

## **Transformation**

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 into the family of God. They are transformed. In our parish, Jimmy Upton and Anthony Ornelas, 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 into his family. He takes bread and wine and transforms them into the Body and Blood of Christ.

As I have reflected on our Gospel a bit more deeply, I have come to the conclusion that I was looking at it the wrong way. 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 Chosen 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 would 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 God has loved and chosen them.

### **Appreciation**

Our Rite of Election last weekend, Saturday, March 9, was a spectacular event. We thank God for giving our catechumens and candidates, especially the catechumens from our parish, Jimmy Upton and Anthony Ornelas the grace to say “yes” to his calling.

I thank the altar servers, lectors, musicians, our parish DRE, the Altar Society, ladies of the South Coast Filipino American Association and everyone who helped made it a memorable day for us. You are the best.

### **Announcement**

Next weekend, Fr. Peter Lyons, T.O.R. will be visiting Holy Trinity and St. John’s to celebrate Masses and speak on behalf of FOOD FOR THE POOR, a ministry providing direct relief to the poor throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Fr. Lyon will share personal witness about Food for the Poor’s mission to care for the destitute as a means of living out the Gospel mandate to love one another. Please join me in welcoming Father Lyon.

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

*--Fr. Anthony Ahamefule*