

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
Chrism Mass
April 9, 2014



“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me;”

During the shooting of the movie *Lincoln*, Daniel Day-Lewis, who had the title role, remained in character off-camera, as well. He even asked his countrymen, other British actors on the set to mask their accents so that he could maintain his concentration. He really wanted to embody President Lincoln. It might be too far-fetched to say that the actor was filled with Lincoln so as to represent him as effectively as possible on screen.¹

Is that not why we have been anointed so that we can bring Christ to others, into the area of our ministry, and into the world. As the oils are blessed this evening, we hear the Lord assure us that we have been anointed with the Spirit in ordination and in baptism, and we pray for everyone who is embraced by this world-wide Archdiocese.

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Tonight we gather to recall the gift of the Spirit received in ordination. It is a precious gift and like all divine gifts it is not meant to be locked up in a drawer. We have been filled with the Spirit and our hands anointed so as to share what we have received. The Lord allows us to act in persona Christi. That is a marvelous gift.

Tonight we do not only renew the oils in the stocks, in the ambry, or in our chapels. Most importantly, we open ourselves for that renewal which comes from the Lord. He calls us to abandon the desert and be renewed in the living water of His grace. He opens our eyes to see the pure light that comes from His teaching and from undivided fidelity to Him, the only source of eternal life. As Jesus freed Lazarus from the bindings of death, He frees us from those of sin and death. Lent should be for us a time of life and grace, an authentic resurrection to the life of grace. “By freeing some individuals from the earthly evils of hunger, injustice, illness and death, Jesus performed messianic signs. Nevertheless he did not come to abolish all evils here below, but to free men from the gravest slavery, sin, which thwarts them in their vocation as God's sons and causes all forms of human bondage.”²

¹ Cf. Joe Paprocki, *Under the Influence of Jesus*, p 130.

² CCC, 549.

What Isaiah told those returning captives was an invitation to begin anew upon their return to the promised land. Jesus used those same words to describe the beginnings of His public ministry. He certainly fanned the sentiments of His listeners. They were not so enthusiastic about His conclusions and, indeed, were ready to hurl Him from the brow of the hill.

Tonight let us allow the ruah, the Spirit, fan our hearts into the flames which will set the world on fire. The message must go forth and we draw on the Spirit to be effective instruments of the new evangelization. We, too, must proclaim the Gospel to the poor.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin observes that “Good wine gets put into ...oak barrels and is left there. No one sees what is happening, and there is almost nothing you can do from the outside. If we have put into our work of evangelization the good ingredients and we foster the proper environment around the cask which is the Church, all we can do then is wait, knowing that the Lord is working in a hidden way to produce wine which can mature even way beyond our expectations.”³

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Dear Brothers in the priesthood, we know and we celebrate that the Holy Spirit has not only been given to us, but also to those whom we are privileged to serve. They have been baptized and confirmed and we reverence the Holy Spirit in them by our desire to help them call forth their gifts and talents in the process of transforming the world

Their task is daunting, because they must be counter-cultural. That requires courage, Sisters and Brothers. It means demonstrating that mediocrity is not acceptable. We have all been saved by the Lamb so as to transform the world into the fullness of its potential. We all pray this evening for the courage to walk against the current, to gage our choices by the measure of the Gospel, and to remember that we are His messengers.

We cannot forget St. Catherine of Siena: “If you are what you were meant to be, you would set the world on fire.” Does not the Christ tell us how He wishes that the fire He came to set were already burning? Do we not see many places where the temperature is only lukewarm at best? Do we not have work to accomplish if our contemporaries are going to meet Christ and embrace His Gospel for their salvation?

Our annual retreat time of Lent is about to reach its climax and we must allow the Spirit to take hold of us. Remember how He thrust the Apostles out of the upper room and they were suddenly enabled to preach the Gospel in such a way that it overcame the divisions of language and culture. Suddenly this dynamic message was not obscure, but within the grasp of each person.

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Tonight this world-wide Archdiocese finds its station in the crypt of this magnificent basilica. We live an important moment of prayer and rejoicing. We gather all of the intentions of our people living and working far from here and those close by.

³ Diarmuid Martin, homily to open a Eucharistic Congress in Ferns, 31.V.13 in *Origins* 43:6, p. 91.

We embrace those who are deployed and beg safety for them. We think of those deprived from the companionship of their families. Can we fail to remember those for whom the Easter sacraments remain a challenge or perhaps only a dream or earnest hope? We ask the Lord to send His Spirit upon them. Allow them to be renewed, as well!

We rejoice in the youthful commitment of the midshipmen and cadets here this evening. Can we fail to be renewed in the reflection in them of the Lord's powerful charge to renew the face of the earth? Are we not also eager to offer them some of our experience?

Finally we pray for the spirit of consolation to fill the hearts of those who grieve at Fort Hood. There are those who have been wounded in body and spirit. There are others who asked perplexed "why?". Next to them are the physically wounded and those who care for them. There are those who have died and those left widowed or orphaned by one more violent tragedy in our powerful and developed society.

We pray for all of them and the community of Annapolis, as well. They, too, have just mourned the death of two young midshipmen. They are all our brothers and sisters. They are the faithful of this Archdiocese. We must share the Spirit with them, as well.

The actor wants to embody his character so as to be effective in his movie. I would say that Daniel Day-Lewis is successful in *Lincoln*. However, his natural gifts as an actor are dwarfed by the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me." He has sent us forth and we can indeed transform the face of the earth.