

Apprehend God in all things, for God is in all things. Every single creature is Full of God, and is a book about God Every Creature is a word of God... Amen.

August 6th, we celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration:

A brief definition, a change in form or appearance, a metamorphosis, an exalting or spiritual change. Transfiguration is a synonym of transformation. As nouns the difference between them is that transfiguration is a significant change in appearance or form; a metamorphosis while transformation is the act of transforming or the state of being transformed in form, appearance, character.

Jesus climbs Mt. Tabor with Peter, James, and John, and they experience a Holy manifestation of his nature, as he speaks with Moses and Elijah. This story reminds me of the intimate relationship Jesus had with the Creator and the Holy Spirit from before the creation, before Jesus became human “in our midst as one who serves”: teaching, healing, washing feet, and frequently struggling with his disciples in their formation.

Peter and those with him were slumped over in sleep. When they came to, rubbing their eyes, they saw Jesus in his glory and the two men standing with him. When Moses and Elijah had left, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, this is a great moment! Let’s build three memorials: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He blurted this out without thinking. While he was babbling on like this, a light-radiant cloud enveloped them. ***As they found themselves buried in the cloud, they became deeply aware of God.***

Jesus did not cling to this transfiguration story, instead he humbled himself, choosing to make his most striking statement of power with death on the cross and resurrection. Jesus did not stay on the mountain but moved on towards Jerusalem, healing, teaching, feeding, loving. He continued to do the work of transforming Peter, John, and the others.

Christian teachings suggest that the Transfiguration is a pivotal moment, the setting on the mountain as the point where human nature meets God: the experience of the temporal and the eternal, with Jesus himself as the bridge between heaven and earth.

In our Old Testament reading from Exodus, Moses had been with God receiving the commandments for the second time. You will remember that the first experience failed with Moses smashing the tablets on the golden calf and the unruly Hebrew people who had no patience for their transformation. God was not amused and wreaked havoc on the leaders, Moses was summoned and returned to the mountain again.

God said to Moses: "Now write down these words, for by these words I've made a covenant with you and Israel."

Moses was there with God forty days and forty nights. He didn't eat any food; he didn't drink any water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Words.

After spending 40 days and nights with God, Moses comes down the mountain, and

his face is shining, it was frightening to his brother, Aaron the high priest; and to all the rest of the people. Because everyone was afraid to come near Moses, he wore a veil over his face, hiding perhaps his transfiguration.

Meister Eckhart teaches us to dig in behind the words, to break the shell and get to the kernel, and then to live in the allegory of the scripture. The Spirit will lead to truth and break open the illusions.

Our human practice of remembrance of the Holy is religion...and we are called again and again to return to our source of being. ME teaches the closer you get to God (The Holy) the less you perceive or detect of God and the more you experience or understand of God. Perhaps this is Transfiguration.

Jesus wants us to deeply experience God's blessings, so that we can cling to that experience in moments of doubt, despair, or anguish. When we are attentive to the light within us and around us, we will experience more of that light and we become a light for others. Jesus wants us to dig in and find meaning in our experience, a spiritual change.

Even with us something like that happens once in a while. The face of a man walking with his child in the park, of a woman baking bread, of sometimes even the unlikeliest person listening to a concert, say, or standing barefoot in the sand watching the waves roll in, or just having a beer at a Saturday baseball game in July.

Every once and so often, something so touching, so incandescent, so alive transfigures the human face that it's almost beyond bearing. Frederick Buechner
Beyond Words

We do not often recognize our own so called mountaintop experiences. I doubt we receive sunburns from our experience with God. We forget the Buddhist Teaching of Pay Attention, Pay Attention. Where do we make time to experience where we find meaning in our lives? Or perhaps, are we always prepared to participate in the experience where we will find meaning? Jesus often suggests being prepared, to keep our lanterns lit, we know not when the master will return... perhaps, this is our pay attention guidance. Will we be awake and ready, or sleep through the experience?

I cannot ruminate on Transfiguration however without painfully remembering our use of Atomic Weapons on the Japanese people on August 6th, the feast of the Transfiguration, and 9th, 1945. The day we were all blinded by the light.

Thank JoAnn Blatchley

Sadako Sasaki, Tea Ceremony, Sister City relationships with Japan

Peacemakers, veterans for peace, seniors, WAMM

On July 16, 1945, the first atomic bomb test, code-named "Trinity," took place in an area of desert in New Mexico called "Jornada del Muerto" - Journey of Death. "We knew the world would not be the same," recalled J. Robert Oppenheimer, as he witnessed the first atomic test, Oppenheimer quoted Hindu Scripture, "Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds."

On August 6, 1945, the first atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima. The thermal flash and blast started fires that became a firestorm until the whole city was ablaze. Birds ignited in midair. People ran to the rivers to escape and soon the river became not a stream of flowing water but a stream of drifting dead bodies. Despite every horrifying statistic of violence and war we've ever heard, before or since, the account, statistics, and memory of that day 77 years ago are still devastated beyond our imagination.

Sixty percent of the city was destroyed -hospitals, hotels, rail stations, temples, factories, houses, reduced to flaming rubble. The next morning the sun rose and revealed the dawning of the nuclear age. Where the city once stood, was a wasteland of ashes and ruin. More significantly, the dawn revealed our future, unless we end our warring madness.

From John Hersey August 23 1946 New Yorker

At exactly fifteen minutes past eight in the morning, on August 6, 1945, Japanese time, at the moment when the atomic bomb flashed above Hiroshima, Miss Toshiko Sasaki, a clerk in the personnel department of the East Asia Tin Works At that same moment, Dr. Masakazu Fujii was settling down cross-legged to read the

Osaka Asahi, Mrs. Hatsuyo Nakamura, a tailor's widow, stood by the window of her kitchen, Father Wilhelm Kleinsorge, a German priest of the Society of Jesus, reclined on a cot. Dr. Terufumi Sasaki, walked along a hospital corridor, the Reverend Mr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto, pastor of the Hiroshima Methodist Church, paused at the door of a rich man's.

A hundred thousand people were killed by the atomic bomb, and these six were among the survivors. They still wonder why they lived when so many others died..

Nagasaki was the first Christian Community in Japan. The head of the statue of the Virgin Mary which once stood in Nagasaki's Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception -- (Urakami in Japanese,) was the only art object of the Cathedral which survived. The cathedral was leveled by the blast, and that fragment of Mary, known as the Burnt Madonna remains as a reminder in the rebuilt cathedral.

From Dorothy Day:

Jubilate Deo. President Truman was jubilant. We have created. We have created destruction. We have created a new element, called Pluto. Nature had nothing to do with it.

The papers list the scientists (the murderers) who are credited with perfecting this new weapon. Scientists, army officers, great universities, and captains of industry-all are given credit lines in the press for their work of preparing the bomb-and other bombs, the President assures us, are in production now.

Everyone says, "I wonder what the Pope thinks of it?" How everyone turns to the Vatican for judgment, even though they do not seem to listen to the voice there! But our Lord Himself has already pronounced judgment on the atomic bomb. When James and John (John the beloved) wished to call down fire from heaven on their enemies, Jesus said:

"You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man came not to destroy souls but to save." He said also, "What you do unto the least of these my brethren, you do unto me.

To be sure, questions of history, race, and faith continue to this day. Why did the US Military force African American soldiers to witness the bombs with no protection to see how it would affect their health. Some historians ask why we did not stop after one bomb, or why was the weapon not used in Germany? Why did we choose large civilian centers, or the two cities with the largest Christian communities? Some would argue convincingly that the atomic bomb was a racist attack committed by White Americans. It is hard to dismiss.

I recognize that there are many who argue that the use of these weapons of mass destruction were necessary. I am not one of them. The Episcopal Church, not one of them. Every General Convention we agree to language that would disarm, repent, and move towards creating a culture of peace and not war.

We became a nation willing to allow the ends to justify the means and to dismiss any discussion of religious value or meaning. We were willing, and some even joyful

and excited, to kill the innocent to secure the world as we wanted it to be. This pattern has not changed.

For me, a Christian Conscientious Objector, following the Way of Love, our actions were and continue to be a betrayal of our fundamental values, and in our trust of God's care of history. Remembering the Transfiguration and these bombings together opens for us the opportunity to reconsider our history, name what gives us meaning, to deeply break open the allegory of scripture as ME teaches, and to question if we would make the same decision today. Perhaps in the experience to transform our natures to act in ways that more fully reflect our values.

Leonard Cohen in an interview regarding his poem-song Halleluiaah, said that given the complexity and brokenness of our time you might raise your fist, or sing Halleluiaah, and I chose both.

DAYS PASS and the years vanish, and we walk sightless among miracles. God, fill our eyes with seeing and our minds with knowing; let there be moments when Your Presence, like lightning, illumines the darkness in which we walk. Help us to see, wherever we gaze, that the bush burns unconsumed. And we, clay touched by God, will reach out for holiness, and exclaim in wonder: How filled with awe is this place, and we did not know it! Forgive us for we are sinners in your sight.

Blessed is the Eternal One, the Holy God! AMEN Reform Siddur