



Transformed by the Loving Gaze of Jesus

PRAYER INTENTIONS, SIGN OF THE CROSS & OPENING PRAYER (Standing or kneeling*) *Glory to you, Lord.*

"Make my body healthy and agile, my mind sharp and clear, my heart joyful and contented, my soul faithful and loving."¹ Let my heart, therefore be holy, true to you O Lord my God, so that all may know I belong to You². Have mercy on us, and be with us today as we contemplate being transformed by Your Loving Gaze.

INTRODUCE TOPIC & SCRIPTURE Mark 10:21 *"Jesus, looking at him, loved him..."*

BREATH-WORK & GRATEFULNESS

BODILY PRAYER VERSE (Based on Psalm 119: 50) ***"Lord, let your loving gaze pierce my heart."***

MEDITATION Jesus looks Matthew a tax collector, a public sinner whose whole life was money, right in the eye. Then, said Pope Francis in his homily for the Feast St. Matthew in 2013, "Matthew feels in his heart the gaze of the Lord who looked upon him. That gaze overtook him completely, it changed his life. We say he was converted. [He was transformed and] He Changed his life. As soon as he felt that gaze in his heart, he got up and followed him... Jesus' gaze always lifts us up. It is a look that always lifts us up, and never leaves you in your place, never lets us down, never humiliates. It invites you to get up – a look that brings you to grow, to move forward, that encourages you, because the One who looks upon you loves you. The gaze makes you feel that He loves you. This gives the courage to follow Him: And [Matthew] got up and followed him."

In, *The Church of Mercy*, Pope Francis said, "Let us also remember Peter: three times he denied Jesus, precisely when he should have been closest to him. And when he hits rock bottom, he meets the gaze of Jesus who patiently, wordlessly, says to him, "Peter, don't be afraid of your weakness, trust in me." Peter understands, he feels the loving gaze of Jesus, and he weeps. How beautiful is this gaze of Jesus—how much tenderness is there! Brothers and sisters, let us never lose trust in the patience and mercy of God!

RESOLUTION (Re-read Scripture.) The Gaze of Jesus transforms. We are not the accidental products of an impersonal universe, but were created by a thought of God in his image and likeness. Therefore, we all have the capacity to encounter His gaze of love and to respond with our hearts full of the love which we have received. "For if man exists, it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence"³ In these quiet moments, turn to the loving gaze of Jesus, and hear Him say, "You are precious in my sight. I love you. I will not forget you nor abandon you."

Mary, intercede for us for the grace of allowing ourselves to be seen – to be gazed at by this God who loves us –let us experience this love so profoundly that it pierces our hearts.

ENDING PRAYER (Kneeling*) *Lord, we thank you for this opportunity to be able to come together - to work on ourselves and strengthen ourselves, physically as well as spiritually. May all we do glorify You. Mary, Tabernacle of God: **pray for us**; St. Joseph: **pray for us**; St. Peter (or saint of the day): **pray for us**. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas

² Based on 1Kings 8:61 and 43

³ *Gaudium et Spes*, 19

*Modifications include raised -knee position or sitting with legs extended. *Cross legged seated position is not to be used during prayer.*

