

## Homily052823

### SIGNS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

All of us have been present for a Confirmation when the Holy Spirit comes to the young person. And I remember being at my niece's confirmation a number of years ago, and, I was one of the celebrants. I didn't really have any particular part as the bishop was confirming the young people I was just watching. I noticed that as the young people came up, then their sponsors would come and fall into line behind them.

There was this one young lad who had asked his pop pop to be his sponsor. The gentleman he had chosen had had a stroke. He was able to get around, but he had one of those canes with the four prongs on it, to steady himself, and his other arm was paralyzed, as a result of the stroke. I watched him approach, he's working his way up and he's there with his grandson. There is a priest on either side of the bishop and they're collecting the cards from the candidates with the name that they're choosing for their confirmation name. The priests collect the card and read the name for the bishop to use as he seals the forehead. And then they repeat it to the bishop as he confirms and seals them. I'm just kind of watching this as they're coming up. And when it gets to the time when this young lad is standing before the bishop and his pop pop behind him, his left hand is at his side, his right hand has the cane, and he's supposed to put his right hand on the shoulder of the young man.

It's clear that that's not going to happen. And so, the priest who is collecting the cards, got it. And he just stepped down and he stood sideways and he looped his arm around the man's shoulders and put his left hand on the boy's shoulder. And then the bishop confirmed him. When the young man got up and turned, and then, you know, as they do, kind of made a beeline across the front, but pop pop was just struggling to turn, and to get the cane underneath him and to keep going. Suddenly the young lad recognized that, that he had already outrun his poppop so he stopped and he waited till his poppop came and got with him, and then slowly they both went back to their places. I just thought it was sweet. It was wonderful. And. It was full of the Holy Spirit

That grandfather wanting to be there for his grandson, whatever it took to get him there, the fortitude, the courage to go and be with his grandson on that important day despite his stroke. And even though he puts himself in the place where he's not going to be able to do everything a typical sponsor does, of himself, but he persists and perseveres any way.

And then, the sensitivity and quick thinking of the priest, his understanding, he got it. And then he knew precisely what to do. He had the knowledge and the wisdom that says, "I'll be the connection, I'll be the connection between this person and this person." And it was received. By the young man, and the grandpa, they got it. They understood what was going on there. And then when the boy turned after he had walked across the front very quickly and he realized that his poppop wasn't with him. He stopped, and there was that sensitivity to wait for the other person, He was not thinking of himself but rather of the man he loved. Thinking to himself: "Even in this moment when I'm the one being confirmed, I'm thinking of my poppop." The Holy Spirit was all over that situation. It only lasted 30 seconds. It was visible for anybody whose eyes were opened and were paying attention--full of the Holy Spirit. I submit to you, this kind of stuff goes on all day long, every single day, everywhere, not just in church. Everywhere we can see the signs of the Holy Spirit in our families at home, at the table, in front of the television, out driving the car, it's there to be seen, but we have to bring our faith to it in order to see.

We have to embrace it with the faith that God has given to us. The Holy Spirit has been poured out. We believe that, but we don't always believe it super-personally, like the Holy Spirit Himself has been poured into my life and has an actual effect on my life every day. But if you think about it, when you're born, you have your spirit. There's a spirit that animates you, the spirit, that you are, the spirit that is named your name, and then the Holy Spirit comes and aligns with your spirit in such a subtle way away that you, you'll never be overpowered by the Spirit. There's always this gentleness, but you will be empowered by the Holy Spirit with his gifts. You will understand more things. You'll have the wisdom that you'll need. You have the courage, you have the attentiveness, you have the knowledge, you have it, and it's the necessity of believing in it.

We pray: "Lord, I know you've given me an awareness, please bring it to my consciousness, bring it to my attention. Help me to live more mindfully in front of the people that I am encountering every single day. Help me to see that in the readings for today. It's all about the outpouring of the spirit and what this outpouring looks like. In the second reading, Paul to the Corinthians, he talks about there's just one spirit, and the one spirit is given. The same spirit is given to everybody, but what happens in the person is different because each of us is different. We all have our own DNA. The Spirit gives us our own spiritual DNA. And so no two are alike. It was possible for God to make no two snowflakes alike. It's possible for God to make no two people fully alike.

The DNA in us is true and real; God joining to that, he's not put off by us. He wants to be one with us. He goes to the Father in Jesus so that together they can send their Holy Spirit to us and live in us

so that we'll have what we need in order to be able to follow his way and to live his way. To recognize him especially here at the breaking of the bread, to realize that you bring to this church your Holy Spirit, and it's that Holy Spirit that I call upon for the transformation of bread and wine.

That you are essential parts of what goes on here, you're not just bystanders, your participants, you bring something, you bring Someone. The symbol of the gifts coming up the aisle is from you. It's the gift from you and of you. You bring that, you put that on the altar, and you ask the Lord to transform that, to transform you, and to believe He will do it, to believe he'll do it because He wants to do it for you.

For me, he says, I want you to believe this, and we can, and we will. And that is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

May our Lord bless us today and give us his peace.