

Unlike his accusers, he has cast aside his horrible hidden deeds of the past, namely unscrupulous acts and misrepresentations of the gospel ( 4:2). He speaks openly, appealing to all to authentically discern the truth.

**Luke 9:28-36,(37-43a)**

Jesus has predicted his suffering, death and resurrection to his disciples; he has called on them to “take up their cross” (v. 23), has warned that those who hear the gospel but fail to trust in it will be condemned, and has promised that some present will see the kingdom of God. Now he and the inner circle of disciples ascend “the mountain” (v. 28). In Luke, Jesus always prays before an important event.

An aura of unnatural brightness is linked with mystical appearances in Exodus and Acts; “dazzling white” (v. 29) is a symbol of transcendence. In Jewish tradition, both “Moses and Elijah” (v. 30) were taken into heaven without dying. Jesus’ agenda is in accord with the Law and the prophets; he is doing God’s will. “Two men” also appear at the resurrection and at the ascension. Jesus’ “departure” (v. 31, exodos in Greek) is his journey to Jerusalem and his passage from this world. Peter clearly doesn’t understand; perhaps he thinks he is witnessing a super Feast of Tabernacles (“dwellings”, v. 33) – a time when the whole city was brightly illuminated. The “cloud” (v. 34) is a symbol of God’s presence; the words from it recall Jesus’ baptism, and add “listen to him!” (v. 35). Vv. 37-43a, the healing of an epileptic child, present three contrasts: from the mountain to the needy world; Jesus’ great power over evil (vs. the disciples’); and Jesus’ fidelity to God vs. general human infidelity. The child is in miserable condition. In healing him, Jesus shows God’s “greatness” to “all” (v. 43).

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~ Notices ~

**Ash Wednesday** A short service of Holy Communion with the imposition of Ashes will take place at St Columba’s Church, Ennis at 7.00pm on Wednesday. All are welcome to start Lent together with this traditional service.

**Prayers** are said daily for the welfare of our community, our nation and the world. If you have any particular issue that you would like to be prayed for, do let me know.

**Our Lenten Journey** Walking with a purpose for the renewal of the spirit. This year we are inviting you to commit to literally walk with Jesus – a mindful walk as part of your Lenten journey. Sue will be leading an ecumenical walk in Lees Road Woods every Saturday during Lent, starting at 11.30am in the car park. Come and join her, or walk on your own, or walk at a place of your choice, for around an hour. Sue will be walking the route as part of a plan to complete 100 miles in March to support the Irish Hospice Foundation. We invite you to join with us in Lent, the season of Grace, in an ecumenical effort to understand how the penance of Lent is a journey for the renewal of the spirit.

**Website:** [clareanglicans.ie](http://clareanglicans.ie)

**YouTube:** [www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans](http://www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans)

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He was transfigured  
before their eyes

## The Sunday before Lent 2022 (Year C)

### Collect

Holy God, you know the disorder of our lives: set straight our crooked hearts, and bend our wills to love

your goodness and your glory in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen**

**Suggested Hymns** - For the online service you might like to view these hymns with lyrics on YouTube.

1) At the Name of Jesus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w-tDjlpqk>

2) Christ be our Light

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Y5N6oxIKH0>

3) O worship the King (CH34)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dv2BqFgm6\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dv2BqFgm6_M)

4) Shine Jesus, Shine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4hXJ9ax2FY>

### Exodus 34.29-35

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterwards all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

### Psalms 99

The Lord is king; let the peoples tremble!

He sits enthroned upon the cherubim;

let the earth quake!

The Lord is great in Zion;

he is exalted over all the peoples.

Let them praise your great and awesome name.

Holy is he!

Mighty King, lover of justice,  
you have established equity;

you have executed justice

and righteousness in Jacob.

Extol the Lord our God; worship at his footstool.

Holy is he!

Moses and Aaron were among his priests,

Samuel also was among those who called on his name.

They cried to the Lord, and he answered them.

He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud;

they kept his decrees,

and the statutes that he gave them.

O Lord our God, you answered them;

you were a forgiving God to them,

but an avenger of their wrongdoings.

Extol the Lord our God,

and worship at his holy mountain;

for the Lord our God is holy.

## 2 Corinthians 3:12 - 4:2

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practise cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

## Luke 9:28-36

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

## Post Communion Prayer

Holy God, we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ: may we who are partakers at his table reflect his life in word and deed, that all the world may know his power to change and save. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## Commentary

### Exodus 34:29-35

While Moses was on Mount Sinai the first time, the people of Israel, under Aaron's leadership, made a golden image of a calf as a symbol of God. So irate was Moses when he discovered the revelry around the Calf that he smashed the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written (32:19). God was angry that the people had broken the commandment against casting idols of the deity, but in time has forgiven them; he has invited Moses to ascend the mountain again to receive a replacement set of tablets. While there, God has conversed with Moses. Vv. 10-26 are the "covenant" (agreement) God has made with the Israelites. In exchange for being their god (vv. 10, 24); acting among them so that the indigenous peoples of the land will recognize Israel's uniqueness; and giving them victory over these peoples (v. 11); the Israelites must, as well as obeying the Ten Commandments:

not enter into any pact with these peoples (vv. 12, 14); destroy their religious symbols (v. 13); not worship with them (v. 16); not intermarry; dedicate their first-born to him (vv. 19-

20); keep the feasts of Passover (Weeks, Shavuot, v. 22) and "ingathering" (Tabernacles, Sukkot); observe the Sabbath (v. 21); make pilgrimages three times a year (v. 23), and offer the first of the harvest to God (v. 26).

Now Moses descends the mountain again. His face is radiant: an expression of his privileged place as servant close to God: he reflects God's glory. Perhaps "returned" (v. 31) is an echo of the Golden Calf incident. Moses dons a "veil" (v. 33) to avoid overwhelming his hearers with God's reflected glory. Again, Moses speaks with God. One account (33:11) says that "the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face" but another (from a different source) says that God only allowed Moses to see his back (33:20-33). A final point: the word translated "shining" (v. 30), *karan*, can be written out as *keren*, meaning horn. Thus, Jerome translated it, and so Michelangelo sculpted Moses with horns!

## Psalm 99

This is a hymn of praise to God as king. The endings of Vv. 3, 5 and 9 are perhaps a refrain, said or sung by worshippers as they "extol" (v. 9) God. God, on his throne above the "cherubim" (v. 1, the half-human, half-animal creatures thought to hover above the altar) in the Temple, is to be praised by "all the peoples" (v. 2). V. 4 lists some qualities God has shown "Jacob", the people of Israel. His "footstool", v. 5, is the Ark. For Israel, God has also: helped people in need (vv. 6, 8); given them just laws (v. 7); and punished and forgiven them where appropriate (v. 8). "Moses ... Aaron" (v. 6) and "Samuel" were known for communicating with God and were his representatives. "His holy mountain" (v. 9) is Mount Zion, the hill on which Jerusalem stands.

## 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Paul contrasts his ministry with that of Moses. In 3:3, he says that his readers, supported and enabled by the Holy Spirit, are "a letter of Christ", prepared by him and his colleagues: a letter written on "tablets of human hearts", not on "tablets of stone". This is the "confidence that we have through Christ" (3:4). The dead letter of the Law has been replaced by the living letter of the Spirit.

Paul interprets the "veil" (3:13) in Exodus as signifying the limited duration of the old covenant. The new covenant in Christ sets aside the old. The thinking of Israelites was frozen in time ("hardened", 3:14), and it still is: when they hear the Law read ("old covenant", 3:14; "Moses", 3:15), they only see God's plan for saving people dimly, i.e. through a "veil", but when one is converted ("turns to the Lord", 3:16), one sees the plan clearly. In Judaism and Christianity, the motive force is the spirit, but for us Christ and the Holy Spirit are one ("the Lord is the Spirit", 3:17), and in Christ we have "freedom" from the Law: as we become more and more Christ-like, we are more and more able to render to God the honour ("glory", 3:18) he is due, with the Spirit's help. In 10:9-11, Paul's accusers claim that he is strong on words but weak on action. He now retorts: "by God's mercy" (4:1) he has turned from persecuting Christians to "this ministry" which he does with "great boldness" (3:12), not losing heart.