

## **PENANCE SERVICE FOR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES**

**Monday, September 25, 2000, 7:15pm**

### **Entrance Song:**

### **Maryanne:**

This evening we have come together to celebrate our reconciliation with God and one another thought the sacrament of Penance. This penance service is more than a reflection on our moral behavior. It is an opportunity to prepare for Confirmation. In a few weeks Bishop McGann will be with us at Resurrection to administer the sacrament of Confirmation. He will extend his hands out over all the Candidates and pray for the gifts of the Spirit to guide and strengthen your lives. This is a very significant and powerful prayer. What actually occurs when Bishop McGann prays for the gift of the Spirit depends to a great extent on your readiness, your openness, and your willingness to let the Spirit enter your lives.

You are asked, for your own sake as well as for the benefit of everyone else, to please sit quietly, think carefully and really experience this sacrament of penance and peace.

### **Fr. John:**

Lord, the Candidates gathered here this evening, have studied about Confirmation. They have come to know how Jesus kept his promise to send the Holy Spirit.

We have each come to know how the Spirit forms us into the church, which is the body of Christ.

Lord, we gather here so that we may be prepared to live what we have been taught. Help us to become more complete member of your church, more alive with your Spirit. For this we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Maryanne:**

*(Eph., 1:18-19; 2:19-21)*

Scripture tells us a great deal about ourselves, about who Jesus calls us to be, about who we can become. Listen to this passage that St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, a people like ourselves, who needed to know the power of the Spirit.

“I ask that your minds may be opened so that you will know what is the hope to which he has called you, how rich are the wonderful blessings he promises his people, how great is his power to work in us. You are members of the family of God! You are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Jesus Christ himself. He makes you grow into a sacred temple in the Lord.”

*(Pause for reflection)*

### **Fr. John:**

Confirmation is about affirming my baptism. It is saying “yes” to a way of life as a member of the church..

*(I ask you now to please silently reflect on the following questions)*

Do I really appreciate this call from Jesus?

Do I consider my faith and my church precious and important?

Am I willing to become all that is possible because of the power of Jesus?

**Maryanne:**

*(Eph. 3:18; 4:1-2)*

St. Paul continued to write and his message is for us too.

“May you have the power to understand the depth of Christ’s love for you. Live a life that measures up to the standard God set when he called you. Be humble, gentle, patient always. Show your love by being helpful to one another.

*Pause*

**Fr. John:**

Confirmation is about living. It celebrates the beginning of a new stage of life and growth in the Spirit.

*(Continue to examine your consciences based on these questions:)*

What kind of person will I be for others? Will I be the kind of friend I would want others to be — trustful, considerate, helpful, sincere?

Am I willing to let the Spirit of Jesus influence my life? Influence my judgements about what is right or wrong? My values about material things and pleasure?

*Pause*

**Maryanne:**

*Hebrews 10:22, 19*

In the letter to the Hebrews, St. Paul assures people that Jesus always gives everyone a chance to begin again. The church celebrates the sacrament of penance in faithfulness to this promise. “Let us come near God with a sincere heart and a sure faith, with hearts that have been made clean from a guilty conscience... We have complete freedom by means of the death of Jesus. He opened for us a new way...”

*Pause*

**Fr. John:**

We have heard the Word of God in Scripture. We have thought about our life as Christians. As a sign that you truly want to begin a new life in the Spirit through Confirmation and that you really want to be prepared through the sacrament of Penance, please take a moment now to call to mind your sins with sorrow.

*Pause*

On the day of your Confirmation, Bishop McGann will pray that you receive the Holy spirit as your helper and guide. He will pray that you receive the gifts of the Spirit; wisdom and understanding, right judgement and courage, knowledge and reverence.

**Homily**

**Meditation Song:**

**Invitation to Confession**

Now we prepare ourselves by being freed from sin and open to the wonder of God’s love through the sacrament of Reconciliation.

*Please introduce visiting priests and the stations for confession. Remind them to remain silent*