



"Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved." Ps 80:4

Please pray for the happy repose of the souls of **Augustin Lujan, OPB** of Espanola, NM (Feb 28, 2016) and **Lorraine Connolly, OPB**, from Reading, PA (July 26, 2016). Both were among our first Oblates with Lorraine making her Solemn Resolution of Love in 1982, and Augustin in 1983 together with his wife Ascencion (also deceased), on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Lorraine's offering for priests grew from her love for her brother, Fr. Carlo, (+Corpus Christi, 2010). She very kindly gave us his chalice and precious statue of the Divine Babe in memory of his faithful ministry.

We thank our Lord for Lorraine and Augustin and remember them and all our deceased Oblates in our prayers. *Eternal Rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual Light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.*

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LET YOUR FACE SHINE ON US



Oblate Reflection

Fall 2016

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us" (Rom 8:18).

Think back over history and notice how time and again, particularly in the 19th and 20th Centuries, God sent the Blessed Virgin Mary to remind us of this truth. In the midst of the horrors of war and genocide, Mary came. Her very presence gave us this assurance: *"I am here. I am alive. Heaven is real. God is beautiful. He is more powerful than every sin and even death itself. He is all love. Take courage. Have hope. Be not afraid."* This, in fact, is Jesus' message. Mary always reveals and proclaims her Son. She magnifies the greatness of the Lord.

In every deprivation we suffer, particularly due to war, persecution, terrorism, racism and moral depravity of all kinds, what does Mary say? ***"Do whatever He tells you."*** What does Jesus tell us? To fill, draw, and take. (see Jn 2:5-8). *Fill your emptiness with me. Draw what you most need and take what I give you to benefit others.* Jesus tells us to seek and find. *Seek my face and find peace in me.*

In all the storms of life that threaten to overwhelm us, Jesus calls out to us like He did to St. Peter, ***"Come to me."*** *You can rise above this and keep moving forward. You can advance on top of the storm as long as you have your eyes*

on me. Should we waver and start sinking, Jesus' outstretched hand is there to lift us up. After Peter denied Him, what was Jesus' first response? He turned and looked at Peter. See the graces that flow from the face of Christ!

During His bitter Passion, after Jesus was mocked, cruelly scourged, and condemned to die by crucifixion, the one image He tangibly left as He was carrying His cross to Calvary, was the image of His face.

What is it about His face that Jesus wants us to remember? *"He who sees me, sees the Father"* (Jn 14:9). Jesus wants us to know and love the Father. *This is Eternal life, that we know the only true God, and the one He sent, Jesus Christ* (see Jn 17:3). Pope Francis, too, reminds us in his prayer for the Year of Mercy that Jesus is the visible face of the invisible Father.

The Transfiguration of Christ

On Mount Tabor, Jesus allowed His face to be seen as never before on earth.

After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, 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..." 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."

Blessed are the pure in heart

Our goal in life is to see God and to help others attain the Beatific Vision. With this ever in mind, let us repent of our sins, be pure in heart, and bring graces to others by our prayers and sacrifices. With our Immaculate Mother, who always does the Will of God, may we unite ourselves to the perfect consecration of Jesus as He offers himself in the Spirit to the Father for the life of the world.

"Become what you behold!"

We have taken a brief look at the apparitions of our Lady of Fatima in light of the Transfiguration of Christ. It's something to ponder and could certainly be more developed. For now, let's conclude with the beautiful Mass introduction offered in *Magnificat* on August 6, 2016:

Christ's Tabor radiance is a kind of mirror in which we glimpse the glory that God wills to give his friends. The resplendence of the Transfiguration reveals the fullness of life destined to be ours. The Transfiguration invites us to configuration. As we peer into the glory that pours from every pore of the transfigured Christ, we cast off everything unworthy of our personal relationship with the Infinite, and we take on the luster of the Son of God. Jesus gazes back at us with a luminous look of love that makes us desire to live his transparent beauty – to be luminaries. Silently from Tabor's splendor, the Savior begs: "Become what you behold!"

With all the holy Souls in Purgatory, let us cry out: *"It is your face, O Lord, that we seek. Hide not your face!"* All you Saints in Heaven, pray for us. Mother of Mercy, Queen of Peace, pray for us, sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Application for Today

When we are faced with an ordeal that is beyond our human ability to comprehend or endure, God reminds us of our future glory. ***“What eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it even entered the mind what God has in store for those who love Him” (1 Cor 2:9).***

God sends Mary from Heaven to help us in our journey of faith. Seeing her “clothed with the sun” confirms the words of St. Paul who said, ***“All of us gazing with unveiled face on the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory” (2 Cor 3:18).*** Mary is a supreme example of what happens when we contemplate the face of Christ.

Contemplating the face of Christ is what St. John Paul II proposed as the program for the new millennium, and the rosary is the special prayer by which we do this with Mary. Let us be faithful to praying the rosary every day! Francisco is a great inspiration for us, for he saw the apparitions but was unable to hear the spoken words. He is a model disciple for the way he received the messages, believed, and faithfully carried them out.

“This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him.” This remains our urgent call today: to listen to Jesus and place all our trust in Him. May His face shine on our country and upon our wounded world, and show us His mercy. May He turn His countenance towards us and give us His peace!

***Do we realize the gift we are asking for
and how to prepare for so great a grace?***

And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone. (Mt 17:1-8)

Imagine what it was like to experience this vision, to hear the voice of the Father, and to be told to keep this in your heart until a later time. The three apostles saw Jesus in a new light, literally. His Transfiguration is very mysterious and wonderful, revealing insights into who Jesus is while reminding us that He is far greater than we could ever know on our own. This vision was meant to strengthen the apostles particularly during Jesus’ Passion and death, and for the rest of their lives as they proclaimed the good news.

The Transfiguration is still speaking to us today as we contemplate this wondrous mystery and discover more of its meaning and the message it conveys.

We can find certain aspects of the Transfiguration all around us and in various events if we take a closer look. Consider the apparitions of our Lady at Fatima, for example. These are generally well known and if not, can be, for much has been written and continues to be discussed about them as we draw close to their 100th anniversary in 2017. Let’s join in the conversation by asking if there are some parallels between our Lady’s apparitions and the Transfiguration of Christ, and if so, could they help us better understand what our Lord is saying to us here and now, through His Mother?

Interesting Correlations

Both Jesus and Mary in their respective manifestations were luminous, with dazzling white clothes. They conversed with the visionaries and told them not to be

afraid. A cloud was part of both scenes, as was the sun.

Three individuals saw each vision: two from one family and the other was the spokesman for the three. James & John were brothers; Peter did the talking. Francisco & Jacinta were siblings; Lucia conversed with Mary. Each trio had the same occupation. The Apostles were initially fishermen who became Shepherds; the children were shepherds who, in a sense, became “fishers of souls.”

In the Transfiguration, Jesus appeared with Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets. They were speaking about Jesus’ death that would soon take place. In Mary’s first apparition, she said that Jacinta and Francisco would go to Heaven soon, while Lucia would remain longer on earth to spread devotion to her Immaculate Heart. During the miracle of the sun on October 13th, St. Joseph and the Child Jesus appeared with Mary; they represent the law and prophets *par excellence*.

“Are you willing to offer yourselves to God and bear all the sufferings He wills to send you, as an act of reparation for the sins by which He is offended, and of supplication for the conversion of sinners?” Mary asked the children. “Yes, we are willing,” Lucia replied. Do we not hear an echo of our Lord’s words to James and John: ***“Can you drink the cup that I drink?” (Mk 10:38)*** and how our Lady’s response to the young shepherds: ***“...you are going to have much to suffer, but the grace of God will be your comfort”*** was what the apostles experienced as well. A year earlier in 1916 when the Angel of Peace brought Holy Communion to the three children, Lucia received the Host, while Francisco and Jacinta drank from the chalice.

Much could be said about a summons to stay awake and pray, about the Holy Trinity and the Mystery of the Eucharist in both events. For now, we will simply mention these thoughts for you to ponder:

“Looking up, they see only Jesus.” The Apostles’ experience at the close of the Transfiguration is reflected symbolically, in a sense, during the miracle of the sun, when the pilgrims “looked” at Mary (who was invisible to them) and saw “the sun.” *To look at Mary and see the Son.* As St. John Paul noted in his Apostolic Exhortation on the Rosary: Mary’s face reminded the disciples of Jesus. They have the same features; their hearts are one. Their outward resemblance pointed to an even greater interior union.

The Eucharist is the Son we can gaze upon without hurting our eyes. This Son comes down from Heaven to shine His graces upon us, to dry our tears and cleanse us from the “mud” of sin.

“Tell no one this vision,” Jesus directed the apostolic three, ***“until the Son of Man is raised from the dead” (Mt 17:9, Mk 9:9)***. Similarly, the third secret of Fatima was not revealed until several years after St. John Paul (the Vicar of Christ) “rose” from a near fatal assassination attempt that occurred on May 13, 1981, the anniversary of the first apparition of Mary at Fatima.

These are just a few thoughts that hopefully will inspire a deeper reflection and greater discovery. God loves to use His Mother and children to reveal Himself to us and to show us the way to Him, for Mary always leads us to Jesus who is the *Way*.