August 6th: Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord (A)

Gospel text (*Mt* 17:1-9): Jesus took Peter, James, and his brother, John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone.

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased"

Fr. Joan SERRA i Fontanet
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Today, the Gospel speaks of the Transfiguration of our Lord on Mount Tabor. After Peter's confession, Jesus started to say that it was necessary for the Son of man to be condemned to death and that He would rise on the third day. This passage of the Transfiguration of Jesus has to be placed within this context. St. Anastasius of Sinai writes that "He, who had donned our miserable skin as a tunic, is today dressed with a divine dress and a dazzling light wraps him up as a robe." The message that Jesus Transfigured brings to us is the Father's words: "This is my beloved Son... Listen to him" (Mt 17:5). To listen means to abide by his will, to contemplate his person, to imitate him, to put into practice his advice, to take up our own cross and follow him.

To avoid any misunderstandings, He charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead (cf. Mt 17:9). The three apostles are looking at Jesus

Transfigured, proof of his divinity, but the Savior does not want them to spread the news until after his resurrection, when it will be possible to understand the scope of this episode. Christ speaks to us through the Gospel and when we pray; we can then repeat Peter's words: “Rabbi, it is good that we are here!” (Mt 17:4), particularly, after the Holy Communion.

Because the Lord, Christ, having announced his death to his disciples, reveals his glory, at the sacred mountain and, having the Law and the prophets as witnesses, He makes them understand his Passion is necessary to reach the glory of the resurrection». A lesson we Christians should never forget.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “Let us listen, then, to the sacred voice of God so compellingly calling us from on high, from the summit of the mountain, so that with the Lord’s chosen disciples we may penetrate the deep meaning of these holy mysteries, so far beyond our capacity to express” (Anastasius of Sinai)

- “That body that transfigures before the astonished eyes of the Apostles is the body of our brother Christ, but it is also our body destined for glory; the light that overwhelms him is and will also be our share of inheritance and splendor” (Saint Paul VI)

- “For a Christian, believing in God cannot be separated from believing in the One he sent, his ‘beloved Son’, in whom the Father is ‘well pleased’ (Cf. Mk 1:11); God tells us to listen to him (...) (Cf Mk 9:7).” (Catechism Of the Catholic Church, Nº 151)