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by Pat Marrin

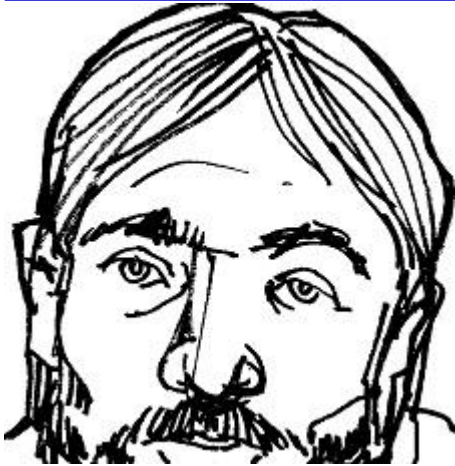
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"All of us, gazing with unveiled face on the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor 3:18).

[2 Cor 3:15—4:1, 3-6; Jn 13:34](#)

If you have ever had the experience of looking at the face of someone who is fully revealing themselves, you have a hint of what St. Paul is trying to explain about the new access to God because of Christ. Two people in love reveal themselves, and it lifts the veil of self-defense and shyness all of us use to protect ourselves until we

are really ready to be known. It is a stunning moment in a relationship, and it often leads to a desire to be one with another person whose love reveals us to ourselves.

Our encounter with God made possible by Jesus is like this. In seeing God, we understand for the first time that we are created in the same image and likeness. Glory meets glory and divine beauty becomes transcendent in our human identity. Paul uses the example of Moses, who saw God face to face when the Law was given. His face was so illuminated the people could not look at him directly, but only through a veil. The Law alone, Paul held, was an indirect encounter with God, a veiled understanding. But Moses had seen Glory.

Jesus, prefigured by Moses and other prophets like Elisha and Ezekiel, was himself the human face of the divine Mystery. His human presence in the world was the veiled revelation of God. But when he was raised from the dead, his hidden divine identity was revealed in glory.

To believe in Jesus is to begin to approach what lovers discover in each other. Just as strangers become friends and then become lovers, we move from glory to glory as discipleship deepens our intimacy and knowledge until we know him as he is. In knowing Jesus, we see as if in a mirror that reveals in us the image and likeness of God.

The question at the heart of our Christian lives is not whether we can become so virtuous that we are worthy of God, but whether we are ready to let go of ourselves so completely that we fall in love with God.