

# A glimpse of glory

Caroline Hodgson *reflects on* Exodus 34:29-end, 2 Corinthians 3:12 – 4:2 and Luke 9:28-36 [37-43]

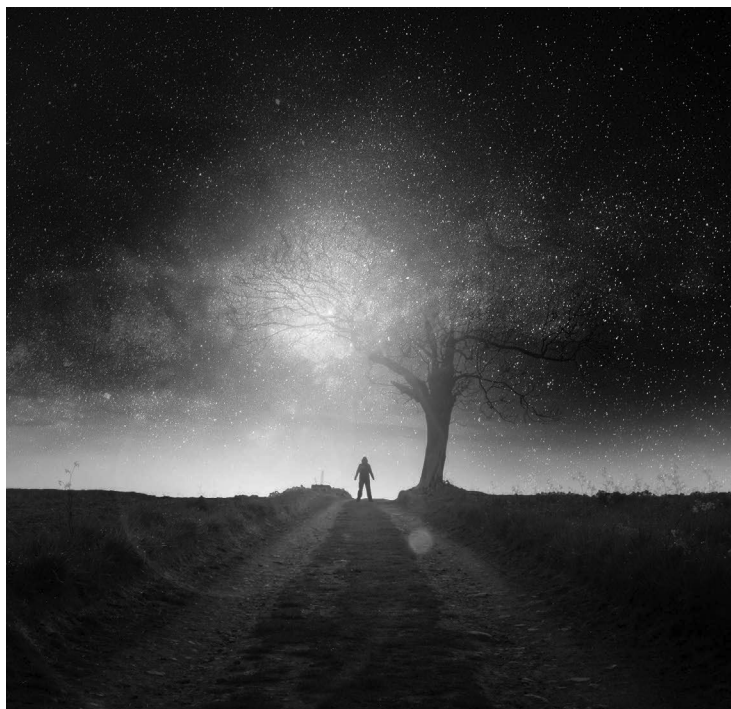
**A** day of dazzling images, with Christ transfigured at the heart of it. First, our reading from Exodus tells the story of Moses the lawgiver, returning from the mountain, initially unaware that his face is radiant from meeting God. The mere reflection in Moses' features instils dread in Aaron and the others. When Moses sees the effect it has on them, he veils his face.

In his letter to the Corinthians Paul refers to this veil, likening the new covenant to removing it. Because God sent the Son, we are "transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another" – just that bit closer to glimpsing God.

Finally, in the Gospel, standing beside Peter we glimpse Christ transfigured. What a moment! Yet even here God reveals to us only what we can bear to see. Luke's account is veiled by the passage of time.

Have you ever been transported in prayer, or singing, or reading the word of God? Or perhaps you've been moved by a work of art or piece of music. Each of these moments is a brief glimpse of God. Like Peter in the Gospel reading, your instinct may have been to hold or try to recreate that moment, that experience, to pin it down in some way. But such dazzling brightness can never be contained within canvas or walls.

As we approach Lent, what can we do to sharpen our vision of God, and reflect just a bit of Christ's dazzling brightness? ☺



Oh Lord, we are dazzled by the reflected light of your glory. Help us, each day, to face you more fully, as we draw nearer to you with bold humility. Amen.

## Poets and faith

### Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

by Julia McGuinness

"Poetry is with me, not a mechanism but an impulse and a reality... I know my aims in writing to be pure, and directed to that which is true and right." So wrote Victorian poet Christina Rossetti of her poetic vocation.

Rossetti was hailed as the foremost female poet of her day by critics and fellow poets alike. She wrote children's poetry – such as the enduringly popular "Goblin Market" – alongside an increasingly devotional output.

Rossetti was as much a committed Christian as she was a poet. Her faith sustained her through significant periods of ill health, both in mind and body, and she turned down three suitors for religious reasons.

Her poetry is concise, lyrical and with a simplicity that does not detract from its profundity. Most of us sing her words every Christmas. Her carol "In the Bleak Midwinter", written in 1872, highlights the deeply personal faith that underpinned Rossetti's life.

"What can I give Him?" she asks, concluding: "What I can I give him – give my heart." ☺

“Open wide the door of our hearts, that we may receive and entertain Thee with all our powers of adoration and love.”

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894), English poet

## Preparing for Lent

by Julian Smith

Lent is the time when Christians identify with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. The question, "What are you giving up this Lent?", suggests that fasting and abstinence still play a part in this. While it's important to remember the temptations and the hunger that Jesus faced, it's easy to forget why he was in the wilderness.

Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit drives Jesus into the

wilderness where he will discover what it means to respond to God's call. Perhaps we should ask the question, "Where is the Holy Spirit driving me this Lent? Is there someone with whom I need to be reconciled? Do I need to forgive myself and, with God's help, learn to be at peace with who I am? Is God calling me to some form of ministry and I keep dodging the call?"

Lent 2025 – a time for self-discovery, not giving up? ☺