

Feast of the Transfiguration

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I worked for an insurance company for over 8 years, during my tenure we went through a lot of changes. The company changed product lines, job descriptions, personnel, management, salary, office hours, even location as I was transferred from one state to another on a couple of occasions. All these changes took place with just one company and represent just one facet of my life, if I take into consideration other aspects, such as health, relationships, education, or career, I imagine that the list of changes is greater than I think.

As a society we anticipate changes, we expect change, we say phrases such as... change is inevitable, or the only constant is change. We use the symbol of the triangle (delta) to represent change, we use the prefix trans like in the word transformation to express change in form. We use idioms like: *Out with the old, in with the new *The times they are a-changing* A leopard can't change its spots *Change your tune *The more things change the more they stay the same.

To communicate some form of change and even though I know that "change might inevitable" or that times they are a-changing, I might not like change or might not want to change. Although I know that with time, I would get used to the changes and the new "normal" for some reason, at times I don't want to change. Deep inside I believe that the reason, why I don't like change, is not because I want to be stubborn, is not because I don't think that things will eventually be better or that change is bad, I believe that the reason why I don't like to change is because I know that change requires a sacrifice. If my job moves me from one location to another, I need to adjust my routine, locations, schedules, possibly even friends. Anytime something undergoes a change, there is a sacrifice of time, talents, treasure, or other elements even if it is temporary.

In our spiritual journey change is just as inevitable. Look at salvation history, from the very beginning there was change, the earth was formless, and God gave it form, there was change, every aspect of our discipleship is a journey of change. We use terms like metanoia during lent to represent a deep change in how we think, which affects how we act, a deep conversion. We revere God's word and in the gospels time and time again, Jesus called his disciples to repent. To repent is to change the way they lived and to adopt a new way. We admire conversion stories, people who were going in one direction and changed their lives to go in a different direction such as St. Paul. We praise the lives of the saints, people who lived holy lives, they all went through major periods of change. Every time there was a change there was sacrifice, in economic terms there was an

opportunity cost, there was something not done, something left behind, something exchanged, something not followed or pursued for there to be change.

The gospel today takes us up a high mountain with Jesus, where he is transfigured... there is a trans- word, Jesus changes in figure. He chooses to show three of his closest disciples, the glory to come, God showed them a change, like they have never experienced or seen before. Going up the mountain is a representation of us going up to meet our God, the brightness, the light is the immense glory of what is to come and what to expect. St. Thomas Aquinas believed that Jesus was transfigured in front of a couple of his Apostles, in a way of providing a path or a sense of the goal of the journey of discipleship. In other words, the transfiguration served as a foretaste to the Apostles of what is to come.

But what else was there to come? Jesus was shining like the sun, bright as could be and in his glory, what else could come after that? He continued the path towards the ultimate sacrifice. Jesus instituted the eucharist, as the ultimate sacrifice, the one change that became permanent, the one change that fulfill all the other changes, the one change that allows us to share, to taste and to be transformed by this glory... the change that we know as transubstantiation. The prefix of trans- again tells us that there was a change, the bread and wine are changed in substance to the body and blood of Christ.

The eucharist becomes the ultimate sacrifice, the ultimate change, the ultimate revelation of God's love for us, by making himself available to us completely. The eucharist like the transfiguration shows God's glory, light, brightness but even more it allows us to partake of it in a way that transforms us from inside out. By receiving the eucharist we are changing our complete being we are becoming Christlike.

It is not a coincidence that the last two luminous mysteries of the rosary are the transfiguration and the eucharist because, the transfiguration was Jesus up in a mountain showing the glory of the heavenly kingdom, and when we come to mass, we are going up the mountain to calvary. By receiving the eucharist we are receiving the glory of God. The book of Daniel in his vision stated, "Thousands upon thousands were ministering to him, and myriads upon myriads attended him". That is the mass, that is the sacrifice of the eucharist.

Change is inevitable and at times I dislike change because it comes with sacrifice, but Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice, so that you and I can enjoy the transforming power of his body, soul and divinity. As we elevate the host tonight, let us thank him for showing us his glory through the transfiguration and for the ultimate sacrifice of the eucharist.