

## **Homily – Confirmation at Panna Maria**

**March 4, 2018**

The ten commandments set out the way of life required of God's people. Their focus is on protecting the well-being of the community, and each of us has an important role to play. Jesus' cleansing of the Temple in Jerusalem calls our attention to true religion – not something superficial or merely routine but something deeply rooted in our hearts and at work in our daily lives. Authentic worship through faith in the risen Lord is the work of the Holy Spirit. Following Jesus is not easy, for he is also the crucified Lord. The Cross seems foolish and is a stumbling block for many.

Today, I will lay my hands on you and call down the Holy Spirit upon you, the same Spirit whom you received in Baptism. Today, the Spirit will come into your lives in a new and powerful way. I will also anoint you with Sacred Chrism. Today, God calls you to continue the mission of his beloved Son. The Holy Spirit will give you whatever you need to carry out your responsibilities as disciples of the risen Lord Jesus. We are children of God, called and sent to share the good news of God's love with everyone we encounter. We are to proclaim the gospel in word and deed – by the way we live!

This is a new, blessed moment in your lives. It is also a great challenge! We live in difficult times for people of faith. Walking in God's ways is countercultural. The ways of the world are to seek power, possessions, pleasure -- by whatever means! Daily we face an exaggerated individualism, a tendency to justify every kind of evil, an atmosphere of mistrust and falsehoods that divides, alienates, and polarizes us into camps and tribes, building walls rather than bridges. The kingdom of God, on the other hand, is one where everyone is respected because he or she is created in God's own image. The kingdom of God is a place of love and concern for the poor, the brokenhearted, the captive, the neglected, the immigrant, the stranger, those who mourn.

The Sacrament of Confirmation will strengthen you to live a life of discipleship, faithful to the word of God. The Holy Spirit will empower you to proclaim the Lord Jesus and his gospel to others, especially by the way you live and act. We rightfully pray daily for a better life for our families and our communities. But God needs us to be his eyes, ears, mouth, and arms in order to bring the kingdom to fulfillment. Have courage! Be confident! God's Spirit is with us, within us! *Ven, Holy Spirit, Ven!!*