

## FROM FR. JASON



# CONGRATULATIONS

## NEWLY CONFIRMED!

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Lord is doing something great among us. This Sunday during the 10:30 AM Mass, Bishop Saporito will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation for our young people, and the whole community rejoices. But what is Confirmation? It is not a simple ceremony, not a farewell from the parish, not the end of catechism. No! It is the powerful action of the Holy Spirit who wants to complete in us the grace of Baptism and make us true witnesses of the Risen Christ in today's world.

In the early Church, after Baptism, the neophytes received the laying on of hands and were sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. They were not left alone. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead came upon them to transform their lives. Today, in this secularized society that no longer knows God, the Lord continues to pour out this same Spirit through Confirmation. He roots us more deeply in our divine filiation, making us cry from the heart, "Abba, Father!" and unites us more firmly to Christ and to His Church.

Confirmation is the sacrament that gives us the special strength of the Holy Spirit to live as adult Christians, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. It increases in us the seven gifts: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Above all, it makes us witnesses. Not spectators, but living signs of the victory of Christ over sin and death.

How many young people, after receiving Confirmation, disappear from the life of the Church! They think it is the end of the journey. But the opposite is true: Confirmation is the true beginning of the Christian life in the world. It is the moment when the Lord says to each one: "You are mine. Now go and announce the Gospel with your life!"

Let us pray that our young people continue the journey of initiation after Baptism and Confirmation, through the Word of God, the Eucharistic Liturgy, and the parish Community. Let us pray that they continue to discover the beauty of being Church and learn to walk together in humility, simplicity, and praise. Let us pray that they experience that the Holy Spirit is not a distant memory but a living presence who converts us day by day.

To our confirmands: Open your hearts without fear! Let the Holy Spirit descend upon you as He descended upon the Apostles in the Upper Room. Do not quench the Spirit. Allow Him to set you on fire with the love of God and zeal for souls. Do not be ashamed of the Cross. Be courageous witnesses in your families, in your schools, in your workplaces. The world needs Christians who are not lukewarm, but who live the fullness of their Baptism.

Let us accompany these young people with our example. Let us renew in ourselves the grace of our own Confirmation. Let us ask the Lord to raise up in our midst true disciples, ready to live the Paschal Mystery in the midst of a pagan world. Come, Holy Spirit! Fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love! May the Virgin Mary, who was present in the Cenacle with the Apostles, intercede for all of us so that we may walk together in Faith until we reach the fullness of Christ.

Peace,