

TRANSFIGURATION

*Jesus took Peter and James and his brother John
and led them up a high mountain by themselves.*

*And he was transfigured before their eyes,
and his face became as dazzling as the sun,
his clothes as radiant as light .*

Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him.

Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, how good that we are here!"

Matt. 17: 1-4

The Transfiguration is one of the familiar stories of Jesus and his closest friends. He took just three of the disciples to the mountain. We don't know what the others were doing at the time, but we know that Peter, James and John were the ones chosen for the gift of seeing Jesus changed, transfigured into an image of his glory. What a blessing! Peter said, "Lord, how good that we are here!"

Many of us long-term Vincentians have witnessed a transfiguration of sorts, or more than one. Perhaps it was an individual who overcame an addiction. Maybe we have walked with a family who lived with poverty for more than a generation and have watched as the first person in that family achieved an education and a good job. Some of us have watched the personal struggles that we know would be insurmountable without divine intervention. Others have seen someone who has been away from God and, like the Prodigal Son, returned to the Father.

There are other transfigurations too. Many of these are within ourselves. Becoming truly Vincentian, living for our masters, the poor, can transfigure us. We can be like St. Vincent de Paul, who became a priest in order to have a comfortable life and who was evangelized by the poor he encountered. Over the last 20 years, I have been enriched, educated and changed by those I have been privileged to serve. I have watched others experience the same eye-opening revelations. I thank God for this and I pray that more men and women will awaken to their vocations to serve Christ in his poor ones.

The disciples knew Jesus as a man. The transfiguration showed them how his human nature combined with his divine person. We know Jesus as God, our Saviour. The smaller transfigurations we experience as Vincentians can show us God with a human face, in those we serve. When we are given the gift of walking with our neighbours who need us, we can surely echo Peter, "Lord, how good that we are here!"

*Denise Bondy, National Spiritual Committee
Ontario Regional Council*