

Homily – Intercollegiate Confirmations

March 24, 2019

Today's gospel reminds us that Jesus was not a hermit or an ascetic who fled to the desert to escape the world. Rather, he was deeply involved in the lives of people and in the events of daily life – including tragedies. This is also a key to authentic religion. Our religious faith necessarily bursts out of Sunday worship to influence the whole week. A living, vital faith must enliven every aspect of our lives and our society.

The parable of the fig tree reminds us that God is impatient, that the Lord seeks to discover good fruit, not merely pretty leaves. He wants results! At the same time, he is marvelously patient with us. He is the father who goes out each evening looking for his prodigal son. He is the gardener who gives us one more season, one more year. He is the compassionate God who will not quench the smoldering wick or break the bruised reed.

You received the Spirit at your baptism. In a few moments I will lay my hands on each of you and call down the same Holy Spirit upon you, the same Spirit that came upon the first disciples at Pentecost. The Spirit will come into your lives in a new and powerful

way. Your gifts of the Holy Spirit will be increased. The Spirit will strengthen your faith and help you to be generous in your service of others. Your bond with the Church will grow stronger, and you will be empowered to help carry out the Church's mission and ministries. Your witness to the Lord Jesus will become more effective so that you will be faithful to the gospel in your thoughts, attitudes, and actions.

We are living at a very difficult time in our world and in the Church. There is so much darkness, violence, polarization, chaos. The clerical sexual abuse scandal has hurt us deeply. We need healing, reconciliation with God and with one another. We need to change the way we minister, each of us faithful to our vocation. We need to be renewed in mind and heart along with the whole community of faith and its leaders. The Holy Spirit will enable us to do precisely this – growing holy and active in the world, especially reaching out with God's love to our suffering sisters and brothers.

We will walk the journey together! The risen Lord is with us! Our Lady of Guadalupe has promised to be with us always! The Holy Spirit will accompany us! *Ven, Holy Spirit, Ven!!*