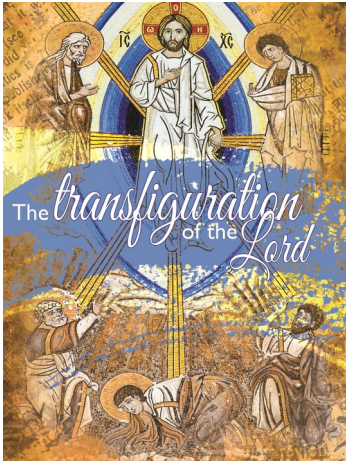


FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Feast of the Transfiguration this Thursday is intimately bound to the great Exodus. Saint Luke, in his account, tells us that Moses and Elijah “were speaking of His exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.” This is not a casual detail. The Greek word *exodos* is the same word used in the Septuagint for the liberation of Israel from slavery in Egypt. Jesus is about to accomplish the definitive Exodus — the passage from death to life, from slavery to sin to the freedom of the children of God.

On Mount Tabor, everything speaks of this continuity and fulfillment of salvation history: Moses, the mediator of the first Exodus, who led the people through the Red Sea and received the Law on Sinai amid fire, cloud, and the voice of God. Now he stands beside Jesus, the new Moses, who will lead a far greater liberation. Elijah, the prophet who suffered persecution and was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot. He represents all the prophets who announced the coming of the Messiah and the new covenant. The mountain itself echoes Sinai. There, God’s glory descended; here, the glory of the only-begotten Son shines from within. The cloud that overshadows the disciples recalls the pillar of cloud that guided Israel through the desert. The voice of the Father repeats the revelation of Sinai, but now points directly to Jesus: “Listen to him.”

Jesus does not come to abolish the first Exodus — He brings it to completion. The blood of the Passover lamb that protected the Hebrews from the angel of death finds its fulfillment in the Blood of the Lamb of God shed on the Cross. The passage through the Red Sea becomes the passage through the waters of Baptism. The journey through the desert becomes our own itinerary of faith, with its trials, temptations, manna from heaven (the Eucharist), and the constant call to trust in the Lord who walks before us.

Are we living this new Exodus? We have been called out of the “Egypt” of a life without God, out of slavery to idols, consumerism, fear, and sin. The Lord has opened the sea before us through Baptism and continues to open it week after week in the celebration of the Eucharist. Like the disciples on Tabor, we are given a foretaste of the glory that awaits at the end of the journey so that we do not lose heart when the path descends into the valley of the Passion.

Peter wanted to remain on the mountain and build tents. How often we too want to stop at the moment of consolation and avoid the “exodus” that must be accomplished in our own “Jerusalem” — that is, in the concrete circumstances of our daily life, in the difficulties of marriage, in the challenges of community life, in the mission to those who still live in darkness.

The Transfiguration tells us: the glory is real, but the way to it passes through Jerusalem. “If we have died with Christ, we shall also live with him.” The same Lord who was transfigured before the apostles will transfigure our own bodies and our community when we allow Him to lead us through His Passover. Let us walk this Exodus together with confidence. May the Virgin Mary, *Stella Maris*, guide us as she guided the first disciples, so that, listening to the beloved Son, we may reach the Promised Land of the Resurrection. Lord Jesus, new Moses and true Passover, lead us in this Exodus. Free us from every slavery and make us witnesses of your glory.

Peace, 