



# Thoughts on the Journey

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The word *transfigure* means to transform into something more beautiful or elevated; an exalting, glorifying, or spiritual change. It's not a word I use often in conversation, but it is a word that captures experiences I have personally witnessed in people and in situations.

My dear friend, Fran, was an instrument of God's love: a vessel of the Holy Spirit. Small in stature, but large on impact, her life of faith inspired many others in their life of faith. She was quick with a smile and an encouraging word and rarely missed an opportunity to bring joy to others whether that be, through one of her countless faith-filled prayers or poems, or unexpected freshly baked goods that she delivered, a note of encouragement, or just a genuine embrace of friendship.

Fran had a great devotion to the Holy Eucharist and promulgated the divine gift of God's presence in the sacrament by working to provide opportunities for others to spend time in praise and adoration of Christ.

Fran spent hours visiting the sick and brought hope and comfort to those transitioning from this life to the next. She would bless each soul with holy water from Lourdes and then entrust them to our Lord Jesus and our Blessed Mother for their journey *home*. It's no irony that Fran, who used the water from Lourdes to bless others, died on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

When Fran was first diagnosed with cancer, she came to me privately to ask for prayers of healing, strength, and courage. Her humility was at the heart of her request, because Fran never sought to draw attention to herself.

In this week's Gospel, Jesus takes his friends Peter, James, and John to the top of a high mountain to be by themselves. Up until this point, these apostles are aware that there is something special about Je-

sus, but they didn't know how special. Then, before their very eyes, he was transfigured and his clothes became dazzling white. In this event of the Transfiguration, Jesus wanted the apostles to know and understand that he was both God and man, soon to be a living sacrifice for all of us. Before leaving the mountain,

**“A cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.”**

Jesus calls us to his heavenly banquet. For those who accept the invitation, we walk through the doors of the church bringing with us the gamut of our every day existence: the joys and sorrows, the triumphs and losses, the mundane, our desires, our personal histories, our sinfulness, the all of who we are. We bring the ordinary of our lives and carry it to the altar of the divine: the place where heaven meets earth. It's the very altar where ordinary bread and wine is transformed into the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is also the altar where we, as ordinary people, are transformed into living Eucharist to share with the world in order to help build the Kingdom of God.

My friend, Fran, understood the magnitude of this Eucharistic gift and made it a daily priority in her life. It transfigured her *ordinary* into a deep relationship with her Savior. Her last text to me read: “*I am at peace...the Lord told me he was taking me home in a dream...I heard the most amazing loving voice. When I opened my eyes, I could see Jesus far away, so I thought he was giving me more time. I have been working on repentance and forgiveness.*”

Fran was a lovely gift of God's presence in the world. She gave us a foretaste of God's love in the way that she lived and the way that she loved. With each encounter with Christ, she was made more beautiful. I will miss her energetic faithful presence in my life, but she has left me a treasure of memories that have always pointed me to Christ. Fran epitomized the word *transfigure* and I give thanks for her legacy of faith.