

CONFIRMATION HOMILY

2016-2017

† **Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki**
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is good for us to be here to celebrate this Mass of Confirmation. I know that our candidates have been working very hard to prepare for receiving this important Sacrament and are ready to answer any question that I may have for them. In particular, we might ask, what do we mean by “Confirmation”? What exactly is being confirmed here and who is doing the confirming? So let me start by doing a survey with a show of hands. If you agree with any or all of the following statements, please raise your hand.

1. Confirmation means that you candidates are confirming the life of faith handed on to you by your parent(s) when you were baptized as infants.
2. Confirmation means that the Bishop is confirming your initiation into the Church which began when you were baptized by the priest or deacon.

3. Confirmation means that God is confirming your adoption as His sons and daughters by sending you the Holy Spirit to complete the grace conferred at baptism.

Actually, you should have raised your hands for all three statements, as all three are true! So let's talk about three.

The most important is the last. Anything we are doing in this sacrament pales in importance compared to what God is doing for us. We need to be reminded of that since our self-centeredness often leads us to think what we are doing is the most important thing.

Secondly, my presence as your bishop shows that your life of faith is connected to other people, to the community of faith that we call the Church. We are not isolated individuals, but united in the blood of Christ as brothers and sisters in the family of God. When the early Christian community was small, the bishop did all the baptism. As the community grew, he could not do them all himself, so priests and deacons would confirm, but the bishop would come later to confirm their baptism and their connection to the larger community of faith. The bishop is a bridge.

Third, we need to be clear about what you are doing here by receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. This is not a graduation. This does not mean you are “done with religion.” You are confirming that you accept the gifts of the Holy Spirit and you are pledging to live as Catholics for the rest of your lives.

Let’s read some of your questionnaires to see how well you understand this. [read questionnaires].

I thank you for sharing these personal testimonies of your faith. The whole Christian community is praying with me that you will remain strong in your faith, which is only possible with God’s grace.

Last summer at World Youth Day in Krakow, about 20,000 young people from North America gathered in a basketball arena for a Holy Hour, which included a song by Matt Maher called, “Your Grace is Enough.”

Matt Maher - Your Grace Is Enough

[\(Lyrics and audio\)](#)

Great is Your faithfulness, oh God
You wrestle with the sinner's restless heart
You lead us by still waters into mercy
And nothing can keep us apart

So remember Your people
Remember Your children
Remember Your promise, oh God

Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough for me

Great is Your love and justice, God of Jacob
You use the weak to lead the strong
You lead us in the song of Your salvation
And all Your people sing along

So remember Your people
Remember Your children
Remember Your promise, oh God

Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough for me

Yeah, Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough for me

Remember Your people
Remember Your children
Remember Your promise, oh God

Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough
Your grace is enough for me

Yeah, Your grace is enough
Heaven reaches out to us
Your grace is enough for me

God I see Your grace is enough
I'm covered in Your love
Your grace is enough for me, for me
It's enough for me

May God give us this grace. Amen.