

Homily The Transfiguration of the Lord

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My sisters and brothers in Christ,

Today we have a special celebration in the midst of the Ordinary Time in the Liturgy of the Church; we celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord. This Feast was established for the Universal Church in the XV Century.

There are two times in the Liturgical Calendar that we reflect on the Transfiguration, the 2nd Sunday of Lent to affirm the Divinity of Christ before his Passion and Death and today, to celebrate the exaltation of Christ to His Glory.

The Compendium of the Catechism says that “Above all the Transfiguration shows forth the Trinity: “the Father in the voice, the Son in the man Jesus, the Spirit in the shining cloud” (Saint Thomas Aquinas). Speaking with Moses and Elijah about his “departure” (*Luke* 9:31), Jesus reveals that his glory comes by way of the cross and he anticipates his resurrection and his glorious coming “which will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body” (*Philippians* 3:21)” n. 110.

The Church, then, wants us to consider the Divinity of Jesus Christ as well as the goal of our life: Heaven, Eternal life where we’ll contemplate, as the Apostles did, the Glory of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

It is interesting to remember that just before the Transfiguration, Today’s passage of the Gospel, Jesus told his disciples that “he was to undergo suffering in Jerusalem, that he was going to die at the hands of the chief priests, the elders and the Scribes. The

Apostles had been saddened and dismayed by this announcement”
In Conversations with God, 2.12.1

Then, he takes Peter, James and John and “led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them” St. Mk. 9,2

They couldn’t believe it. They were so happy. St. Peter tells Jesus: “Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”

St. Leo the Great says that “The principal aim of the Transfiguration was to banish from the disciples’ souls the scandal of the Cross” In Conversation with God, 2.12.1

To follow Jesus Christ it’s not easy; it demands that we deny ourselves and try to know and imitate the life of Christ. His life was not an easy life, but it had a happy ending. Jesus died on the Cross for us and then he was risen on the third day and He’s in Heaven, sitting at the Right Hand of God the Father.

Our journey of faith is challenging, but God will grant us the grace to overcome the obstacles that we encounter. God is with us and with Him we can do everything!

Among other things, let’s consider two things today. First, the fact that Jesus is perfect God and perfect man then, the reality of the dignity of the human person. We were created in the image and likeness of God and we are called to eternal happiness, body and soul, in heaven.

The readings of today’s Mass talk about Jesus, who is the Son of God, the Messiah, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity who assumes a human nature and came to earth to redeem us from our sins, through his Passion, Death and Glorious Resurrection.

Standing between Moses and the prophet Elijah, Jesus is the bridge that joins the Law of Moses to the prophets and psalms. The majestic voice declares Jesus to be God's own beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased. God here gives us a glimpse of His inner life. In the cloud of the Holy Spirit, the Father reveals His love for the Son, and invites us to share in that love, as His beloved sons and daughters.

The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church states that: “Jesus is the Son of God in a unique and perfect way” and that “The first Christian creeds proclaimed that the power, the honor, and the glory that are due to God the Father also belong to Jesus: God “has given him the name which is above every other name” (*Philippians 2:9*). He is the Lord of the world and of history, the only One to whom we must completely submit our personal freedom” (nn. 83, 84).

His life and his doctrine are not a human invention, is God himself who comes to us and in his infinite love he becomes equal to all of us, except in sin. His words are not just an opinion. It's God Himself who speaks to us in His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

That's why in Jesus we have “a different goal: the Son of God, the true man. He is the measure of true humanism ... Mature adult faith is deeply rooted in friendship with Christ”

Together with the Apostles we should say: “Rabbi, is good that we are here!” and renew our commitment to dedicate our life and the best of our time to grow in friendship with Christ.

The second point is the dignity of the human person. It will be enough if we reflect on the fact that Jesus assumed a human nature to be convinced of the importance of the human person.

Nowadays many in our society undervalue the dignity of human beings. There is the ‘culture of death’: abortion, euthanasia, the death penalty, war and even family violence. There are many other manifestations of the devaluation of the human person such as giving more importance to the economy, money, pleasures than to the human person.

Let’s not forget the words of the Compendium of the Catechism: “The human person is created in the image of God in the sense that he or she is capable of knowing and of loving their Creator in freedom. Human beings are the only creatures on earth that God has willed for their own sake and has called to share, through knowledge and love, in his own divine life. All human beings, in as much as they are created in the image of God, have the dignity of a person. A person is not something but someone, capable of self-knowledge and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with God and with other persons” n. 66.

In today’s Gospel, God the Father says: “This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him”. The word of the Lord should be like a lamp shining in the darkness of our days, as Peter tells us in today's First Reading. How well are we listening? Do we attend to His word each day?

Let us today rededicate ourselves to listening. Let us hear Him as the word of life, the bright morning star of divine life waiting to arise in our hearts.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles that were present at the Transfiguration intercede for us that we can set our sight on Jesus of Nazareth, Perfect God and perfect man. Then we’ll have the happiness that belongs to us as children of God. Amen.