

Episcopal Ordination of Bishop W. Francis Malooly

The readings for today were chosen by Bishop Malooly and help us to a faith vision of the office of bishop he is soon to receive by the laying on of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit. The first reading (Jeremiah 1:4-9) has the prophet protesting the call from the Lord God to speak for the Lord “to the nations.” “I do not know how to speak; I am too young.” Now our new bishop can hardly plead that he is “too young,” but he does treasure memories of working with young people at the Monsignor O’Dwyer Center, where he preached many retreats. He very often used this passage from Jeremiah in encouraging young people to live out the spiritual gifts that were the Holy Spirit’s work in baptism and confirmation.

For Bishop Malooly, the call to priestly service, a prelude to this day, came to him in a household richly blessed in the faith. His parents, family members and, later, priests of the parish, teachers and seminary personnel contributed to his own growth in understanding and living the gospel message of Jesus. To all of them we owe thanks on this day.

This text is also a reminder that all of us are spiritually young, with possibilities for growth in our relationship with God. Finally, the passage concludes with words that inspire confidence. God says, “Have no fear . . . because I am with you to deliver you.” To the prophet, the Lord said, “See, I place my words in your mouth!” That too is a source of strength, for the Bishop is to preach the revealed word of God, a word kept faithful and vibrant in the living Tradition of the Church.

(Philippians 4:4-7) “Rejoice in the Lord always!” With these words the Apostle Paul offers guidance for an attitude rooted in faith that the new bishop wants to cultivate. The bishop’s motto comes from this passage, in which the Apostle also invites us to “dismiss all anxiety” and to present our needs to God in prayer.

This past weekend, once again the energy and enthusiasm of our young people were channeled into an explosion of joy in celebrating their faith in Jesus Christ. At Mt. St. Mary’s, Emmitsburg, some 2400 young men and women gathered for a weekend of

prayer and praise. They found in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist fresh strength for their lives of faith. At the closing liturgy, as they applauded those who had given them spiritual guidance for three days, the roar was like thunder, it was what we can imagine happened on the first Christian Pentecost, when the roar as of a mighty wind signaled the movement of the Holy Spirit. This same enthusiasm, that gives us so much hope, we have seen at World Youth Days, most recently with more than two million in Rome, and we see each year here in Baltimore at the Palm Sunday Vigil, when more than a thousand young people follow the World Youth Day cross through the streets of the city and fill the Basilica with the same explosive, exhilarating enthusiasm and faith.

Our new bishop will be preaching the gospel of joy in the Lord to people of many cultures. I address some words especially to those, growing each day in number, who speak Spanish as their first language.

Con especial alegría saludo a los fieles de habla hispana que han venido para participar en la ordenación de un nuevo obispo. Dios les ha bendecido con dones de fe y devoción a la vida familiar que enriquece a nuestro país y a nuestra Iglesia. Vuestro profundo amor a Nuestra Santísima Virgen refleja bien vuestra herencia Católica y es causa de edificación para toda la comunidad Católica. Por favor oren conmigo para que Dios les bendiga y a todos nosotros con vocaciones a la vida sacerdotal y a la vida consagrada. Y oren también por mí, por el nuevo obispo y por todos los que comparten aquí el liderazgo pastoral.

(Mt. 20:25-28) In the gospel passage Jesus talks about the how those he associates with himself should act in discharging their duties. The official liturgical instruction is a commentary on these