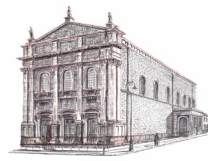




PARISH OF ST. AGATHA
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Pope Francis urges Christians to turn our experience of prayer into a desire to carry hope to the world.

Pope Francis spoke about the Transfiguration, as recounted in the Sunday Gospel (Mk 9:2-10). He began by considering what Jesus told His disciples before taking them up the mountain. Jesus had just revealed that He would be condemned to death but would rise again. “The image of a strong and triumphant Messiah is put into crisis, their dreams are shattered, and they are beset by anguish at the thought that the Teacher in whom they believed should be killed like the worst of wrongdoers,” said the Pope.

Broken hearts

With these concerns in their hearts, the disciples follow Jesus up the mountain, where He is transfigured before them. Pope Francis said Jesus thus reminded them that He would overcome death. “His face radiant and his garments glistening, providing a preview of his image as the Risen One, offer to those frightened men the light to pass through the shadows.”

New point of view

The Pope went on to reflect on Peter’s words: “Rabbi, it is good that we are here!” He said the Apostle’s expression of appreciation is a reminder that the Lord never lets darkness have the final word. When we face seemingly-endless trials, said the Pope, we need another point of view: “a light which illuminates in depth the mystery of life and helps us to move beyond our frame of mind and the criteria of this world.” We too, he stressed, are called to climb the mountain with Jesus to have every fragment of our lives illuminated by His victory at Easter.

Spiritual laziness

Yet, warned Pope Francis, we must not let our joy at the Transfiguration become “spiritual laziness.” “We cannot remain on the mountain and enjoy the beauty of this encounter by ourselves,” he noted. “Jesus himself brings us back to the valley, amidst our brothers and sisters and into daily life.” Spiritual laziness, said the Pope, pushes us to rest in the satisfaction of our own well-being, while ignoring the struggles faced by others. “Going up the mountain does not mean forgetting reality; praying never means avoiding the difficulties of life,” he said.

Christian mission

Pope Francis concluded his catechesis urging Christians to transform our experience with Jesus and carry His light throughout the world. The mission of every Christian, he said, is to ignite “little lights in people’s hearts; being little lamps of the Gospel that bear a bit of love and hope.” And the Pope asked the Blessed Virgin Mary to accompany us to welcome the light of Christ, to care for it, and to share Him with our brothers and sisters. (Devin Watkins/Vatican News).

TRANSFIGURATION MEANS CONVERSION INTO SOMETHING NEW

The Lenten Season is an opportunity given to us every year to highlight the necessity to change from our old sinful state of life and be transfigured by Jesus into a sinless pure way of life, as God intended. This is why the Gospel today (Mark 9:2-10) brings us the transfiguration story in Lent. It is not just about Jesus’ Transfiguration which reveals the duality of His Nature, being Human and Divine (true God and true Man), but also reveals the duality of our own nature. It gives us a glimpse of what happens to us at the moment of death, when our immortal spiritual body will be separated from our mortal human body. Jesus’ bright white dazzling image was prefigured by the image of the burning bush in the Old Testament.

SIN IS A TERMINAL ILLNESS BUT CAN BE CURED

It is our spiritual nature that faithfully departs the body and ascends to meet our Creator to be judged. On that day, there will be a spiritual biopsy performed by Christ the Judge, revealing if we allowed the disease of sin to spread all over our hearts, which paralysed it and prevented it from loving and forgiving each other, while living on earth. If we did not allow Jesus to transfigure our hearts and souls, then the Judgement will not be pleasant. It is our choice whether we want our souls to live forever in Heaven or Hell. To live in sin is to disobey God’s Teachings and Laws, which means we decided to ignore Jesus and not listen to Him. The sinner lives in a state of anger and impatient. Is always heard gossiping and killing peoples character behind their backs. The sinners Pride is worn like a necklace around their neck with their impure lifestyles offending God greatly. If we do not allow Jesus to heal and transfigure us, then our sinful condition becomes a spiritual terminal illness. The Good News is that Jesus wants to heal us if we ask Him. His Divine Mercy is the spiritual vaccine to counteract the unhealthy virus of sin when confessed.

WE ARE TO LISTEN TO JESUS THE BELOVED SON OF GOD

Some people are confused by the identity of Jesus. They do not understand that He is the visible image of the invisible God. In other words, Jesus is God in the Flesh. This is what is meant in the Angelus when we pray; “And the Word became Flesh and dwelt amongst us”. God always spoke the Word from Heaven through the Prophets, but now He comes Himself to speak in the Person of Christ. He calls Himself the Son of God but He is still God. To help us understand this, let us think of a male child that is born and is the son of his parents. In time he has children and he becomes a father. Again in time, his children have children of their own and now the man is a grandfather. So the one man is a Son, a Father and a Grandfather. God revealed Himself to the world in different stages, first as God the Father, then God the Son and then God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the active creative holy presence of God in the Church and the World. St. Peter in saying, “Let us build three tents for Moses, Elijah and Jesus,” was mistakenly making Jesus equal to the Prophets, assuming He was one of them. God the Father in Heaven intervened immediately, making Jesus’ identity and His purpose on earth very clear by saying; This is My Son the Beloved: Listen to Him.” We are commanded to listen to the Gospel of Truth and practice Love and Mercy. We are told by Jesus in the Last Supper, that the bread and wine are transfigured by Him, in every Mass, into His Body and Blood - which is the Eucharist. Sadly many Catholics are not listening and if the Truth be told, do not believe. Even if one cannot be fed physically of the Holy Eucharist at this time, let us never forget Jesus is present in this Living Sacrament. Let us pray for a return of the public Mass, so all children of God can be fed the Living Bread from Heaven. God bless, Fr. Brendan