

**Homily – Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Easter  
Televised Mass with Senior Staff – April 24, 2024**

“The word of God continued to spread and grow.” In Antioch, “while they were worshiping the Lord and fasting...” the Holy Spirit made himself heard. Luke writes about this matter-of-factly. It seems something natural for them. Those believers go unnoticed, apparently indistinguishable from the other inhabitants of Antioch. However, they really are different. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are familiar to them.

It is God who chooses, calls, and sets aside each person for every task assigned. The Church lays hands and sends them off. Everything comes from the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, the Church takes responsibility, fasts, and prays for those who are to be anointed and sent. Whoever believes in Jesus believes not only in Him, but also in the Father, by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Faith in Jesus never ends in Him. The faith always takes us to the Father through Jesus. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No one goes to the Father except through Him. However, now the Holy Spirit takes center stage. He does it in his style. Important decisions in the Church are synodal. Stewardship is the habitual style of the community.

They understand their task to preach the gospel in word and deed. The early Christian community of Antioch sets a standard for how the People of God allow themselves to be tuned and harmonized to lend their voice to the Holy Spirit. It is a charismatic community, all willing to serve the gospel through a climate of humility, with mutual love for the love of God.

In the gospel, Jesus bids farewell before returning to the Father revealing himself once again as the light of the world. The Holy Spirit

would continue to make the Lord present in a different way. The anointment is passed on. God wants the gospel to reach all ends of the earth, not excluding every corner of our own world. He lets us know this desire to make us co-responsible. The mission of Jesus is truly entrusted to us.

Two thousand years have passed. How did the faith reach us? God anointed a long chain of people until he reached each one of us. Now we are the anointed ones by the Holy Spirit. It truly is a blessing that should be appreciated. The fruit of our gratitude must be to make our anointing operational in the style of the Holy Spirit.

The first challenge is discernment between the light and darkness. Each of us is partially blind. We need each other, communicating in a way that leaves enough room for the light to shine among us. We do not merely strive to walk together. Our shared trust, together with our stewardship of each other and the entire Body, lays the foundation for us to be united and guided by the Holy Spirit in communion.

Pope Francis says that *“the courageous initiative that the Spirit instils in us leads us to imitate his style, which always has two characteristics: creativity and simplicity. Creativity, to proclaim Jesus with joy, to everyone and today. (...) and then simplicity, precisely because the Spirit takes us to the source, to the first proclamation. Indeed, it is the fire of the Spirit which leads us to believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father’s infinite mercy.”*

May Our Lady of Guadalupe help us discern the voice of the Holy Spirit and be docile to Him.