

TRANSFIGURING OUR SPIRITUAL LIVES

Douglas Sousa

The story of the Transfiguration maps out some steps we need to take in our journey of prayer. First, we must climb the mountain; second, we must look upon Jesus; and third, we must go back down the mountain to tell others what we have seen.

First, we must climb the mountain. Before revealing his glory to Peter, James, and John, Jesus leads them up a high mountain. Climbing a mountain takes a good deal of effort. There's always the danger of falling off a cliff or running into a wild animal. Also, the higher one climbs, the thinner the air is and the harder it becomes to breathe.

The apostles' experience teaches us something profound about the spiritual life. God often does not reveal himself until we are willing to make the hard journey up the mountain. That mountain could be a sin that we have to overcome, an unhealthy relationship, or sickness. Every challenge we experience is an invitation from God to climb the mountain so that He can reveal His glory to us. We may not understand why God has put those obstacles in our path and made things so hard for us. However, if we ask Him, He will give us the strength to endure whatever may come. And, with time, we will see and be amazed by God's mercy.



The second truth of the spiritual life which the Transfiguration teaches us is that we are meant to see the vision of God. Unlike the apostles, we do not see Jesus face to face. How, then, do we get a glimpse of him in all his glory? The central and most important way is in the Mass. At every Eucharist, the Risen Lord is truly present in our midst. When the readings are proclaimed, it is Jesus' voice that we hear. When we receive the Eucharist, we touch the body of the Risen Lord just as the apostles did, and we are transformed by him.

For that reason, the Sunday Mass is an indispensable part of our Christian life and spirituality. While it is very good to read the Bible, pray the rosary, and contemplate the beauty of nature, none of those activities compare with the gift offered us in the Eucharist. While those activities can give us some insight into Jesus and his love, they cannot actually give us Jesus himself as the Eucharist does. There is no substitute for the real, life-changing encounter we have with the Risen Lord in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood which we receive every Sunday.

The third truth of the spiritual life is that we cannot stay on the mountain. We have to go back down to witness to others the Jesus we have come to know.

The experience the apostles had of Jesus was overwhelming. It filled them both with awe and fear. Understandably, Peter does not want it to end. He wants to stay there, camping out with Jesus, Elijah, and Moses forever. But Jesus does not allow it. The vision of his glory comes to an abrupt end, and he leads them back down the mountain to continue preaching the good news and healing the sick.

Many times, when we are praying and feeling God's presence all around us, we do not want it to end. We want to stay basking in the warmth of God's love. That is entirely natural because we were created to praise God and never feel so much "at home" as when we are praying. But it is not enough. The spiritual life is never just a private affair. From worship, we must go into service. We must come down the mountain and point out the way to encounter God to others so that they may share our joy.

St Mary's
Parish

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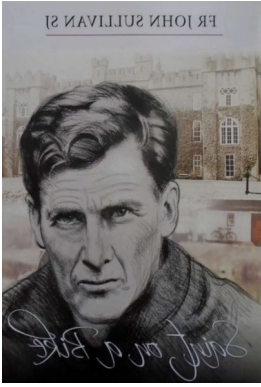
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Fr. John Sullivan S.J. is the model of an ecumenical Saint. It is not just that he spent the early part of his life as an Anglican and the latter part as a Roman Catholic. What is true is that even after becoming a Catholic and a Jesuit he remained faithful to the understanding of faith that he learned as a child and as a young man. His faith and his

humility and his intense prayer life have their roots in both traditions.

It has been an inspiration for me to see the way Archbishop Michael Jackson has followed the path of John Sullivan so closely. They both attended the same school and both were nourished by the same Christian tradition and spirit. Archbishop Jackson is also a friend of Rome.

Communion with Peter is true only when it is about the realisation of communion with Christ and with his caring message. Communion with Rome involves the concept of fraternity in the faith and in the search to understand fully who Jesus is. The task of the Church in our contemporary world is to lead people to understand the God revealed in Jesus Christ when so often they who no longer know where to seek or find Jesus. This missionary task is a task for all believers over and beyond denominational divisions.

John Sullivan inspires us along such a path. He renounced the wealth and celebrity life that he lived as a young man. He opted for the simplicity and austerity of the Jesuit tradition and a ministry towards those in various forms of distress.

He offers to us today an indication of the path we must follow ecumenically if we are to allow the saving grace of God to be fully embraced by the man and women of our times. Blessed John Sullivan pray for your Church."

Excerpt from the homily of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin at the Mass of Thanksgiving for Life and Witness of Blessed John Sullivan S.J Church of Saint Francis Xavier, Gardiner Street, 22 February 2020



Lenten Appeal 2020

Boxes are available in the church. You may also wish to find out more about our work and contribute online <https://www.trocaire.org/getinvolved/lent>

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR VITAL LENTEN CAMPAIGN

"To Keep a True Lent."

Is this a Fast, to keep
the larder lean?
And clean
From fat of veals and sheep?
Is it to quit the dish
of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?
Is it to fast an hour,
Or ragged to go,
Or show
A down-cast look and sour?
No: 'tis a Fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat
And meat
With the hungry soul.
It is to fast from strife
And old debate,
And hate;
To circumcise thy life.
To show a heart grief-rent;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin;
And that's to keep thy Lent.

Robert Herrick (1591–1674)

LENTEN ADORATION

**Following the 6pm Vigil Mass
EVERY SATURDAY DURING LENT**

In Memoriam

Masses on 7th/8th March 2020

11am: Jo Walsh (Anniversary)

5pm: Michael Campion

Masses and Confession

Sundays: Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm

Croatian Community Mass 6.30pm

Messe en français 12.30 (2^e et 4^e dimanche du mois)

Daily masses 10am and 12.40pm, Saturday 10am only

-Rosary daily after 10am mass

Confession: Tuesdays 12.00-13.30

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

1st Collection: €1,060

Share Collection: €885

Weekday collections: €650

THANK YOU

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