

GOSPEL PEARLS

Two certainties

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Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone. As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead." (Matthew 17: 1-9)

The entire Word of God found in the Old Testament, that is, in the Law and in the Books of the Prophets (as in Moses, the greatest lawmaker and in Elijah, the greatest prophet, both of whom were present at Christ's transfiguration) converges and finds its complete fulfilment in Jesus. It is Jesus who is glorified as the Light of all discernment in this world. His transfiguration, the fourth of the rosary's "Luminous Mysteries", represents the anticipation of the first Glorious Mystery (Jesus's resurrection), without which our faith in Him would be in vain. It also presupposes the fifth Sorrowful Mystery, since Jesus could not rise from the dead unless he first died. In hindsight, therefore, Jesus's transfiguration reminds Christians of two certainties: as men, the natural certainty of dying in retribution for our sins; and as disciples of Christ, the supernatural

certainty our rising from the dead.