

August 8, 2016

On a cruise line, there was a magician who had a show, and every time he did the show the parrot that was housed in that room would critique him. "He's a phony, he's a fraud, it's just a cheap trick." The parrot would say that at everything the magician did, all throughout the show. Finally, one day, the ship exploded. The parrot and the magician found themselves in a boat together. They just glared at each other for days. Finally, the parrot said, "Okay, I give up, what did you do with the ship?"

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Transfiguration. Most of the time we celebrate this on a weekday. This is not a normal Sunday feast. But when it does occur on a Sunday, it takes the place of the eighteenth Sunday in ordinary time. It shows us something that is tremendous. We get a preview of what Jesus is trying to show us in our first reading, in the book of Daniel. Daniel was a prophet in the old days, of the king of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. He was able to see into the future because God granted him those visions. We see that he is seeing today, something that's very important about the end of time. They left out part of it, which was terrible. We see God sitting on his throne, bright as light. Flames of fire, thousands ministering to him, angels, people in heaven, ministering to him. Court was convened and the books of judgement were opened. And then they skip the important part, because the important part is who is on trial. Satan is on trial. They leave that out. But Satan is on trial and he is condemned to the everlasting fire, forever. Then they pick it up again showing us the son of man coming. When you hear the son of man in the Bible, it's talking about the messiah, it's talking about Jesus. So it says, when he reached the ancient ones presented before him, everybody got down and worshipped. God condemned Satan to hell and he elevates Jesus to the seat next to him on his right-hand side meaning He is equal to Me, in everything. And that His dominion will last forever. The gospel is a prequel to the first reading. Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up on the mountain. In the Bible and from the church fathers we hear Mount Tabor. But, that's impossible. Mount Tabor was just a hill of one thousand feet and it had a Roman fort on it. Jesus is not going to do anything inside a Roman fort. So, He takes them up Mount Hermon, eight thousand feet, and there does this because it's closer to heaven. There must have been a misprint somewhere in the Bible. That's not unusual because they were writing it by hand. He takes them up there and He becomes bright as white. Jesus wants to give them something to last through all the problems, all the sufferings, all the torturing, they are going to undergo for the faith. He wants to give them a preview of coming attractions. When he becomes white as light, He is no longer His earthly body, it is His heavenly body. Bright as white. We're all going to be wearing white. White will be the new black. Orange won't be. So, we are going to have all white. "Well, Father, how are we going to be able to tell each other apart?" We won't need to because we are going to take place in a thing the eastern Fathers have talked about from the beginning, but, which is absent in the western church which we belong to. We don't hear this term. This term is deification. Become God. Becoming divine. That is what Jesus's white is showing them. He's becoming divine. We are going to be in heaven, becoming one with God, hopefully. That's our calling. God came down from heaven and became man so that man can go up to heaven and become God. Do we become like God the Father, God the Son, no. They have no beginning and no end. We have a beginning, but no end. We will spend eternity becoming one with God and each other. Well Father, "I don't like him, I don't like her." Too bad. They are going to be in heaven and you're going to be shocked. That's what Jesus is showing here. He's also showing something else. He's talking with Moses and Elisha. Moses was the first and the greatest prophet ever for the Jewish people. Moses lived about 4,000 years before Jesus; Elisha about 1,000. Jesus is talking to people from the ancient past as if they're here today. That's because he is

transcending space and time. There is no more time in heaven. It is the eternal present of God. Everybody in the past, everybody in the future, will be existing with us with no time. Time is a manmade construct for here, in this life. There is no time, there's no dimensions, there's no space, everything is right here, right now. This is what He's showing us. So, what do we say? He's showing them a preview of what happens with the resurrection. This is what's going to happen, and it's called deification. Everything we do as Christians, should be geared to the fact that we want to be in heaven. We want existence in heaven, we want to become one with God. In the early church, the people were so in love with that concept, they would die to do that. Today we've lost that for some reason. People don't have the urge to go to heaven anymore, because they think, erroneously, everyone's going to heaven. And they're not, Jesus tells us over and over again, it's not going to happen. We have lost that urge. But, everything we do as Christians, followers of Christ, is geared to going to heaven, or should be. Our prayers at Mass, our attendance at Mass, our prayers at home, our acts of charity, everything, should be geared in our lives to wanting to be in heaven. Not to be in with the fads and fashions of the world, but to be in heaven. We shouldn't be listening to the world. Jesus showed the apostles and they referenced it. In the letter of Peter, we just read, the second reading. He showed us his glory. Well, it's not just His. It's ours if we claim it. It belongs to us, this deification, this transfiguration. The word transfiguration comes from another word, metamorphosis. We learn metamorphosis in science when caterpillars become butterflies. Metamorphosis means changing of state. The state that you exist in. But, because scientists already used it for bugs, we didn't want to use it for God. So, we got another word, transfiguration. In transubstantiation on the altar, we see another preview. God can do anything. He gave us this view, white as light transcending time and space to show us what happens after the crucifixion and the resurrection. Deification, becoming one with God. Because of this, we should be want to be one with God. Everything geared to going to heaven. Why? Because as Teresa of Avila says, "this life is like a bad night in a bad hotel." It's not someplace you want to stay. You are moving through it, you're passing through it, and we don't want to miss the boat. Many times, Catholics and other Christians get confused, get covered up, don't see the truth because of what the world is doing to them and saying. This is a problem. Because, we always need to pray for guidance to know the truth, to discern the truth. Only this will get us to heaven. If we don't know the truth, if we cannot see the forest for the trees, we need to pray to be able to see that.

A man got a new dog for hunting and he was training him. He took him out and shot a duck and it fell in the water, and the dog walked out on top of the water, picked up the duck, and walked back on top of the water. He's like, "Wow, that's amazing." He shot another duck, the dog walked on top of the water, picked up the duck, walked back on top of the water. So the man said, "you know what, I'm going to show my neighbor." His neighbor comes, "Watch this," Boom, duck comes down, dog walks on the water, comes back on top of the water. And the neighbor says. "Wow, you got ripped off, your dog can't swim." That's missing the truth, that's missing what we need to know, what we need to have, to be able to see to get to heaven. We can't let the world get involved with us. We need to look at what Jesus is showing us in the transfiguration, the truth, that there is something after this life and we don't want to stay here.

God bless you