

Early in Christian tradition Mt. Tabor was identified as the mountain of the transfiguration of Jesus (Luke 9:28-36). Although the text does not name the mountain, the tradition placing the transfiguration at Mt. Tabor was known to Origen in the third century C.E. In the fourth or fifth century a church was built on the mountain, and by the ninth century there were four churches. Mt. Tabor suffered a tumultuous history during the Crusades, as it was on a high point beside a major road. The church to be seen today, the only one still standing, was built above a Byzantine church by the Custodia Terra Sancta of the Franciscans in 1921 and consecrated in 1924. The dome of the apse of the modern church depicts the transfiguration in a mosaic designed by A. Villani. Following the account of Luke, Jesus is clothed in white. Moses stands at left, holding the Tablets of the Law, the prophet Elijah is at right, the apostle Peter is at lower left and the apostles James and John are at lower right. The Latin inscription above Jesus reads, "This is my son, my chosen; listen to him" (Luke 9:35).