

**Catholic Schools Convocation Mass
August 6, 2019**

On this great feast of Pentecost, we join with St. Peter in declaring our faith. We in the Church say to the world: “We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty.” This feast reminds us of the glory and power of the Almighty God. It reminds us that we have been called to share in that glory, but also to share his glory with the world in our own ministry. Gathered here with all of you who make Catholic education possible in our archdiocese, I am grateful to God for all of you and for the mission he has given us.

It is the grace of God that brings us here. We have received the light of the Gospel and the joy of salvation through his grace. We have also been called to our vocations by his loving grace. You are here because God has put it on your hearts to serve his little ones. You are educators, and this is no small calling. Let the light of the Transfiguration remind you of what you have been called to do: “Listen to him.” Listen to the chosen Son of the Father, because that same chosen Son is the one who chose you, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to serve his church and his people in this way. It is not your own myths or ideas you have been called to share. It is nothing short of the truth which God has shared with us, that he has shown us through his gifts of faith, science, mathematics, art, history, language, music, and so many other disciplines he has instilled into the children and families you serve. You have taken on this mission with hope, and not because it is easy.

You know well how challenging this mission can be. There is so much pain and struggle in the world and in the lives of those we serve. The Church has not been immune from these struggles, and neither have the families and children in our schools. This is a painful truth to be sure. But on the Transfiguration, we are reminded that we have not been left to struggle alone. The Living God is with us in his majesty. The Ancient One is with us, the Son of Man whose kingdom is everlasting. He has promised to be with his people forever. As the new year approaches, remember the power of God. Let it shine in your heart in a new way. The struggles that you face are not the story of you. You are educators who carry out your mission with hope in the grace of God. Do not let the world or the evil one make you lose your hope. We do not muddle through. No, we are servants of God. We thrive in the mission that has been entrusted to us. We stand together and our unity is our strength.

Because we are charged with passing on what has first been given to us, we are united in the message we share. There is one Lord and one mission, so we are one. Our society has become obsessed with differences and what divides us, but the glory of God in the Transfiguration is for the whole world. But we have had an encounter with God. Pope Francis reminds us that, “Encounter with God in prayer inspires us anew to ‘descend the mountain’ and return to the plain where we meet many [people who are hurting]. To these brothers [and sisters] in difficulty, we are called to bear the fruit of that experience with God, by sharing the grace we have received” (Angelus, 16 March 2014). We do not stand alone, we are members of the Body of Christ who has shown his glory to us, who has loved

us, who has called us. We stand together in the light of Christ, and in the proclamation of the truth. We stand united in service of those entrusted to us.

So my friends, may we forget any of the little tents we want to make for ourselves. Trust in the Lord who has called you and follow him. Give of yourselves joyfully and remember that you are doing God's work. Thank you so much for your passion, your faithfulness, and your love for the mission and for those you serve. United in the light of Christ, may we always listen to him and share what we have been given.