

Homily for Confirmation

2021

In the synagogue at Nazareth, among family and neighbors, Jesus reads a text from the Old Testament. Then he tells his listeners: “today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing!” In doing this, he makes the mission of a former prophet his own: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has anointed me.” God chooses prophets to speak on his behalf, to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, to give comfort to those who mourn.

These two readings shape our celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation today. 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. God will give you whatever you need to carry out your responsibilities as disciples of the risen Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit bears witness that we are children of God, called and sent to share the good news of God’s love with all our sisters and brothers whom we encounter.

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. "Around us there is presence of evil. The devil is at work. But in a loud voice I say God is Stronger." (Pope Francis) 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 justice and peace, of harmony and unity, of love and concern for the poor, the brokenhearted, the captive, those who mourn. The gift of the Holy Spirit has been bestowed in abundance so that we may live lives of genuine faith and active charity.

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!!*

Our Lady of Guadalupe as we receive the Holy Spirit help us with your prayers to follow the lead of the Spirit in our lives as you did.