



*Prayer prepared by
don Reuben GAUCI (AC Malta) don Gianluca ZURRA (AC Italy)*

6th August Transfiguration of the Lord THE CARESS OF A DREAM

SIGN OF the CROSS AND SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE PRAYER (fr. Reuben)

Let's continue this encounter by becoming aware tht we are living in the presence of our loving God. Our life is an expression of God's love. Let's try and calm down and affirm God's presence in our life: In the name of the Father, and of the son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

In the begining of this meeting coming from so many different countries, let's pray to be open to the Holy spirit who brought order when earth was formless and empty and who inspired the Holy writers to write the Scriptures: Fill us with your gift of docility and understanding so that the scriptures that we are going to listen ontinues to transform us.

- READING OF THE Gospel : Mt 17, 1-9

¹¹ 1 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There in their presence he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as dazzling as light. 3 And suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him. 4 Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Lord,' he said, 'it is wonderful for us to be here; if you want me to, I will make three shelters here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' 5 He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and suddenly from the cloud there came a voice which said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour. Listen to him.' 6 When they heard this, the disciples fell on their faces, overcome with fear. 7 But Jesus came up and touched them, saying, 'Stand up, do not be afraid. 8 And when they raised their eyes they saw no one but Jesus. 9 As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them this order, 'Tell no one about this vision until the Son of man has risen from the dead.'

GOSPEL COMMENTARY fr. Gianluca

There are times when giving confidence requires a strong presence, hands that can shake fears off, grasp firmly those who are drowning, or risk falling into sadness. However, there are also moments that can be crossed thanks to a more sober style, but no less capable of instilling courage. This is what Jesus does with his disciples: after announcing his imminent passion to them, generating dismay and bewilderment, he does not leave them alone, nor does he violently pull them out of the torpor into which they have fallen. Instead he chooses the path of dreaming, of tenderness, of delicate accompaniment, not in the manner of a push, but more like that of a caress. He takes the disciples aside, on a mountain. This is the first gesture of care, clear in its strength of humanity: when it comes to facing a crisis one cannot remain in the deafening noise, but it is necessary to stop and make that silence a place of true words, of fruitful relationships. Peter can find his place again, he can say his own freely, while Jesus himself hosts the disciples, and we together with them, in his fruitful dialogue with Moses and Elijah. In the uproar all this would not be possible: those who love us invite us to rework our labors by taking ourselves aside, giving us time and giving us back the dignity of true interlocutors. Not only that, but on the mountain the disciples are surrounded by the cloud: it is the "caress" of God, who does not make his way with dazzling light, impossible to sustain our gaze, but wrapping and guarding it, because in the end, when we are lost, this is what we need in order to be able to continue the journey. But Jesus' most disconcerting gesture is the last: He touches the disciples by telling them to stand up, not to fear, not to be afraid. He doesn't give answers, he doesn't offer certainties that close and resolve, but his touch, like the cloud and like the silence of the mountain, is able to caress them, inviting them to continue, reopening once again a road that seemed closed, impossible to cross. In Jesus' touch is thus manifested the presence of a God who knows how to caress, bringing to the sidelines, enveloping, giving strength to get up and rework fears. Any other intrusive gesture, too violent, would have been counterproductive. It would have perhaps deceived the disciples with magic, but it would have made them fall back for the umpteenth time into bewilderment as soon as they returned to the foot of the mountain. But no: when one caresses, accompanies, and puts the other back on his feet without taking the place of his responsibility, then there is really nothing left to fear. There will always continue to be deserts to face, fears for what we cannot in any way predict or control, but a hand that touches like this, that caresses like this, that takes us seriously in this way, today as then can become a resource of trust and humanity for all. And we well know how much we need it in these times, learning also from crises to know better how to perceive what are around us the real caresses that do not deceive us, but accompany us in life without ulterior motives. As Pope Francis reminds us, young people, the new generations, need to return to dream, always and above all in the most delicate and difficult moments: that the rulers, those who have ecclesial, social, political and economic responsibilities, know how to take them by the hand, like Jesus on the mountain, and allow them to discover that even today, despite everything, adult life can be reached with confidence, to make their contribution to a more just, more beautiful, more true world.

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- Reading from CHRISTUS VIVIT : nn. 14 e 15

14. Let us also keep in mind that Jesus had no use for adults who looked down on the young or lorded it over them. On the contrary, he insisted that “the greatest among you must become like the youngest” (*Lk 22:26*). For him age did not establish privileges, and being young did not imply lesser worth or dignity.

15. The word of God says that young people should be treated “as brothers” (*1 Tim 5:1*), and warns parents not to “provoke your children, lest they become discouraged” (*Col 3:21*). Young people are not meant to become discouraged; they are meant to dream great things, to seek vast horizons, to aim higher, to take on the world, to accept challenges and to offer the best of themselves to the building of something better. That is why I constantly urge young people not to let themselves be robbed of hope; to each of them I repeat: “Let no one despise your youth” (*1 Tim 4:12*).

OUR FATHER and final Blessing (fr. Reuben)

We continue to ask you to teach us to pray since we are not able to do so on our own. Let's let the spirit pray through us as pray together in our own language:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Continue to bless us and our countries through this meeting together. Bless all those who are giving their generous contribution. Open our hearts and minds to receive your inspiration and strengthen our will to do your will. And this we pray in Christ our Lord.

Let's receive God's blessing:

Fr Reuben: The Lord is with you

Participants: And also with you

Fr Reuben: May all mighty God bless you, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.