

*Second*, God wants us to know the reason his Son came to earth. What are Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus about? According to Luke, they "*spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.*" (Luke 9:31b) Departure? Yes, Jesus is going to Jerusalem. There he will *depart*, he'll *leave* his disciples *at the cross*. He can't stay with the disciples. He came to die for sinners, to rise again, and ascend to the Father. After that, he promises, "*I will be with you always.*" (Mt 28:20)

And *finally*, the Father himself speaks, telling us who Jesus is. And who is he? "*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.*" (Matthew 17:5b) The same pronouncement the Father made when Jesus was baptized, he now makes again, "*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*" (Matthew 3:17) But he adds something, "*Listen to him.*" We're listening. What does Jesus tell us? Here's what he says:

- "*The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*" (Luke 19:10) Are you feeling lost and confused? Are you in a dark place? Jesus has come to save you.
- "*The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*" (Mark 10:45) Are you feeling worthless, of little value to anyone? Jesus gave his life to ransom you, to buy you out of sin and death. That means you are priceless!
- *I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.* (John 10:11) Jesus tells the story of a shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep and goes looking for his *one* lost sheep. *You* are that precious sheep for which Jesus lays down his life, for which he goes looking!

The Transfiguration didn't last long, maybe just a few minutes longer than it did for us to read the story. It happened so fast Peter wouldn't have had time to find a single stick to build a shelter. Will we have our own experience of the Transfiguration? Yes, when Jesus comes again. On that day, we'll see him in power and glory, the same glory in which he appeared to Peter, James and John on the mountain.

In the meantime, we have the opportunity to behold and embrace the Son of God in different ways. In our baptism we are joined to Jesus crucified and risen to life. In Holy Communion, we hold in our hand and feel on our lips the same Jesus who was glorified on the mountain and who went to