

Homily: The Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus: August 6, 2023: Dn 7: 9-10,  
13-14; Ps 97; 2 Pt 1: 16-19; Mt 17: 1-9

***“The Transfiguration as a Sacred Event meant to deepen our Faith in Jesus”***

1. **In this reality of the Transfiguration**, which we are called to meditate on as Catholics in the **4<sup>th</sup> luminous mystery** of the Rosary, **Jesus reveals His divinity to the Apostles: Peter, James and John.** Why does He show them in this event that He is truly the Son of God? The Church has always understood this: as Jesus in His love wanting to strengthen the Apostles’ Faith, as well as everyone who would believe in Him until the end of time, in light of the upcoming grave trial of witnessing His violent Passion and Death which will shake their Faith, and possibly our Faith, in His divinity and the truth of His teaching. **The Transfiguration thus always must be seen in light of the mystery of the Cross.** To remember that Jesus underwent His holy Passion **freely** out of love for the human race, in which He took on the worst sin, death, and the powers of evil could offer; and just when it looked like they had defeated Him by beating and murdering Him, He triumphed in the reality of His **Resurrection, body and soul**, from the dead after 3 days in the tomb. Jesus wants to bring each of us to that same reality of victory in Him, in this valley of tears; in which all of us also battle against the effects of *sin, death and the powers of evil* on a daily basis, and sometimes get worn down. **Calling to mind the Transfiguration of the Lord is meant to help us in those moments of discouragement.** To not give up, but to remember that the Lord Jesus is the Victor over sin, death and the powers of darkness and that we can rely on Him to triumph in us as well. Yes, he can transform us no matter what kind of spiritual pit we have gotten ourselves into!
2. **St. Peter used this reality of the Lord’s Transfiguration which he witnessed firsthand, as a main point of encouraging the readers of his 2 NT letters then and now to persevere in the Faith during great difficulty and persecution.** As he states it: *“we heard the voice of the Father declare on the mountain, ‘This is my Son, my beloved, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him.’”* St. Peter then says because of what we saw and heard on the mountain, *“we possess the*

*prophetic message that is altogether reliable. You will do well to be attentive to it, as a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.”* As recalling the Transfiguration of Jesus strengthened St. Peter’s Faith, so should it help us when we are discouraged and tempted to give up on following Jesus and the Catholic Faith because it seems too hard. It’s a holy speculation, but maybe recalling the reality of the Transfiguration to mind is what led Peter to weep and then repent when he denied he knew Jesus three times the night of Holy Thursday in his weakness. We all need to remind ourselves on a regular basis that the Lord’s way is the better way to live rather than settling for the sinful pleasures of the flesh and of this passing world - which will end in eternal spiritual disaster, as St. Peter points out repeatedly in his two letters in the New Testament which I recommend you look at this week. **The Transfiguration shows us what the Lord has in store for us if we are faithful to Him in this life.** The Church says of this reality of the Transfiguration and what it points to: *it prefigures the glory of the Lord Jesus as God, foretells his ascension into Heaven, and anticipates the glory of Heaven, where we shall see God face to face.* Through the life of grace, we already share in the divine promise of eternal life, but it has not been made fully manifest to us; that only happens after death or when the Lord Jesus returns in glory, whichever happens first.

3. Finally, the Transfiguration brings home the lesson that **it is only in embracing the Cross in love that we will come to the glory of the Resurrection. There is no crown without the cross.** The appearance of Moses and Elijah there on the Mountain of Transfiguration tell us that the teaching, life, and subsequent Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus is the fulfillment of everything: the Law, represented by Moses, and the Prophets, represented by Elijah, taught in the Old Testament. The divine message is: **we can trust Jesus!** It is He who has given us **the gift of the Catholic Faith** - that is the prophetic message we can rely on that St. Peter refers to today. **It is the path that leads to Heaven if embraced in our heart and in our life.** May the Transfiguration of the Jesus draw us ever closer in union with the Blessed Trinity and deepen our desire for holiness. God bless you.