

***The Transfiguration of the Lord***  
***August 6, 2023***  
***Year of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Ark of the New Covenant***

*“God reveals himself to the humble in the humblest things, while the great who never penetrate beneath the surface, do not discover him even in great events.” (Father J.P. de Caussade, S.J., Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence, p. 5)*

This weekend, we once again celebrate that great moment in the life of Jesus, which is called His Transfiguration. Throughout the centuries, countless homilies have been offered to explain, teach and reflect upon this sacred moment. Please be aware that I have specifically used the word “moment” in the last two sentences, for that is what it is, a moment. It is a moment when the brilliance of the Son of God shines forth resplendent in the holiness of, He Who Is. The piercing magnificence of this moment, Jesus Christ flanked by the great biblical figures of Moses and Elijah, so penetrates and fills the apostles with an awareness of their own unworthiness and insignificance, they can only fall upon their faces in confusion and shame. Yet, that is precisely what it is, a moment. It is a moment, one of countless moments, which have been joined together forming the thirty plus years of the life of Jesus. It is this moment of unveiled holiness, which allows us to see our own call to holiness fulfilled in the sacredness of the moment. For all you and I are afforded, is one moment, intertwined with countless others, to realize holiness.

If, by chance, someone were to randomly ask you: “Why was this moment significant? Why was this moment, apart from other moments in the life of Jesus, recorded in vivid detail by the writers of the gospels?” To answer the question, would we return to the description of Jesus? As dazzling as his appearance would have been to the minds and eyes of the Apostles, could we not forget the presence of both Moses and Elijah? Adding to this, we also have the voice of God the Father, speaking affirmatively: Listen to My Son! Which of these three happenings makes the moment sacred and significant? We could speculate that it is none of these which make this moment significant. Rather, the importance of this event, the Transfiguration of Jesus, is found in the ordinariness of this moment. An ordinary moment joined in union with all of the other ordinary moments throughout His life.

Please, let us not be distracted by the shininess of this moment in the life of Jesus. The true significance of this moment is found in the unspoken, unseen, reality of the Will of the Son being in complete union with the Will of the Father. It is this union of Wills which makes the moment sacred and holy. This moment also teaches you and I that our growth in holiness is found in uniting our wills completely with the Will of God. Is this not a glimpse into Heaven? Heaven, the union Father and child perfectly present to each other in love for all eternity. My family, faith teaches us that this union of wills begins here and now in our ordinary everyday life.

I ask you, what makes Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and every other great biblical figure holy? The answer, I offer, would be the same answer that solidified the holiness of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Each one, in their own way, sought to be faithful to the Will of God in their daily life. This is in no way different from what is expected of you and I. Put simply, our own

holiness is found in our fidelity to the Will of God. Furthermore, we can grow in holiness by joining our wills to His Will in two easy ways. I use the word “easy” in this instance, for it has to be easy for it to be attainable for us. It is easy for it is attained through active choices and passive acceptance.

The easier of the two, passive acceptance, is similar to our breathing. Do we need to be reminded to take a breath or do we just breathe? Passive acceptance is the mindset that no thing we will experience today, coming from the hand of God, cannot be a blessing for us. We accept everything, every moment and everything present within that moment that we experience, as a blessing from God. Secondly, we actively choose to unite our wills to God’s will in the daily fulfilling of our duties in each moment we are provided. This means, we commit to faithfully living out what God commands, to love Him and our neighbor, in whatever state of life or vocation we find ourselves. This choice to fulfill our duty to love God and neighbor is the same, whether we are rich or poor, working or retired, male or female, old or young. Why is it of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus, both enduring the same horrific suffering, we honor one as good as opposed to both? A choice must be made. And this is why this moment of the Transfiguration of Jesus is so significant. We are able to glimpse, with unveiled faces, the complete union of the Will of the Son with the Will of the Father in the acceptance, actively and passively, of His Cross as what love requires for our salvation.