

God's Facebook Page

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Based on Exodus 33:12-23, 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2, Luke 9:28-36

If you are at all familiar with the internet, then you know the word "Facebook." Facebook is a website where people can post comments and pictures to share what's happening in their life. Friends and family can then read the messages and respond. The fact that you can follow what's happening in someone's life on a daily basis makes Facebook a wonderful way to truly get to know someone.

Too bad Facebook wasn't around during biblical times. It would have come in real handy, especially for Moses. In the Old Testament reading today from Exodus we find Moses having a conversation with God. Moses says, "God, show me your glory." "Let me see your face," Moses requests. Moses wants to get to know God better. "Invite me as a friend on your Facebook page," Moses would have said in today's world.

Although God does not allow Moses to look directly at his face (which, the Bible tells us, would mean certain death), God does invite Moses to take a journey with him, up a mountain, where he and God spend some time getting to know each other better. The result of their time together was the giving of the Ten Commandments.

In the epistle reading, St. Paul makes mention of Moses having to wear a veil on his face after his visit with God upon the mountain. His face, the Bible says, took on a radiant glow. Moses experienced the presence of God so completely that he was transformed by it – physically and spiritually.

If I were Moses, I would have wasted no time in taking a snapshot of myself and posting it to my Facebook page with the caption, "Notice anything peculiar about my face? Don't I look simply divine?"

Looking at Moses' snapshot, we *might* notice the radiant glow of Moses' face, but it would be impossible to miss the dark, obtrusive veil covering his face. Once again, the face of God's glory is only partially revealed.

Up to this point, God has not added us as a friend on his Facebook page. We still long for the invitation to be fully welcomed into God's presence. Our hearts echo Moses' words: "Lord, show us your face!"

And then we receive an e-mail. God finally responds to our request. Notice St. Paul in the epistle reading says, "The veil is taken away by believing in Christ." By God sending his Son, Jesus, to us, we are given an open invitation to come and experience

God and God's world. We are invited to become a friend of God's Facebook page. And when we log on, we are finally allowed to see the full face of God. It is none other than the face of Jesus Christ. The caption reads, "This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to him." As Jesus says to us, "Now you are my friends, and I will tell you everything the Father has told me" (John15:15).

If you want to know who I am, God says, then take a look at what Jesus is doing and saying. He knows my plans, my desires. If you want to join the ranks of the saints of God, then follow Jesus. He is the one who knows the way.

That sounds like marching orders, does it not? It makes sense when you realize that on Wednesday we will embark on a new journey – a journey called Lent. Lent is the season in which we focus on Christ's suffering and death. Ash Wednesday is just a few days away; the shadow of death is on the horizon. Lent is not a journey that we would ever choose to make, but it is a necessary one.

If we want to truly know who God is and be a part of God's kingdom, then we must make this journey with Jesus. We must be willing to follow Jesus to the cross on Calvary's hill, for it is on the cross that the face of God will be revealed most fully. On the cross we will behold the face of forgiveness. We will behold the face of salvation. We will behold the very face of God.

God, our loving Father, wants what is best for us, so God instructs us to listen to Jesus. It's one of the reasons that we gather here, week after week – to listen intently to the words of Jesus. This holy place provides a space where we can concentrate solely on the voice of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

When we focus our whole being on the voice of Jesus, all of the other voices of this world – which compete for our attention – begin to fade away. Just as Moses and Elijah disappeared from the holy mountain at Jesus' Transfiguration, so the other non-essential things in our lives begin to fade away when we focus our minds and hearts solely on Jesus. That is God's will for our lives. "This is my Son, my Chosen one," God says. "Listen only to him."

Not too long ago we gathered around a manger in Bethlehem. There we discovered that God has a name. His name is Emmanuel – God with us. His name is Jesus – the Lord saves.

Today, as we gather on top of the mountain, we hear again God declare who Jesus is. "This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to him."

God knows that our Lenten journey will be filled with difficulties. So God calls us to center ourselves on the words of Jesus in order to find strength for the journey.

Listen to the good news that God has sent his very own Son. Listen to the depth of God's love as he offers his only Son on the cross for us.

Hear Jesus' promise to walk beside us as we make this journey, through hatred and betrayal, through pain and death, and ultimately into the promised resurrection.

On this day of Transfiguration, God has posted a picture of the glorified Christ on his Facebook page. The caption reads, "This is my Son, my Chosen One. Listen to him."

Listen to him. His words are trustworthy and true. Allow his words to be the guiding light in your journey of faith. His words will lead you home to your heavenly Father. Listen to him.

Amen.