

## **Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflections on first & second readings of Sun 6th Aug**

### **First Reading: One Like a Son of Man (Daniel 7:9-10. 13-14)**

This prophecy of Daniel was written in the dark days of the Syrian persecution of Judaism a couple of centuries before Christ. First, the evil empires that persecuted Judaism are described under the imagery of ravening beasts, tearing their prey to pieces. Then comes this altogether different image of a noble human being on whom God confers all power and sovereignty on earth. In the original vision, this human figure is the personification of the Jews, 'the holy ones of the Most High', who will be freed from this persecution and exalted to glory. In the New Testament, this prophecy is applied to Jesus. In the trial before the High Priest, he will claim this exalted position as his own, saying, 'You will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of the Father and coming on the clouds of heaven.' The High Priest recognizes this as a divine claim and cries out, 'Blasphemy!' This title, and the claim to share the Father's throne, are indeed claims to divinity. It gives sense to Jesus' other claims to divine power, the power to forgive sins and to complete the Law. In this power, he sends out his apostles to teach and baptize all nations.

*What does Jesus mean by calling himself 'son of man'?*

### **Second Reading: Peter's Witness to the Transfiguration (Second letter of St Peter 1:16-19)**

In fact, the Second Letter of Peter was probably written not by Peter but by an unknown author, writing in Peter's name and with his authority. For the author, the event of the Transfiguration takes a central place in spirituality, 'as a lamp shining in a dark place', providing a confirmation of the prophetic message and an inspiration until the dawning of the final day. The description of the place as 'the Holy Mountain' is a reminder that we do not know where it took place, but that, wherever it occurred, it is a parallel to the appearance of God on the Holy Mountain of Sinai, which was the occasion and basis of the choice of Israel to be God's People. There Jesus was honoured with glory conveyed to him by 'the Majestic Glory'. In the Bible, 'glory' is properly a divine property. It is an awesome term, for glory belongs to God alone, although 'heaven and earth are full of his glory', as the angels sing in Isaiah's vision of God in the Temple (Isaiah 6.3). As the Beloved Son of God, Jesus shares the same glory. It was, therefore, for the chosen disciples who witnessed it, an experience of the divinity of Jesus.

*Is it possible to experience in any way the glory of God in creation?*

## **Welcome to our Parish Newsletter:**

**St. Mary's & St. Aidan's R.C Churches**

**Rev. Sean Hall**

**Tel. 0191 268 4222 // [parishsecretary@mail.com](mailto:parishsecretary@mail.com)**

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### **Sunday 6th August 2023:**

#### **The Transfiguration of the Lord**

After listening to today's Gospel, The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9), consider Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection:-

Mark's was the first Gospel to be written; he gives the basic account which Matthew and Luke both use. This commentary looks first at Mark, then at the changes made by Matthew and Luke. Mark's Gospel has been described as 'a Passion Narrative with extended introduction.' In this second half of the Gospel, everything is overshadowed by the Passion of Jesus. The disciples are going to be stunned and shaken by the Passion, when their loved and awesome leader is taken from them and tortured to a humiliating death. So beforehand God allows them to see the other side, to see Jesus for what he really is. They see his features as a heavenly person, transformed with the divine light and clothed in dazzling garments. With him are the two heavenly figures who had experience of God on the Holy Mountain, Moses and Elijah, for this is an experience of Jesus as God. The overshadowing cloud is further evidence of the divine presence. The Voice that spoke to Jesus at his baptism now speaks to them all, authenticating Jesus as God's Son and chosen teacher. The disciples are literally 'gob stopped', and want to preserve the experience by building three shelters for the heavenly visions. But such an experience, like any mystical experience of the divine, is not to last. They must return to the business of living their daily lives in the light of this overwhelming experience. Matthew's account is almost the same as Mark's. He adds the detail of Jesus' face shining like the sun. This was the case with Moses when he encountered God on the Holy Mountain, and Matthew, writing for Jewish Christians, is always keen to stress that Jesus was a Second Moses. He also changes the reaction of the disciples: in Mark, they are so scared that they do not know what to say, but in Matthew, they fall to the ground and do reverence, and Jesus gently raises them up. Luke stresses that Jesus went up the mountain to pray. He frequently stresses Jesus' constant need for prayer, and many of Luke's parables are about prayer (the Importunate Widow and the Unjust Judge, the Pharisee and the Tax Collector). Luke also details that Jesus, Moses and Elijah were conversing about his journey up to Jerusalem, a journey that is the theme of the latter half of Luke's gospel. Jesus went up the Holy Mountain to pray. Where do you like to pray? What do you find the best form of prayer?

**Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB**

## **NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES:**

**SCRIPTURE REFLECTION GROUP:** No sessions during the summer break.

**CONFESSION:** Saturday 12th August at St. Mary's.

The first & third Saturday of the month at St Aidan's 11am - 11.30am

The second & fourth Saturday of the month at St Mary's 11am - 11.30am

**EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:** Mon 7th August at St Aidan's, 6pm-7pm.

**ST MARY'S CHILDREN'S LITURGY:** Meeting 11:45am on Sun 3rd Sept.

**COLLECTIONS:** w/c 30th July 2023

ST. AIDAN'S - Loose Plate: £266.00 / Envelopes: £57.00 / Hall Hire: £52.00

Candles: £50.00 / Northern Cross: £15.00

ST. MARY'S - Loose Plate: £223.67 / Envelopes: £78.00 / Donation: £100.00

Friday Coffee Morning: £47.00 (Little Sisters of the Poor)

***Thank you all for your continued support and generosity.***

**SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED THIS SUMMER:** Non-perishable food is always in demand—sugar, rice, tea, tuna, tomatoes, biscuits etc. Thank you.

## **SONGS OF PRAISE AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, JESMOND**

All are welcome to take part in the recording of this BBC production on Monday 21st August, 630pm - 930pm. There is a big space to fill at a relatively quiet time of year, so the more the merrier! It's free but people do need to book their place – singwithus@ctvc.co.uk or 07734 030 888.

**MASS INTENTIONS:** Please see envelopes and baskets at the entrances to our churches to request a mass intention.

**SECOND HAND BOOKS AT ST MARY'S:** A replenished selection of books, including those for the younger parishioner, are available in the hall. Please leave your donation for the parish in the box on the bookcase.

**SPIRITUAL BOOK LIBRARY:** A selection of thought-provoking books are available in St Mary's church hall. Please borrow, read and return.

## **MASS INTENTIONS FOR w/c 6th August 2023**

Sat. 5th (St. Mary's)	5.30pm	People of the Parish
Sun. 6th (St. Aidan's)	9.15am	James Alan Scott
Sun. 6th (St. Mary's)	11.00am	J & M Thompson celebrating 35 yrs of happy marriage.
Mon. 7th (St. Aidan's)	6.00pm	Eucharistic Adoration
Tues. 8th (St. Mary's)	10.00am	Derek Forsyth
Wed. 9th (St. Aidan's)	10.00am	Priest's Intention
Thurs. 10th (St. Aidan's)	10.00am	Priest's Intention
Fri. 11th (St. Mary's)	10.00am	Honey B.N
* Sat. 12th (St. Mary's)	11.00am	Confession
Sat. 12th (St. Mary's)	5.30pm	Maureen Jones
Sun. 13th (St. Aidan's)	9.15am	People of the Parish
Sun. 13th (St. Mary's)	11.00am	Honey B.N

***For Mass Intentions, please see envelopes at the entrances to our churches.***

## **PREPARATION FOR NEXT WEEK:**

Sunday 13th August - The Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*"The inscrutable wisdom of God."*

Second Reading: The Holy People of Israel (Romans 9:1-5)

## **CHILDREN'S PRAYER:**

Dear Jesus, thank you for the sacred places where you are worshipped, and for making our homes sacred with your presence. Amen.

**WE ASK THAT YOU PRAY FOR:** Those who are sick. Those who have died recently. And those of our parishes whose anniversary occurs at this time.

## **KEEP IN TOUCH**

Contact us via parishsecretary@mail.com or 0191 268 4222

Access weekend mass live via our Facebook page NE12Catholic.

Newsletters & Homilies can be viewed on [www.stmarysforesthall.co.uk](http://www.stmarysforesthall.co.uk)

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