

**Homily Outline for the Chrism Mass
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
April 15, 2025**

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I. My dear Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, Consecrated Religious, brothers and sisters in Christ:

A. Question from 3rd grade candidate for Confirmation and First Holy Communion: "What is your favorite passage of the Bible?"

1. Answer: The opening line of Chapter 12 of the *Letter to the Hebrews* from today's First Reading in the *Liturgy of the Hours*:

2. "Since we are surrounded by this cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every encumbrance of sin which clings to us and persevere in running the race which lies ahead; let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who inspires and perfects our faith."

B. Running along the riverbank of the Trinity River in Texas that separates Dallas and Fort Worth.

1. It had rained the day before and my shoes were caked with mud on the way out.

2. On the way back, I peeled the mud off my shoes and was able to run freely without being bogged down by the mud.

3. This is what the *Letter to the Hebrews* tells us: sin clings to us and bogs us down, preventing us from moving freely in our spiritual lives; receiving forgiveness for our sins allows us to lay aside every encumbrance of sin which clings to us and persevere in running the race which lies ahead, keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, who inspires and perfects our faith.

- II. Our first reading for this Mass from the *Book of the Prophet Isaiah* starts out: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me . . ."
- A. Isaiah describes this anointing as being done with the "oil of gladness."
 - B. In our Gospel today from St. Luke (Luke 22:14-23), Jesus quotes this passage from Isaiah at the synagogue in Nazareth, where he had grown up, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor."
 - C. He then adds: "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."
 - D. Jesus indeed fulfills the prophecy. He is the "Anointed One," which in Hebrew is *Messiah* and in Greek is "*Christos*," the Christ.
 - E. We became Christians when we were baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - 1. After we were baptized with water, we were anointed with the Sacred Chrism; we too, became "anointed ones."
 - 2. This anointing was confirmed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - 3. As fully initiated Christians, we all carry on the in the world today the ministry of the Body of Christ.
 - F. At our Chrism Mass today, I will consecrate the oils used in Baptism, Confirmation, the Ordination of Priests and Bishops, and the Dedication of Churches and Altars.

III. Renewal of Priestly Promises

- A. In the book I sent to all of our priests and seminarians as a Christmas present last December, *Rekindle the Gift of God: A Handbook for Priestly Life*, Father Roch Kereszty wrote:

The priestly service of the apostle continues, to an extent, in the role of the ministerial priesthood carried out by the bishop and the priest. Consequently, their work is not limited to the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments. Neither the bishop nor even the priest is simply a “sacramental minister.” On different levels, the purpose of both is to build up a loving and worshipping community through preaching, sacramental ministry, and personal contact so that the eucharistic celebration may reach its threefold goal: (1) to build up more perfectly the Body of Christ; (2) to enable the members to unite their gift of self with the one perfect self-donation of Christ to the Father; and to the extent that they are united in Christ, (3) to become through Him and with Him gifts to one another. (p. 32)

- B. As we heard in the Gospel, this anointing was fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus Christ.
- C. By our priestly ordination, we share in that anointing which enables us, with Christ, to “to bring glad tidings to the poor.” (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18-19).
- D. Our anointing equips us to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ “who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his Blood” (Revelation 1:5).
- E. It is our privilege to share this Good News joyfully with all of those to whom we have been called to minister through our sacred ordination.

May God give us this grace. Amen.