

What we see in Peter, James and John is a Church in process; or better, in the words of Herbert McCabe, the Church itself as process:

The process by which the world grows to maturity in Christ is Church. The Church is not a thing, it is a process in time.

(p.25 *The New Creation*)

He will also go on to say to that

What is holy is first of all terrifying, dangerous; God is dangerous not, first of all, because of his wrath, but because his holiness is of itself destructive of what is profane. (p.28)

And also that *The holiness of Israel is a sharing in the holiness of God. (p.28)*

If we bring these ideas together, with the feast of the Transfiguration in mind, we can see that it's a feast celebrating this process of becoming Church; this process of *being* Church; this maturing in Christ, in holiness, which *is* Church, and realise that it is a necessarily uncomfortable business. To approach the holy, which is what we are about, will challenge all that is profane within us. This is perhaps also what 'rising from the dead' can mean, which the disciples discuss on coming down from the mountain precisely because they haven't yet got it: this process of growing in holiness, of being Church. And he takes us there through his own 'rising from the dead' but even then the process of transfiguration continues – or, once more in the words of Herbert McCabe:

Even when faith has matured by death and resurrection into the vision of God, we shall not have reached something static, fixed, comprehensible; eternal life is an unceasing exploration of the infinite abyss of the Godhead.

Peter, James and John get a glimpse of this process in action today – and it scares the pants off them! 'Just what have we got ourselves involved in?' we might hear them saying. It's a question for us, too, if the process is working.

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