

Transfiguration

My dear friends in Christ,

Today, we are presented with the transfiguration of Jesus. The focus here is that Jesus will be glorified. However, this glorification is achieved through his suffering and death, thus echoing the central theme of Lent. In other words, the transfiguration focuses on the Paschal Mystery, the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The idea of passing through death and rising in glory is at the heart of the Sacrament of Baptism, which will be received by catechumens at Easter, for as they enter the baptismal font and are immersed in it, they leave the old self behind and rise to assume a new life in Christ. They die to self and rise to new life, and in doing so enter the family of God. They are transformed. In our parish, Kim Graves and Jobe Anthony Castro (4th grader) as catechumens, are in this process of being transformed by Christ.

This shows how faith embraces our ordinary life and transforms it. God takes the ordinary and turns it into the extraordinary. He takes water – one of the plentiful resources on the planet – and makes it the means by which we enter his family. He takes bread and wine and transforms them into the Body and Blood of Christ.

As I reflected on our Gospel a bit more deeply, I have come to the conclusion that the beauty is not so much that God transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary, but rather that he transforms us, so we can see the extraordinary in those things we too often dismiss as ordinary.

In the Gospel, the glory of Jesus never left him, and God was always calling down on him, saying, “You are my Beloved Son.” What changed was the perspective of Peter, James, and John, who in the moment became aware of this reality in a poignant way.

Usually, at the baptism of a child or an adult, loved ones, godparents, and all the family members will gather to witness the person being reborn and remade into a member of God’s own family. But God has already loved the child or adult from the moment of his/her creation and even before – when God sent his only Son to suffer, die and rise again for each of us.

The real transformation today should be in our hearts, as we come to recognize that God is saying all along, “You are my Chosen children.” As we continue our Lenten journey, I invite you to pledge to remind someone in your life or even a stranger how deeply and personally they are loved and chosen by God.

Announcements

The Rite of Election for the South Coast Vicariate (parishes from Florence to Brookings) was last Saturday, February 29. The Rite of Election is a ceremony where catechumens, our sisters and brothers who are preparing to be baptized at the Easter Vigil Mass, formally request Baptism. The bishop on behalf of the universal church receives their request. The names of the catechumens are then recorded in a special book called “Book of the Elect.” They have elected to be baptized, thus the name, the Rite of Election. We thank God for giving our catechumens and candidates, especially the catechumens from our parish, Kim Graves and Jobe Anthony Castro, the grace to say “yes” to his calling and the courage to follow Christ.

Holy Hour Adoration with the Knights: As you know, our parish has a new Knights of Columbus Council. The role of Knights is to evangelize by serving the people of God, promoting faith and the Catholic identity, and being good examples to their families and all families. They cannot do this without grounding themselves in prayer. What is better than to pray and spend some quality time with our Savior Jesus Christ exposed in the Blessed Sacrament?

Beginning this Thursday, March 12, from 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm, the new Knights of Columbus of our parish will be spending a holy hour in the Chapel with the Blessed Sacrament exposed. This will be a monthly event, and I will lead the Knights in this holy hour. When we adore the Eucharist, the heart of our Catholic faith, we become stronger in our faith. Everyone is invited.

May the grace of Christ strengthen you in your Lenten observances.

--Fr. Anthony Ahamefule