

trans·fig·u·ra·tion

a complete change of form or appearance into a more beautiful or spiritual state



Each time we disclose a truth about ourselves, we part a veil. By doing so, we invite others to come into our lives and make contact with us. Parting any veil forces a degree of vulnerability and demands unimaginable trust and faith.

By inviting Peter, John, and James up to the mountain, Jesus extends to them the unexpected privilege to see himself transfigured in all his glorious splendor. So dazzling was this visual feast that Peter's desire to build three tents - one each for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, suggests nothing but a longing for God's revelation to linger and stay.

In the LGBTQ community, “coming-out,” self-revelation or “transfiguration” are part of a lifelong journey of understanding, acknowledging and sharing one’s gender identity and/or sexual orientation. It may be easy for some, or longer and more difficult for others. While many are eternally grateful for the amount of support and empathy they receive from friends and family, some share “coming-out” stories that are heartbreaking and heavy to hear.

By reflecting on the Gospel text of Jesus’ transfiguration allow yourself the time to revisit your own “coming-out” journey, whether as an LGBTQ person or an ally. Revisit the times that others have come out to you. Chances are you may discover God’s hidden graces, blessings and learnings that perhaps eluded you before.

LUKE 9: 28-43

28 About eight days after saying this, Jesus took Peter, John and James and went up onto a mountain to pray. **29** As Jesus was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. **30** Suddenly two people were there talking with Jesus - Moses and Elijah. **31** They appeared in glorious splendor and spoke of the prophecy that Jesus was about to fulfill in Jerusalem.

32 Peter and the others had already fallen into a deep sleep, but awakening, they saw Jesus’ glory - and the two people who were standing next to him. **33** When the two were leaving Jesus, Peter said, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us set up three tents—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (Peter didn’t know what he was really saying.)

34 While Peter was speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. **35** A voice came from the cloud, saying, “This is my Own, my Chosen One. Listen to him.”

36 When the voice had spoken, they saw no one but Jesus standing there. The disciples were silent and did not tell anyone at that time what they had seen.

37 The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd awaited Jesus. **38** A man in the crowd called out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. **39** A spirit seizes him and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him. **40** I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they could not.”

41 “You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your child here.”

42 Even while the boy was approaching, the demon dashed the child to the ground and threw him into a violent convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child and returned him back to his father.

43 And they were all awestruck at the greatness of God.

FOR REFLECTION

1. Being created in the image and likeness of God, how has God revealed Godself through you? What has been your safe spaces or “mountain tops” to reveal who you really are and appear in all your God-given glorious splendor? What are some of the responses you have received to your “transfiguration,” revelation or “coming-out?”
2. Peter, John, and James were awakened to God's beauty. God’s beauty wasn't new, but their seeing it was. Does a Gospel passage like this one allow you to celebrate your true LGBTQ colors even if others have yet to wash away “the scales from their eyes” to “see” and recognize you? (Acts 9:18)
3. “*The disciples were silent, telling nothing of what they had seen.*” The transfiguration experience needs neither explanation nor understanding, just presence and silence to process its full wonder. As an LGBTQ person or ally are you able to reveal who you are without explanations and justifications? If so, how have you been able to reach such a mountaintop where you can reveal yourself? If not, what mountains do you feel you still have to climb to get to where you want to be? Does prayer help you on your journey?
4. Immediately following the story of the transfiguration is a story of disfiguration - the story of the demon-possessed boy. Are there times when you look at yourself, or your life, and don't like what you see or have become? Do you say things like - “I'm just not myself,” “that's not me,” or “how did my life get to this point?” In times like these when you feel you have lost the connection with the original beauty of your LGBTQ creation (or perhaps fallen asleep to the beauty within yourself, others, and the world) how do you “awaken” yourself? Have you ever experienced Jesus' healing and restoration at these times of disfigurement?
5. Is the Eucharist, with its insistence on the physical body and on community, a sacred space for you? How can you bring others from the LGBTQ community to this liturgical mountaintop to experience Jesus in these ways?

TRANSFIGURATION

A reflective sonnet by [Malcolm Guite](#)

For that one moment, 'in and out of time',
On that one mountain where all moments meet,
The daily veil that covers the sublime
In darkling glass fell dazzled at his feet.
There were no angels full of eyes and wings
Just living glory full of truth and grace.
The Love that dances at the heart of things
Shone out upon us from a human face
And to that light the light in us leaped up,
We felt it quicken somewhere deep within,
A sudden blaze of long-extinguished hope
Trembled and tingled through the tender skin.
Nor can this blackened sky, this darkened scar
Eclipse that glimpse of how things really are.

