



# **OUR LADY OF MERCY PARISH**

## **Boca Grande, Florida**

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Mass Schedule:

Daily (except Saturday)	8:00 A.M.
Saturday Vigil	5:00 P.M.
Sunday	9:00 & 10:30 A.M.
Confessions: Saturday	4:15 to 4:45

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**TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD**

**AUGUST 6, 2023**

### **THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD**

(Father Karl Rahner, S.J., Theologian 1904-1984)

The life of Jesus should be an example and a warning to us. But to understand what the mysteries of Christ's life want to say to us, we must know what they mean for Jesus himself. And so, we inquire what place the transfiguration assumes in the life of the savior.

To understand this, we need to consider that Jesus also had a human heart susceptible to joy and sorrow, pain and consolation; a heart that in a completely sinless, holy manner, but still really, experienced the changes wrought by all these storms of the soul as we do. The son of God assumed indeed a true human nature with body and soul; he became like to us in all things except sin. And so, he could also be like us in that there was a place in his soul for the stirring of the mind, for the changes of joy and sadness, jubilation, and lamentation.

As Saint Augustine says: "In him who had a true human body and a true human soul, also the human emotions were not untrue." And really, if we page through the Gospels, then we discover how Jesus wept, then became happy again; how he looked upon one full of love, and upon others scornfully and with deep sadness; how he wondered at and enjoyed the one, sighed over others; how he was filled with joy, with zeal, stirred by compassion, shaken unto death, and deceived.

If we want to get a sense of what was going on in the heart of Jesus as he climbed the mount of transfiguration, then we have to take into account in what period in Jesus's life the transfiguration was. The savior had already preached a good deal in Judea and Galilee; he had proclaimed that the kingdom of God had come, had taught how people were supposed to receive it, had stated clearly enough that he is the promised messiah and the true son of God. He came unto his own and his own received him not.

To be sure, he had a troop of loyal, if also imperfect, disciples and apostles, but the people as a whole had not believed. In Judea, where the Pharisees prevailed, there was a mishap right at the start. In Galilee, to be sure, the enthusiasm was great at the start, but it soon dissipated. The people sought miracles and bread more than faith. After the Eucharistic discourse, even some of the disciples became disloyal. Pharisees and Sadducees worked against him now in Galilee as well, and always asked unbelievably for new signs. And when Jesus asked, "Whom do the people say that I am?" the best appraisal made of him was that of a prophet. So, Jesus's invitation to faith in him fell on deaf ears; the people had actually rejected its messiah already. There still remains only one thing: suffering and the cross. And so, six days before the transfiguration, Jesus had predicted for the first time to the apostles his passion and death.

Now we can get some sense of the sort of thoughts and feelings that might surely have filled the heart of the savior as, with his three chosen apostles, in the quiet of the evening he climbed a lone high mountain far from all people and their busy noise. It will surely have been the feeling of pain over the ingratitude, hardheartedness, and unbelief of his people, thoughts of his coming passion, readiness and resolve for the cross, but also the anxiety and sadness of the Mount of Olives.

What does Jesus, in this mood of the holiest of hearts, then do? He prays. He goes away from human beings, he climbs a high mountain in order to hold converse, there in the quiet solitude of the mountain, in the restfulness of the long nights, with his father in Heaven, with his God, in whom that fate is meaningful, in whom even a defeat becomes a victory. Jesus loved these nights of prayer that bring human beings, their decisions, and their fate before the face of the eternal one. We read of these nights of prayer before the selection of the apostles, after the many miracles of healing in Capernaum, after the first multiplication of loaves of bread. So, Jesus prayed also in this mood at this period in his life. There he will have prayed to the father for his unbelieving people, for his apostles and disciples for faith and strength in the coming days of suffering. He will have said to his father: See, I come to do your will. I am ready to drink the cup, to be baptized with the baptism of suffering. Yes, it presses down upon me, until it is accomplished.

No one goes unheard before the face of God. The Father hears the pleas of his much beloved son. Union with God, which Jesus otherwise holds hidden in the ultimate depths of his soul, now fills up all the chambers of his soul, it embraces his body, drawing it, too, into the blessedness of God's light and God's unity. "His face was like the sun, and his clothes were as radiant as light." And still more: there appeared to him Moses and Elijah, the great proclaimer of the law and the prophets. And Jesus in between them as a sign that the law and the prophets have their goal and their fulfillment; as a sign that he gives the power of fulfilling the law from within; that he is the wellspring and the plentitude of every Spirit at work in the prophets and presently to be poured forth upon all who believe in him. And because all redemption and all Holy Spirit takes its departure from the cross, they talk with Jesus about the leave taking he is supposed to set forth upon in Jerusalem. And just as at the baptism, the voice of the Father confirms here, too, that this poor, praying Jesus, consecrated for suffering, and heroically prepared for the cross, is God's very beloved son.

This, then, is the meaning of the transfiguration for Jesus himself: in the dark night of earthly hopelessness the light of God shines, a human heart finds in God the power which turns a dying into a victory and into the redemption of the world.

### **PRAYER FOR SAFETY IN HURRICANE SEASON**

O God, Master of this passing world, hear the humble voices of your children.

The Sea of Galilee obeyed Your order and returned to its former quietude.

You are still the Master of land and sea.

We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control:

the Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awake from its seeming lethargy, overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land, and spread chaos and disaster.

During this hurricane season we turn to You, O loving Father.

Spare us from past tragedies whose memories are still so vivid and whose wounds seem to refuse to heal with passing of time.

O Virgin, Star of the Sea, our beloved Mother, we ask you to plead with your Son on our behalf, so that spared from the calamities common to this area and animated with a true spirit of gratitude, we will walk in the footsteps of your Divine Son to reach the heavenly Jerusalem, where a stormless eternity awaits us. Amen.