

Celebrating Our Lord

Transfiguration



Prayer Starter

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ...



Daily Bread

When Jesus began planning to go to Jerusalem, he talked to his disciples about some of the bad things that he knew would happen to him. Jesus wanted them to be prepared. His disciples didn't believe that Jesus could possibly be killed or treated badly by others. They also had a hard time believing that he could rise again after being killed. So, Jesus took three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John, and went up Tabor Mountain to pray. It took a long time for them to climb. Once they were there, Jesus began to appear physically brighter to his disciples. He was glowing. It seemed like a light was coming from inside his body.

Then the disciples saw more glowing light coming from the sky. Suddenly they saw the great men Moses and Elijah standing next to Jesus. The three disciples were so amazed and moved, they did not want to leave the mountain.

Then a cloud covered them all and they heard the voice of God saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to Him!" (Luke 9:35) The disciples were so terrified at this that they fell to the ground. But Jesus told them not to be afraid.

They saw and heard for themselves how Jesus was truly one with God. They suddenly saw Jesus as more than their teacher. This moment, when they saw him in a different way, they realized that what was happening here was much more important than they had ever dreamed. This moment is called the Transfiguration.

After the Transfiguration, Jesus asked his disciples not to talk about it until he rose again from the dead.

SCRIPTURE SOURCE

Below is one of the descriptions in the Bible of the Transfiguration (Mark 9:3-4). It was a moment of realization for the disciples when the true and awesome nature of Jesus was revealed to them.

Do the math and then match the numbers with the words to fill in the blanks.

Jesus= $3+5=$ _____

Whiter= $8-2=$ _____

Elijah= $10-1=$ _____

World= $7+6=$ _____

Clothes= $6-4=$ _____

Bleach= $1+2=$ _____

Appeared= $2-1=$ _____

Dazzling= $11-6=$ _____

Talking= $6+6=$ _____

Moses= $7-3=$ _____

“His _____ became _____ white, _____ than anyone in the
_____ could _____ them. And there _____ before them _____
and _____, who were _____ with _____.”

In the Armenian Tradition

In the Armenian Church, the Feast of the Transfiguration is called Baydzaragerbootiun. It is one of the five major feasts of the Armenian Church. In the Armenian calendar, the feast takes place on the 14th Sunday after Easter, so it is always on a different date between June 28 to August 1.

In church, we sing the Hymn of the Transfiguration. These are the words in English:

By your Transfiguration on the mountain
You show your divine power
We give you glory
Oh, light divine

Well Versed

“This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to Him!”

Luke 9:35

CELEBRATE WITH GOD



Armenians often use both roses and water to celebrate "Vartavar!"



BIBLE BYTES

Transfigure is a word that we don't use much in everyday life. It means to change in outward form or appearance, to transform or to change so as to glorify.

In Armenia, this feast of Transfiguration is also called Vartavar (the Festival of Roses). The reason for this is that a very long time before Christianity, Armenians had a feast around this time of year to honor a goddess named Astghig and to celebrate the harvest. People would play games with water and decorate with roses.

Today, people in Armenia and the Middle East still have fun celebrating the Feast of the Transfiguration by throwing water on each other in the hot August weather. They chase each other outside, like a game of tag.

Did you know...!?

Family Focus

Today, we learned about the Transfiguration, one of the Five Major Feasts of the Armenian Church. To make the radiance of Jesus that day more understandable, we did a classroom activity on how things seem in darkness and then in bright light. Students colored a picture of the event and learned a line from the special hymn of that day. Finally, we read about some distinctive Armenian traditions connected with the feast.

Living Your Faith

1. Take your child into the church on Feast of the Transfiguration. Splash water on each other afterward in an old Armenian practice!
2. Discuss the concept of how your perception of someone changes when you see them in different circumstances, like the way that Jesus appeared to his disciples. We may think we know everything about someone, but we actually do not.