



TE DEUM

FEBRUARY 2009

WE PRAISE YOU, O GOD

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Proclaiming the Living Voice of the Gospel in Beauty and Holiness

Special Worship Opportunities in February

Transfiguration of Our Lord

22 February 2009 • Worship at 8:30am & 11:00am

On the Transfiguration of Our Lord, also known as Transfiguration Sunday, we hear the story in the Gospels (Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36) when Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him up a high mountain to pray. As he was praying, Jesus was transfigured into a glorified form, and “Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus” (Luke 9:30-31). This festival day is celebrated at different times in different traditions. For Lutherans, we celebrate the Transfiguration on the last Sunday in Epiphany, where as the Roman calendar celebrates the second Sunday in Lent, yet other traditions celebrate the transfiguration on 6 August.

Orthodox theologian, Thomas Hopko tells that in the Transfiguration the disciples see the glory of the Kingdom of God present in majesty in the person of Christ. They see that in him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and that because they see this before the crucifixion, they truly know who it is that suffered for them on the cross. Besides this, the presence of Moses and Elijah are also of great significance for understanding this festival day. Hopko says these two figures stand for the Old Testament itself: Moses for the Law, and Elijah for the Prophets. They also stand for the Living and the Dead, for Moses died and his burial place is known, while Elijah was taken alive into heaven in order to appear again to announce the time of God’s salvation in Christ the Messiah. Christ is the Lord of both the living and the dead.

Ash Wednesday

25 February 2009 • Worship at 10am & 7pm

Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent. It is a special day of devotion and the most solemn day of the church year. The name comes from the practice of imposing ashes on the foreheads of penitents during Ash Wednesday liturgy. The liturgical color for this day is black, the color of ashes and mourning; purple, the liturgical color of Lent, is also used.

Lent began in the early fourth century as a three-week period in preparation for Easter. By the late fourth century, Lent had been expanded to consist of forty days prior to Maundy Thursday. By the end of the fifth century, there was a desire to exclude Sundays from Lent (since Sundays were not days of fasting), so Lent was extended to the Wednesday before the first Sunday. This Wednesday was known simply as the “Beginning of the Fast.” By the late eleventh century, it was called Ash Wednesday.

The Ash Wednesday liturgy has a mood of penitence and reflection on the quality of one’s faith and life. The intention is to enlist full participation in the Lenten discipline which, by its focus on the mystery of redemption, strengthens worshipers in the gift of Baptism. The penitential acts of the Ash Wednesday liturgy are related to our Baptism, to restoration, and to spiritual and moral growth.

Grace Notes – Email Newsletter

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