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Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time after Easter | **Year:** C
First Reading: Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 97:1–2, 5–6, 9 | **Response:** Psalm 97:1a, 9a
Second Reading: 2 Peter 1:16–19
Gospel Acclamation: Matthew 17:5c
Gospel Reading: Luke 9:28b–36
Preached at: the Chapel of Richartz House **in the** Archdiocese of Harare, Zimbabwe**.**

Dear brothers in Christ,

Today's readings are about light. But not a gentle light, like sunrise or sunset. This is a fierce light—a bright, burning light that comes from God. It is the light of faith. The light Jesus brings into the world, so no one has to stay in the dark. This light doesn't just help us see. It changes what we see. It changes us. It doesn't just shine—it burns, it blesses, it breaks through everything false and small and scared.

In the first reading, the prophet Daniel sees a vision. Thrones are set. Fire flows like a river. And on one of the thrones sits the "Ancient One"—God—full of glory and majesty. Then comes someone called "a Son of Man," riding on the clouds. He is like us, but more than us. And God gives him power and kingship. We believe this is Jesus—fully human, fully divine—who will come again not to crush us, but to gather us into life.

The psalm today says, "The Lord is king! Let the earth rejoice!" God's power is real, but it's not cruel. It's not distant. He is a God who walks with the poor. Who melts mountains and also mends hearts. He is both fire and friend. Glory wrapped in mercy.

Peter, in the second reading, tells us what he saw with his own eyes. He's not making it up. He was there when Jesus' face changed and his clothes became full of light. And he heard the voice from heaven. That memory stayed with him. He tells us to hold on to the light like a lamp in the dark—until the day comes when Christ rises like the morning star in our hearts.

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And now we come to the Gospel. Jesus climbs a mountain with Peter, James, and John. Luke tells us this happened “after eight days”—a hint of something new. In Scripture, eight is the number of new beginnings. This is not just a moment of beauty. It’s a sign of a new world breaking in.

Jesus prays. And while he’s praying, his face changes. His clothes shine with a light they’ve never seen before. His glory shows. Not in strength, but in stillness. And two great figures appear with him: Moses and Elijah—the ones who saw God on mountains long ago. They speak with Jesus—not about power, but about his exodus, his coming death. That word connects to the story of Moses leading God’s people out of Egypt. Jesus too will lead people to freedom—but through suffering and the cross. His death will not be the end. It will be a passage.

St Augustine said Jesus’ shining clothes show us the Church—us—made clean by mercy, united to Christ. The Transfiguration shows us not just who Jesus is, but who we can become in him.

Then comes the cloud. Just like at Mount Sinai. In Scripture, the cloud means the Holy Spirit. And from the cloud comes the voice of the Father: “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” The whole Trinity is here: the Father speaking, the Son shining, the Spirit in the cloud. And what the Father says is simple—and life-changing: Listen to Him.

Not “admire him.” Not “think about him sometimes.” But listen to him. Do what he says. Follow him. Even when it’s hard. Even when it leads down the mountain, through the valley, all the way to the cross.

And that’s where we are, most of the time—not on a mountaintop, but in the valley. What does this moment of light say to us here in Zimbabwe, where many walk in real darkness? Where young people wait for jobs that don’t come. Where power cuts steal hours from the day. Where hospitals struggle and prices rise. Where people carry the weight of corruption, grief, and fear.

The Transfiguration tells us this: God’s glory is not far from our pain. It does not lift us out of suffering. It walks with us through it. The mountain is not the goal. It is the preparation. The memory of light gives us strength for the road ahead.

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And the voice from the cloud still speaks: Listen to Him. Listen to Jesus—the one who eats with the poor, who weeps with the grieving, who says no to greed and violence, who lays down his life in love. To listen to Him means to let His words shape our actions. To follow His way, even when it's unpopular or costly. It means to live the Gospel not just in prayer, but in public. Not just in Church, but in daily life.

In the language of Ignatius, this moment on the mountain is deep consolation. A gift to strengthen us for mission. Peter wants to stay there—to build tents and remain in the light. But Jesus leads them down. Back to the crowds. Back to the cross. And so it is with us. Prayer must lead to presence. Encounter must lead to service. We are not called to remain in comfort, but to carry the light we've seen into the world.

So what does it mean for us, as Jesuits and companions of the Society, to be transfigured? It means letting Jesus' light change the way we see: ourselves, others, the world. It means trusting His voice above all the noise. It means living in such a way that others see the light—not because we are perfect, but because we have met the one who is.

This week, take time to imagine the scene. Place yourself there, on the mountain. What do you see in Jesus' face? What do you feel when the voice speaks? What do you bring back down with you?

Let us ask ourselves:

- Where is Jesus asking me to see in a new way—to look with eyes of faith, not fear?
- When have I heard God speak into my life—and did I truly listen?
- Where can I carry light this week—into someone's struggle, into our nation's need?

May the light we glimpse today not make us forget the pain of the world, but help us face it with hope. And may we walk that path not alone, but with the One who shines in the darkness, and leads us through.

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In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.

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