

August 6, 2023
THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD
(This feast takes precedence over the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time)

Daniel 7:9-10

Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 9

2 Peter 1:16-19

Matthew 17:1-9

Notes from Bishop Peter

1. Context: Jesus foretells his passion at the end of Chapter 16 and tells his disciples that they must “take up their cross” if they want to be his disciples. They knew what the cross was as they had seen men crucified by the Romans who were occupying their country.
 - a. The Apostles can’t understand any of this because in their view the Messiah was not supposed to suffer. And what is this about rising from the dead?
2. In order to strengthen Peter, James and John whom he will invite to be with him in the Garden of Gethsemani, he asks them to be with him on the mount of the Transfiguration. (Tabor)
 - a. The mountain: = traditional meeting place with God.
 - b. Jesus is transfigured – the glory he had with the Father before the world began came through him... How beautiful – the Apostles are ecstatic, literally! (means outside themselves)
 - c. Moses and Elijah represent the Law and the Prophets respectively. Jesus is the fulfillment of both.
 - d. Peter’s suggestion that they build three tents. This refers to the Jewish feast of Sukkoth. This was harvest time and serves even today as a foretaste of the glorious coming of the Messiah. This year it is celebrated between September 29th and October 6th.
 - e. Peter thinks to himself that the Messiah is coming now and he will not have to work anymore!
 - f. Cloud = Presence of God – The Father’s voice: “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.”
 - g. Listen! Even when he tells you that he has to suffer and die.

- h. These words come from the First Poem of the Suffering Servant – Thus Jesus is the Suffering Servant.
- i. Cloud and Moses and Elijah disappear. JESUS IS ALONE (AS ON THE MOUNT AFTER THE MULTIPLICATION OF THE LOAVES AND THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN).
- j. “Don’t tell anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.” What does this mean?

3. Conclusions:

- a. Jesus is true to his mission. He comes down from the mountain. What a great man and God’s Son (literally) too. Satan tries to deter Jesus on a mountain during the third temptation according to Matthew. Of course, the devil fails.
 - b. We have those “transfiguration” moments when Jesus breaks into our lives – mystical experiences where we are aware of his love for us – He often touches us in the area of our charism or virtue that he will work through to bring about the in-breaking of the Kingdom. For instance our compassion, our love for God and neighbor, our faith, our perseverance, our dedication to the sick and the poor...
 - To see the “glory” of God in the eyes of a pregnant woman or those of a woman who has just given birth and sees her baby for the first time.
 - To see the glory of God in the joy of a father who sees his baby for the first time...
 - And in the eyes of a young couple in love or an elderly couple who knows what love really means...
 - c. When we contemplate Christ, when we gaze on his face, and, according to Saint Paul (II Corinthians 3:17) we are being transformed from one stage of glory to the next until it burst forth when we die.
4. Eucharist: Celebrating and receiving Jesus truly present is similar to a Transfiguration experience. We can hear Jesus tell us what he told the

Apostles, "Don't be afraid. I am with you." And we answer in faith, "My Lord and My God."

Amen.