



The Holy See

REMARKS OF JOHN PAUL II ON THE FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD

Sunday 6 August 2000

We are preparing to celebrate Holy Mass on the feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord, cherishing in our hearts the ever-living memory of the Servant of God Paul VI, 22 years after his "going forth" to eternity.

Today's liturgy invites us to turn our gaze to the face of the Son of God who, as the Synoptics unanimously attest, is transfigured on the mountain before Peter, James and John, while the Father's voice proclaims from the cloud: "This is my beloved Son; listen to him" (*Mk* 9: 7). St Peter will recall the event with emotion, saying: "*We were eyewitnesses of his majesty*" (2 *Pt* 1: 16).

In our era, pervaded by the so-called "image culture", the desire to be able fill one's eyes with the figure of the divine Master becomes more intense, but it is appropriate to recall his words: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (*Jn* 20: 29). It was precisely with his eyes of faith fixed on the adorable face of Christ, true man and true God, that the revered and unforgettable Paul VI lived. Contemplating him with burning and impassioned love, he said: "Christ is beauty, human and divine beauty, the beauty of reality, of truth, of life" (*General Audience*, 13 January 1971; *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 21 January 1971, p. 12). And he added: "The figure of Christ presents, over and above the charm of his merciful gentleness, an aspect which is grave and strong, formidable, if you like, when dealing with cowardice, hypocrisy, injustice and cruelty, but never lacking a sovereign aura of love" (*General Audience*, 27 January 1971; *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition, 4 February 1971, p. 12).

As we approach the altar with grateful hearts, praying for the blessed soul of this great Pontiff, we also wish, like him and like the disciples, to turn our gaze to the radiant face of the Son of God to be illumined by it. Let us ask God, through the intercession of Mary, Teacher of faith and contemplation, to enable us to receive within us the light that shines brightly on the face of Christ,

so that we may reflect its image on everyone we meet.

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