



**WELCOMING  
CHILDREN  
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY  
OF AMERICA**



# **The Transfiguration**

## **August**

# **Adaptive Activities for Children**



**National Catholic  
Partnership on Disability**

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## Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

**Each monthly edition incorporates the following:**

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

# Prayer

*Begin with the Sign of the Cross.*

Leader: Today we are going to learn about the Transfiguration of Jesus, celebrated in the Catholic Church on August 6. This was when James, Peter, and John received reassurance, from God's voice and actions, that Jesus is the Son of God and his presence fulfilled predictions from the past. As times got tough, James, Peter, and John were able to look back on this experience and draw strength from it. We, too, can draw strength from spending time with Jesus, the Son of God. James, Peter, and John went up a mountain and came down ready to energetically and joyfully spread Jesus' message. We could go up a mountain to spend time with Jesus, or we can spend time in prayer talking and listening.

We pray today that, like James, Peter, and John, when we come down from the mountain we will be filled with energy and joy and ready to share that with everyone we meet. After I say each petition you will respond, "We shout to the Lord with joy!" Let's practice that...

**All: We shout to the Lord with joy!**

Leader: God, we thank you for sending your only Son, Jesus, to earth to be with us. Together we pray...



Tiepolo. "Christ leading Peter, James, and John to the high mountain for the Transfiguration." CCO via nga.gov

**All: We shout to the Lord with joy!**

Leader: Let us see you in the world around us and through the actions of others, with each God sighting bringing us closer to you. Together we pray...

**All: We shout to the Lord with joy!**

Leader: Let us pray in gratitude for the many blessings you give to us. For our family, friends, and community, we thank you. Together we pray...

**All: We shout to the Lord with joy!**

Leader: We are grateful for you, God, and are amazed by the world you have created. We ponder your many miracles and look to how you loved others. Help us share that love with one another. Together we pray...

All: **We shout to the Lord with joy!**

Leader: What else do we want to pray for today?

*Give kids time to share any prayer intentions and follow with the response.*

Leader: Loving God, we thank you for your great love, and for the example you set! Help us as we draw nearer to you and come to know you more fully. In your most Holy name, we pray, Amen.

*End with the Sign of the Cross.*



Image by falco from Pixabay



## Reading of Sacred Scripture

Matthew 17:1-8

After six days 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**



Unknown, German 15th Century. "The Transfiguration." CCO via nga.gov

## Gospel Reflection

Matthew shares a little of what his friends were able to witness. Can you image seeing Jesus in his divine glory right before your eyes? Artists have tried to capture what it looked like. In this painting, a close up of a larger scene, we can see Jesus floating in the air and beaming with light. This light is so strong that Peter, James and John are blocking a little of it with their hands, shading their eyes so they can see. They are so in awe and overwhelmed that they are on the ground, scared by this unknown.

Sacred art can help us see what this scene would have looked like and having a picture of what this image would have looked like helps us turn to Jesus in prayer.

What does transfigured mean?

Dictionary.com says it is “a complete change of form or

appearance into a more beautiful

or spiritual state.” Jesus changed form into a radiant figure, just for a little while. God knew that tough times were coming for Jesus and showing these disciples Jesus’ divine identity was telling them that Jesus is the Son of God. While Jesus walked on earth his disciples saw his human nature but witnessing the Transfiguration helped them be good friends to Jesus through his suffering and death because it reminded them that Jesus’ death was not the end.

What a privilege for Peter, James and John to be able to have a glimpse of heaven, by seeing Jesus in his divine power. We have not seen what they saw, but we choose to believe in Jesus’ glory and divine power and to be his friend. He wants friendship with you. Talking to Jesus is



Detail from Raphael's "The Transfiguration" CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

simple, you can speak to him and say his name, “Jesus.” Throughout your day you can call him and say, “I love you, Jesus.” “Thank you, Jesus, for showing your divinity to Peter, James and John.” He is waiting every moment, for your attention, for some simple words of love and admiration. Jesus always loves us and continues to patiently wait for us. So, let’s turn to him with eyes of love and hearts of obedience and speak to him. Jesus is love and he is in your heart right this very moment.



Image by Meranda D from Pixabay



## Faith in Action

### *The Transfiguration of Jesus - Seeing Jesus in a New Light!*

Have you ever looked at something in the sunlight and noticed how it shines differently? Maybe a rock sparkled or a window glowed. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus took three of his friends, Peter, James, and John, up a high mountain. There, something amazing happened. Jesus became full of light, shining like the sun! This is called the Transfiguration.

In that moment, the disciples saw who Jesus really was: the Son of God, full of glory. God spoke and said, “This is my beloved Son...listen to him!”

That means:

- ◆ Jesus is the Son of God, and he is full of light and love.
- ◆ Sometimes God gives us a special moment to understand him better.
- ◆ We can listen to Jesus and shine with his love, too!

Everyone can understand God’s light through beauty, quiet prayer, colors, touch, and love.

**"Jesus Shines" Light Box:** Make a special glowing box to remind your family of the Transfiguration.

- ◆ Use a clear plastic container or tissue box.
- ◆ Fill it with shiny items like foil, beads, or glitter paper.
- ◆ Add battery-operated lights or glow sticks inside.
- ◆ Place a picture of Jesus on the box and the words:  
“Jesus shines with God’s love!”
- ◆ Use the box during prayer or story time to remember that Jesus is our light.



Image by Leandro Santos Leandro Design from Pixabay

Adaptations: Use tactile or high-contrast materials. Let children touch or turn the light on and off to participate.



**"Shining Moments" Family Chart:** Help your family notice when God is close or when someone shows God's love.

- ◆ Create a chart with each person's name.
- ◆ Each day, write or draw one "shining moment" when you saw or shared God's love.
- ◆ Example: "I helped my sister," "I said a prayer," "I saw a rainbow."
- ◆ At the end of the week, thank God for the ways he shows his light in your family.

Adaptations: Use pictures or stickers. Give choices for "shining moments" to help with ideas.

**Transfiguration Story Bag:** Retell the story of the Transfiguration with sensory and visual items.

Suggested Items:

- ◆ A small flashlight (Jesus' light)
- ◆ A picture of a mountain
- ◆ A cloud made from cotton or soft fabric (God's voice came from a cloud)
- ◆ A heart or small cross (Jesus' love)

Read Matthew 17:1–9 slowly, showing each item as it is mentioned in the story.

Adaptations: Use textured items, simplified text, and repeat the story often with the same motions and visuals.



**Shining with Welcome:** Shine Jesus' light to other people at your parish by making Church pew packs.

- ◆ Fill large baggies with a few coloring pages of Jesus, crayons, a quiet fidget or soft religious item, a prayer card, and a note that says, "Shine Jesus' light."
- ◆ Decorate the bags
- ◆ Leave the bags out with a sign inviting families to take them
- ◆ Be sure to check with your parish staff first!

Adaptations: Let each person contribute based on their own gifts!



Image by Matthias Bockel from Pixabay

## Activities with Children

**Let's talk:** Talk with your child about what happened during the Transfiguration and why it is important. Let's break it down:

What happened: Peter, James, and John went up a mountain with Jesus. When they got to the top, Jesus changed in front of them. His face shined super bright like the sun and his clothes became really white. Then God said, "This is my son, listen to him."

Why is this important: This is when Jesus showed his divine nature, and the disciples realized he was truly the Son of God.

Talking points:

- ◆ How do you think Peter, James, and John felt?
- ◆ How does this make you feel?
- ◆ Why do you think this is important?
- ◆ Is there a time at Mass when something changes, just like this?
- ◆ Do you think this made their faith stronger? Why?

**Let's Glow:** Have an adult break open several glow sticks and pour the contents into a container of regular glue. Mix to create a glowing paint! If you have a black light, you can use regular neon markers, paints, or highlighters to create artwork that glows brightly!

This shows how shining a bright light reveals new things. The glory of God was revealed in the Transfiguration, as the disciples witnessed Jesus shining before them.



Snow64, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



**Let's Read:** This month we can read the Holy Scripture of Jesus' Transfiguration with John, Peter, and James.

- ♦ Matthew 17:1-9
- ♦ Mark 9:1-8
- ♦ Luke 9:28-36

**Let's Make it:** Shiny Drawings

- ♦ Draw the outline of a picture on a piece of paper using dark markers.
- ♦ Using crayons or pastels, color in the picture.
- ♦ Carefully dab a cotton ball into cooking oil, coating the picture with a thin layer.
- ♦ Allow to dry somewhat and hold up the picture to light to view the "shiny" element created through the oil rubbing!



Image by Vlad Vasnetsov from Pixabay

**Sensory Bin:** \*NEED A BLACK LIGHT\* Sensory bins can help children with hands on learning. This month use a sensory bin that glows in the dark! The disciples were in the dark until Jesus reveled his true nature to them.

Items can include glow in the dark rice, glow in the dark glitter, glow in the dark items (stars, crosses, etc.) and other items to remind us that Jesus is both divine and human.

To make the glow in the dark rice, scoop white rice into a quart or gallon bag. Pour a few drops of florescent paint into the bag (you do not need a lot). Securely close the bag and shake to mix. Open the baggie and let the painted rice dry. When dry, empty into a container or sensory bin to begin playing. In a dark room, bring out your blacklight and watch as your rice glows!

## Saint for August

### St. Monica and St. Augustine of Hippo

Feast Days: August 27 and August 28

St. Monica was born a long time ago in North Africa, around 332. She was a kind and faithful woman who loved God very much. Monica was married and had children. Her husband did not understand her devotion to God and did not allow her to have the children baptized. One of her sons was named Augustine. Monica loved her family and prayed for them every day.

Monica wanted her son Augustine to follow God, but for a long time, he made choices that did not make God happy. Augustine didn't want to go to church or live like a Christian. This made Monica very sad, but she never gave up. She kept praying and loving her son, even when it was hard. After her husband died, Monica followed Augustine to different cities and continued to pray.

For many years, Monica asked God to help Augustine. She never stopped believing that God could change his heart. One day, after a long time of Monica praying, Augustine began to listen to God. He changed his life and became a Christian when he was 31. Monica was so happy and thankful to God.

Later, Augustine became a priest and then a bishop. He wrote many books about God and helped many people learn about Jesus. He was a great teacher through writing and speaking and people still read his writing today. He died on August 28, 430, and was made a saint in 1298. St. Augustine is one of the most important teachers in the Catholic Church. He is called St. Augustine of Hippo because he was bishop of a place called Hippo Regius in northern Africa.



St. Augustine with St. Monica. Nheyob, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Monica shows us how to be patient, pray always, and never give up on the people we love. Augustine shows us that God can help anyone become holy, even if they start out making bad choices.

This month, we celebrate the Feast Day of St. Monica on August 27 and the Feast Day of her son, St. Augustine, on August 28!

**Activity:** Prayer Hearts Like St. Monica and St. Augustine

**Objective:** This activity helps children think about people they can pray for and how God answers our prayers, just like he answered St. Monica's prayers for St. Augustine.

**Materials Needed:**

- Paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Scissors (optional)
- Glue or stickers (optional)

**Steps:**

1. On a piece of paper, draw a big heart. You can decorate the edges if you like.
2. Inside the heart, write the names of people you want to pray for. It can be family, friends, or even someone who is having a hard time.
3. Use colors, stickers, or drawings to make your heart beautiful.
4. Around the heart or on the back, write or ask someone to help you write: "Dear God, help me love and pray like St. Monica. Help the people I care about follow you like St. Augustine. Amen."
5. Hang up your heart at home or give it to someone you prayed for.



St. Augustine of Hippo Nheyob, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons



### Reflection:

Who is someone you can pray for today? Maybe someone who is sick, someone who is sad, or someone who needs to know Jesus better. St. Monica never gave up on her son, and her prayers helped him become a saint. Your prayers matter too!



Callot, Jacques. Conversion of St. Augustine. Open Access, MET library.



Callot, Jacques. St. Augustine, Doctor. Open Access, MET library.

## August Resources

Ascetic Life of Motherhood. *7 ideas for Holy Transfiguration with your family*. <https://www.asceticlifeofmotherhood.com/blog/7waystocelbrateholytransfiguration>

Cultivating Catholics. *The Transfiguration of the Lord*. <https://cultivatingcatholics.com/the-transfiguration-of-the-lord/>

Easy Breezy Sunday School. *The Transfiguration*. <https://easybreezysundayschool.blogspot.com/2016/02/the-transfiguration.html>

Kids on the Move. “The Transfiguration.” YouTube video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dC081rBhFsE>

Teaching Catholic Kids. *Celebrating the feast of the Transfiguration*. <https://www.teachingcatholickids.com/celebrating-the-feast-of-the-transfiguration/>

Wilson, Sarah Hinlicky. (2024). *Seven recipes for celebrating the Transfiguration*. Thornbush Press. <https://thornbushpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Seven-Recipes-for-Celebrating-the-Transfiguration.pdf>