

Transfiguring Our Lives through Christ

The same three apostles who are present in the Garden of Gethsemane are also at the transfiguration. On both occasions they fall asleep! But when they awake at the transfiguration, they see something totally different. They see Jesus radiant and resplendent like they had never seen him before. This revelation of his glory is meant to strengthen their faith and prepare them for seeing Jesus later, sweating blood in the agony of the Garden. Experiencing the joy and beauty of Jesus is essential to persevering through the inevitable passions we will have to undergo. Faith is not all about suffering, but about joy, love, and intimacy with Christ. Yes, love sometimes means we must suffer, but the fruit is greater intimacy. A diamond is made under great pressure and love must pass through temptations.

All three synoptic Gospels unite the transfiguration with Peter's profession of faith. The reality of the passion and cross

should not shake the apostle's faith, but they should realize that his exaltation can only be accomplished in the cross: "And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself" (John 12:32).

The sufferings we see in the world, in our own past and present, shouldn't shake our faith in Jesus, either. Overcoming sin comes from embracing suffering.

Jesus is so radiant that he awakes the apostles from their slumber. May the consuming love with which we burn for Jesus transfigure us into beautiful lights that awaken this world from its slumber of faith as well.

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC



Piece: *Transfiguration*
(detail), 1516-1520
Artist: Raphael
Location: Vatican Museums

For Reflection

What area of your life or heart does Jesus want to transfigure into a brighter testimony for him?

All light comes from energy consumed and transformed. How does that truth apply to your spiritual life?

While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white.

Luke 9:29

Calendar

Monday
MARCH 18

Lenten Weekday

Dn 9:4b-10
Lk 6:36-38

Tuesday
MARCH 19

St. Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary
2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16
Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22
Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a
or Lk 2:41-51a

Wednesday
MARCH 20

Lenten Weekday
Jer 18:18-20
Mt 20:17-28

Thursday
MARCH 21

Lenten Weekday
Jer 17:5-10
Lk 16:19-31

Friday
MARCH 22

Lenten Weekday
Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a,
17b-28a
Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

Saturday
MARCH 23

Lenten Weekday
Mi 7:14-15, 18-20
Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Sunday
MARCH 24

Third Sunday of Lent
Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15
1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12
Lk 13:1-9

Dear Padre,

With the recent canonization of Pope Paul VI, is the trend now for popes to canonize their last few predecessors?

Of the 266 popes in history, more than eighty are saints, including the early martyrs and later luminaries like Leo the Great (440-461) and Gregory the Great (590-604). However, only a handful of this number have been canonized in the last thousand years: Celestine V (1294), who resigned



CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

after five months in office, was canonized in 1313; Pius V (1566-1572) was canonized in 1712; and Pius X (1903-1914) was canonized in 1954. In fact, Pius X was the last pope to be declared a saint until a wave of canonizations in recent years added other twentieth-century popes to that number: John XXIII (1958-1963) and John Paul II (1978-2005) were made saints during the same ceremony in April 2014, and Paul VI (1963-1978) was canonized in October 2018. Moreover, two popes from the last century are now declared Venerable: Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) and John Paul I (1978). These

join at least a dozen other popes of earlier centuries who are at various stages in the canonization process.

Popes are not automatic candidates for sanctity. They, like the rest, must be investigated for doctrinal orthodoxy, heroic virtues, and miraculous intercession after death. In addition, Benedict XIV (1740-1758) specified that they should also be measured for their “zeal for the preservation and propagation of the Catholic faith, for the encouragement and restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, and the defense of the rights of the Apostolic See” (translated from *De Servorum Dei*).

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A Word from Pope Francis

At the end of the stunning experience of the transfiguration, the disciples came down the mountain with eyes and hearts transfigured by their encounter with the Lord. It is the journey that we too can make. Transformed by Christ's presence...we will be a concrete sign of the invigorating love of God.

—Angelus, August 6, 2017



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