring our darkness to his light, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Merciful God, our maker and our judge, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, and in what we have failed to do: we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves; we repent, and are sorry for all our sins. Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Peace

We are the body of Christ. **His Spirit is with us.** The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Hymn

OFFERTORY

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.

Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. **Blessed be God for ever.**

Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere, mighty Creator, everliving God. We give you thanks and praise for your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who by the power of your Spirit was born of Mary and lived as one of us. You anointed him as Messiah, the light of the nations, and revealed him as the hope of all who thirst for righteousness and peace. By his death on the cross and rising to new life, he offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people. Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we proclaim your great and glorious name, for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine; may we who receive them, as Jesus said, share his body and his blood. On the night he was betrayed, he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said, 'Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper he took the cup and gave you thanks. He shared the cup with them and said,

'This is my blood poured out so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.

Fill us with your Spirit that we may follow Jesus in all we do and say, working for justice and bringing your peace to this world that you have made.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Blessing and honour and glory and power are yours for ever and ever. Amen.

We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread. The gifts of God for the people of God. Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts with thanksgiving.

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life. Amen The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life. Amen

Prayer after Communion

God of the nations, we thank you for nourishing us with this holy sacrament. Guide us by your presence, that we may bring your light to those who dwell in darkness, and establish your justice in the earth.

Father, we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory.

Hymn Tis

Blessing

May Christ the Son of God be manifest to you, that your lives may be a light to the world; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal Go in peace to love and serve the Lord: **In the name of Christ. Amen**



The sermon today is based on **Mountaintop Experiences** By Dr. Philip W. McLarty. I forgot to take books to Canberra with me and I had less time than usual because of the clergy conference but I thought this was good.

The readings from the Old and New Testaments today have something in common: Moses stands in the presence of God on Mount Sinai and receives the Ten Commandments; Jesus stands between Moses and Elijah on Mount Hermon, as a voice from heaven resounds, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him." Which Peter is remembering in our 2nd reading.



Let's think about mountaintop experiences - those you've had and those you've heard about. My hope is we'll be able to put them in perspective in such a way as to strengthen our faith and bolster our witness to the living Christ among us.

To begin, let's just say up front that mountaintop experiences are important. Like romance in a relationship, or a breakthrough on the job, they're the icing on the cake. They're what get you through the day-to-day toil and grind of everyday living.

For example, we all know it takes more than puppy love to sustain a healthy marriage or build a strong family. It takes hard work. But, if that's all you've got, it's not much fun. You need moments of intimacy and ecstasy occasionally, to make it worthwhile, moments in which you look back and smile to yourself. Times when they did some chore you were dreading, made a remark that confirmed that they really appreciate you or did some little extra that made your day.



The same is true of faith. Occasionally, we need a sign of affirmation and approval - a breakthrough - to validate that our time and talent have been well spent. A mountaintop experience for a salesman might come in closing the deal of a lifetime; for an attorney, in winning the big case; for a teacher, in seeing a student make it to the big league. A mountaintop experience may come but once in a lifetime; yet, that the satisfaction of that one moment can linger forever and make all the drudgery and hard work worth the effort.

When I attended Cursillo, I had a lovely time, just me and the Lord, where he just poured his love into me. I was so refreshed and blessed. Mountaintop experiences are important. That's the first point. But it's not like you can pick them up at the store. And that's the second point: Mountaintop experiences are a gift. You can't manufacture them or conjured them up on demand. As often as not, they come about without warning, when you least expect them.



Mountaintop experiences are a gift of grace. They're also the catalyst of transformation. Matthew says that Jesus "was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his garments became as white as the light." (Matthew 17:2) Those who've had a genuine mountaintop experience are transformed in the process.

Mountaintop experiences are the catalysts for transformation. When you've been to the mountaintop, you never see things in quite the same way again. But



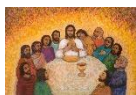
they're not meant to last forever. That was Peter's problem - he wanted to hold on to the moment: "*Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you want, let's make three tents here: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.*" (Matt17:4)

It's also the problem of those who've been to a Marriage Enrichment Seminar, a wonderful conference or gone on cursillo: Try as you may, it's just about impossible to keep that height of love and devotion.

No, mountaintop experiences are best understood as moments in time - significant moments, to be sure - moments in which time seems to stop and the whole world stands still - but moments, nonetheless. In which case, it's nice to keep a journal or a scrapbook to flip through occasionally, then put back on the shelf, as you go on to whatever God has in store for you next.



Finally, mountaintop experiences inevitably lead to the valley below. Look at what follows on the heels of Jesus' transfiguration: He and Peter and James and John come down from the mountaintop only to meet a man with a son who has epilepsy begging for Jesus to heal him and the remaining disciples at their wits end. So much for the ecstasy; there's work to be done. Mountaintop experiences are best seen as fleeting moments in time leading to a new chapter of sacrifice and service to the glory of God.



This is seen in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. It recalls the Last Supper, where Jesus met with his disciples in an upper room to share a meal and celebrate Passover. Can you imagine how many meals they'd shared over the course of their time together? They'd eaten in the home of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38); and in the home of Zaccheus (Luke 19:5). But of course, they ate most of their meals on the road, as they travelled the hills of Galilee together. Yet, of all the times of breaking bread together, this one meal stands out as a mountaintop experience. For, as Jesus broke the bread and gave it his disciples, he said, "This is my body which is given for you." (Luke 22:19) And as he poured the wine, he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:20)

In that moment they were on the mountaintop with Jesus. It was a moment they'd never forget. And then, what? Just as quickly as it began, it was over, and they on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus would be arrested and they would be scattered and, in time, persecuted and put to death.



For all of us, Mountain Top experiences are meant to encourage us, show us a little of God's glory so that we have the strength and faith to carry on through the tough time, through the valley and through all the mundane effort of daily life. Take a moment to remember a glorious moment in your life.

Here's the sum of it all: Mountaintop experiences are important; they're a gift of God's grace and love; they're the catalyst of transformation; they're not meant to last forever, for they inevitably lead to the valley below.



In closing, I couldn't think of a better illustration than the speech Dr. Martin Luther King delivered on April 3, 1968. It was given in Memphis, Tennessee, the day before he was assassinated. It's entitled, "I've Been to the Mountaintop." He was there in support of the city sanitation workers, who were on strike. It reiterated his call for non-violence, the hallmark of his life and witness, here's the last paragraph in Dr. King's own words:

"Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land. And I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord."



We have been talking the last few weeks about being salt and light in our community, it is my experience that being God's hands and feet in a situation and seeing God take that tiny grain of salt or small beam of light and use it to bring peace and blessing to people is one of the most wonderful experiences of life.

May God give us such mountaintop experiences as this; that, by God's grace, we, too, can be instruments of peace and love and so, help reconcile the world to God.