

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY:

FIRST READING

2 KINGS 2:1–12

From the Hebrew Bible we hear the story of the taking up of the prophet Elijah into heaven and the passing on of his power to Elisha. The narrative illustrates the great favor Elijah found in the eyes of the Lord as he is carried away in a chariot of fire. Elisha is first in despair and rends his clothing in mourning, yet realizes he himself has been chosen to offer continued prophetic vision to the people.

PSALM 50:1–6

The psalm tells of the majestic and righteous God who requires true sacrifice and thanksgiving of the people.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:3–6

In this lesson Paul proclaims that Christ is the very image of God, though not all can perceive this truth. This proclamation focuses on Jesus Christ as Lord, and Paul is captive to this message. As light shone forth from darkness in creation, so God has shone forth in the hearts of those to whom the light of the knowledge of God in Christ has been given.

MARK 9:2–9

Our gospel is the story of Jesus' transfiguration. The narrative draws upon themes and symbols from Israel's past and its hopes for the future. Moses and Elijah represent the law and the prophets, whose promises Jesus fulfills. The chosen disciples see divine glory reflected in Jesus' human person. A voice from the cloud declares that he is God's beloved Son