

Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord – Personal Transfiguration

*Delivered by Rev. Fr. Ghevond Ajamian
St. Sarkis Armenian Orthodox Church, Dallas, TX
July 3, 2016
Gospel Reading: Matthew 16:13-17:13*

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Tomorrow is Independence Day and many refer to the Fourth of July as the birth of America, yet the reality is that the Fourth of July is the day when America changed and was transformed. America changed from belonging to the King of England to belonging to the American people. Independence Day is when we remember when the Declaration of Independence was signed and stated to the world who and what America is. It is a land of opportunity, justice and rights, where life liberty and happiness can be pursued. This is the day we see and celebrate how America was transformed.

Today, in the Armenian Church, we remember the Transfiguration of our Lord. We remember how Christ ascended Mount Tabor with three of His disciples, Peter, James and John and was transfigured. His face shone bright as the sun and appearing next to Him were Moses and Elijah. Moses represented the Law and Elijah represented the prophets. Christ showed His disciples that He was the fulfillment of both the Law and the Prophets, showing His glory, greatness and majesty.

This is why, every Sunday at the end of the Divine Liturgy, when the priest descends from the altar, he professes, “Եղիցի, եղիցի, եղիցի: Կաստարումս օրինաց եւ մարգարէից, դու եւ Քրիստոս Աստուած փրկիչ մեր:” (Let it be, let it be, let it be. You are Christ God our Savior, who is the fulfillment/completion of the Law and the prophets).

Little do we realize, but each of us has gone through a transformation and transfiguration, which happened at our baptism. At the time of our baptism, we change spiritually, becoming heirs to the kingdom of heaven. Our souls and bodies no longer belong to this world, but to Christ. We forget this and treat our bodies and souls as if they are our own.

It is on the Feast of the Transfiguration we are reminded that we have changed and must continue to change, to become more Christ-like. We are reminded of our baptisms today, when we toss water on each other.

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So as we leave today and are soaked with water, let us remember our Lord's transfiguration, our first transfiguration (at our baptism) and strive to transfigure us and our world around us, through Christ Jesus.

Amen.