



Through Prayer and Penance the Soul is Transformed

By Fr. Jerome Magat

The subject of the fourth luminous mystery of the rosary is one of the most dramatic scenes in all of Scripture. It places Jesus between Moses (representing the Law) and Elijah (representing the Prophets) as the Lord of all history and the fulfillment of God's promise of a savior. This moment made such an impression on the disciples of the Lord that it is one of the few stories common to all three synoptic Gospels.

In St. Luke's version of this event, there is a detail contained in the story unique to his account: Jesus was transfigured while he was praying. This seemingly minor detail presents some insights into the power of prayer and the relationship between the Transfiguration and the sacrament of penance.

Just as Jesus was transfigured while He was praying, we are called in a similar manner to be transformed into saints. Throughout the ages, many saints and theologians have offered different definitions for prayer, but in its simplest terms, prayer is, "the elevation of the mind and heart to God in praise of his glory; a petition made to God for some desired good, or in thanksgiving for a good received, or in intercession for others before God" (CCC Nos. 2559-2565).

As the soul is drawn in closer union with God, it is steadily transformed by grace and becomes a more perfect image of God Himself, sharing in the Trinity's inner life. Not only does prayer have the power to secure favors — more importantly, it has the power to transform our will and desires to conformity with God and His loving, providential plan. So, no matter whether our petitions are "answered" or not, the person transformed by prayer will have greater insights into God's will for them, especially if that plan includes a participation in the Passion through suffering.

Not only does the Transfiguration remind us of the transforming power of prayer, it also invites us to consider the transforming power of the sacrament of penance. When Jesus was transfigured on Mt. Tabor before Sts. Peter, James and John, these three apostles caught a glimpse of Christ's divine glory. In a sense, Jesus uncovered for them an insight into His divine nature. They were able to see Jesus in a unique and highly-privileged manner. It was as if they could see a part of Jesus beyond what mere human sight could discern.

In a similar fashion, this is what can happen for a contrite penitent in the sacrament of penance. When one approaches our Lord's tribunal of mercy in making a good confession, all of the masks and appearances that we assume in life can be taken off. We lay bare our souls before Jesus' mercy. He sees us as we truly are. No longer must we "put on airs" or "present ourselves" in order to cast a certain image that we would like others to have of us. In effect, we reveal our true self. We allow the grace of Christ's mercy to take our frail humanity and permit it to be purified, strengthened and transformed, so that we become as transparent to Him as He was to the three apostles.

The challenge for us after confession is to integrate that true self known to Jesus with the perception that we want others to have of us. The integration of Christ's two natures, held in perfect balance, calls us to become whole and integrated persons. In the season of Lent, we do well to pray for the grace of prayer to transform us, so that we can become as transparent as the Transfigured One through the sacrament of penance.

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OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

March 17, 2019

2nd Sunday of Lent

Moments of Light and Glory Through Lent

Dear Parishioners,

In four weeks, we will be preparing for Passion Week. It may seem like a long time away especially if you've given up some of your favorite things for Lent. However we can rest assured, there are many moments of light and glory along the way. Today's Gospel of the Transfiguration is one of those beautiful reminders. Here we see the glory of Jesus revealed to Peter, James and John. It is a glimpse into the graces and light we ourselves receive when we allow the Lord to work in our hearts through prayer, fasting and the sacraments.

This week we are indeed privileged to have Archbishop Michael Miller visit our parish. He has had the opportunity to meet with so many of our parish leaders, coordinators and committee members. Many of the conversations, revolved around the issues of ministries and the priorities and goals of the Archdiocese. I am sure you will join me in extending our sincere gratitude to Archbishop Miller for taking the time to share his thoughts and listen to so many parishioners. Thank you also to all of you who made sacrifices in your work and family schedules to make it to these meetings.

Speaking of meeting the Archbishop, our RCIA candidates actually met with His Excellency a week before the rest of us. They were at the Rite of Election last Sunday afternoon at Holy Rosary Cathedral. This is a big gathering of catechumens and candidates from several parishes who come together to celebrate Mass with the Archbishop as part of their preparation for Easter.

It is a major milestone in their journey towards the initiation into the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation at Easter. In the presence of the bishop, they inscribe their names in the Book of the Elect at the Cathedral as a pledge of their fidelity to the teachings of Jesus. No longer are they "catechumens" or people being instructed in the Faith, they are called the Elect or *illuminandi* – those who will be enlightened in the mysteries of the Faith. I urge you all to keep them in your prayers as we approach Easter Vigil. My thanks to the RCIA team who have been working very hard to prepare this group.

May our Blessed Mother guide us through these days of light and glory as we make our way towards the beautiful celebration of Easter.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R

PRAYER OVER THE ELECT

Father of love and power,
it is your will to establish everything in Christ
and to draw us into his all-embracing love.
Guide the elect of your Church:
strengthen them in their vocation,
build them into the kingdom of your Son,
and seal them with the Spirit of your promise.



Weekly Collection: Sunday Mass Offering Mar 9 & 10: \$5,160.35. St. Joseph's Society \$1,423.00. Offering for the Needy: \$20.00. Thank you for your faith-filled generosity.

OLPH Parish Centennial Development Plan Info Session: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish is prayerfully planning a major development plan which will usher a new era of growth and sustainability for our parish community. An information session will be held on Saturday April 6 at 3pm in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Spring Break: OLPH School is closed for Spring Break March 18 – 29.

Church Washrooms: For security reasons, the church washrooms will be locked after weekday Masses until further notice.

Lenten Prayer Series: Half-hour Lenten Prayer Series on Wednesdays at noon. Soup & bread offered after most gatherings. Mar 6 – VST Epiphany Chapel, 6030 Chancellor Blvd. | Mar 13 – St. Helen's Anglican, 4405 West 8th Ave. | Mar 20 – West Point Grey United Church, 4595 W. 8th Ave. | Mar 27 – St. Anselm's Anglican, 5210 University Blvd. | Apr 3 – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic, 2465 Crown St. | Apr 10 – West Point Grey Baptist Church, 4509 W. 11 Ave.

Share Lent: Find out more about this year's Share Lent Campaign on devp.org. If you would like to help with this D&P campaign, please contact Deirdre dmswebster@gmail.com.

Permanent Diaconate Information Sessions: Do you feel called to be a Permanent Deacon? Men between the ages of 35 and 60 interested in ordained ministry, along with their spouses, can learn more about the permanent diaconate this spring. The Permanent Diaconate Office is hosting information sessions this April and May in Vancouver and Langley. For more information, or to register, please visit <http://stmarkscollege.ca/news-events/events/permanent-diaconate-information-sessions/> or email deacons@rcav.org.

Alpha for Young Adults: Alpha is a weekly event where you can explore and ask questions about life and faith through sharing a free meal, watching a video, and participating in open and honest discussion. If you're someone searching or skeptical of Christian faith, this is for you. Bring a friend along too! Mondays starting March 18 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Mahony and Sons, Burrard Landing, Vancouver. For more information, contact Vea at 604-618-2802.

Quo Vadis – Men's Discernment Events: Day of Recollection with Archbishop Miller on Saturday, March 23, 10-3 p.m. at John Paul II Pastoral Centre, Vancouver. Open to single Catholic men ages 18+ who want to answer the question: What is God calling me to do with my life? Please register at least one week in advance by contacting the Vocations Office at vocations@rcav.org or call 604-443-3254

Fiat: Women's Discernment Events: Day of Recollection – Fiat of Women in the New Testament on Saturday, March 23, 12-3:30 p.m. at FSE Convent, 2811 Venables Street, Vancouver. Fiat, the women's vocation discernment group for the Archdiocese of Vancouver, is getting ready for another year of events. Events are open to single, Catholic young women ages 18-35 who are open to discerning and responding to God's call in their life. Sign up now to receive emails of events throughout the year. Email womensvocations@rcav.org for more information.

Seminarian Calendar – Lent 2019: The Vocations Office invites everyone to pray for our seminarians. Check out the Seminarian Calendar at <http://vocationsvancouver.ca/seminary/seminarian-calendar-lent-2019>. You can hover over the date and click on the names for interesting information on each seminarian. Scroll below the calendar to see the list of seminarians and schools.

Theology of the Body: Discover human nature as the "Gift of Self" in our relationship with God and one another through Theology of the Body. Using the teachings of Christ on marriage, St. John Paul II reveals our true human nature in the image and likeness of God as a "communion of persons in the sincere gift of self," giving us the authentic meaning of our humanity now and in eternal life. Sessions begin this Spring: April 1-June 24 at St. John the Apostle Parish, Vancouver, and March 26-June 18 at St. Anthony Parish, West Vancouver. Register at rcav.org/tob.

Stewardship Reflection

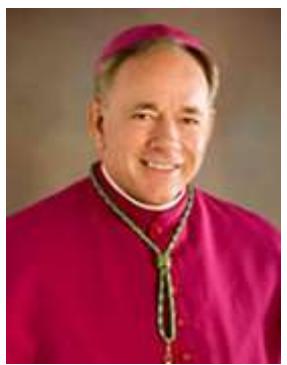
"I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession." (Genesis 15:7) Just as the Lord gave Abraham, Moses and the Israelites a land to possess, He has also given each of us a home.

Whether your home is grand or humble, your own or rented, it is a gift from God. Abraham prepared a great sacrifice to the Lord in gratitude for the home God gave him. How do you show your gratitude to God for the home He has given you? Do you make a sacrifice of any kind? Do you return any of your finances to God, investing equally in your eternal home just as you invest in your earthly home?

CALENDAR

MARCH/APRIL

Mass with Archbishop Miller



March 17

Join us for the 9am Mass this weekend with Archbishop Miller rounding off his visit to the parish. The Knights of Columbus will put on a breakfast reception following Mass.

Lenten Study



March 22

On Fridays of Lent after the Stations of the Cross, we will be screening Bishop Robert Barron's *Conversion: Following the Call of Christ*. Stations of the Cross start at 7pm. The 20 min video screening will follow soon after.



April 7

Join us for a Penitential Service in preparation for Easter on Sunday April 7 at 2pm. There will be visiting priests available for the service.

OLPH Elect and Candidates at the Rite of Election

Twenty-three catechumens (now Elect) and three candidates signed their names in the Book of the Elect at Holy Rosary Cathedral. The Mass celebrated with Archbishop Miller was a very happy and poignant occasion for them. Archbishop Miller in his homily touched on the readings for the 1st Sunday of Lent about temptation as well as the responsibilities of the Elect "the people who have not chosen God but have been chosen by God" to be one with Him. Congratulations and a warm welcome to all. Please pray for them in the coming weeks leading up to Easter.

ELECT

Jason Liang
Stanley Wang
Carol Wen
Maggie Zhang
Lydia Gao
Richard Zhuo
Alina Zhang
Judy Jin
Jon Bathgate
Helena Han
June Jin
Ellen Wang
Peng Gao
Andy Fan

CANDIDATES

Elsa You
James Cudmore
Sandra Weitz



Redemptorist

Pilgrimage: May 2-14

As part of our 150th Jubilee Icon of Love celebrations, the Redemptorists all over the world have organized several pilgrimages to visit the actual icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, places where St Alphonsus and St Gerard Majella lived and prayed as well as other places of interest in Italy.

The cost of the trip is \$4800. Arrangements can be made for pre-authorized payments as well. For more information about the pilgrimage, please contact Brian or Deon royaleorchid@shaw.ca or call Brian 778-999-4599 / 778-866-8118.



12-DAY ITINERARY

- Day 01: May 02 2019 - Canada to Rome / Naples
- Day 02 May 03 - Arrive in Rome – Marianella – Naples
- Day 03: May 04 - Pompeii – Amalfi Coast
- Day 04: May 05 - Excursion to Scala
- Day 05: May 06 - Sites of St. Alphonsus and St. Gerard Majella
- Day 06: May 07 - Amalfi – Montecassino – Rome
- Day 07: May 08 - Papal Audience – Holy Doors of Rome – Relics of Jerusalem
- Day 08: May 09 - Rome (Vatican)
- Day 09: May 10 - Assisi - Sites of St. Francis and St. Clare
- DAY 10: May 11 - Pisa – Padua
- DAY 11: May 12 – Venice – St. Mark's Square - Murano Glass Factory
- DAY 12: May 13 – Goodbye Italy