

CONFIRMATION

Last year, my niece made *her* Confirmation and during the preparation course, the 40 candidates went away for a weekend retreat. But as the bus set off on the Friday evening, news got out that the retreat house not only had no mobile reception, worse, it had no Wi-Fi! There was a huge groan. Everyone was devastated. One boy was angry, demanding the bus to turn back. A girl sobbed: *I need to post an Instagram*. Wi-Fi these days is essential. Without it, we feel cut off. It's amazing what it enables you to do: to surf, email, play *Fifa* or *World of Warcraft*, watch YouTube and access *Facebook* or *SnapChat*. It connects you to the globe. None of this is easy without Wi-Fi. An elderly couple I know said to me recently: *No, my wife and I, in our house we don't have wifi*. I felt sorry for them: they're missing out on loads of stuff.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak. The Holy Spirit is a bit like Sacred Wi-fi. Being sealed in the Sacrament of Confirmation with the Holy Spirit is like having a sacred Wi-Fi router installed in your heart. Once in, the Holy Spirit will enable you to see things, to know things, to do things other people can't see, know or do. He'll give you 7 spiritual apps: 3 powers for the mind, and 4 gifts for the will. He'll connect you with God, the angels and saints, with heaven and the invisible world, with the community of Christ's Church. But better than Wi-Fi, this Holy Spirit is a Person. He is the Third Person of the Trinity, God full of power. He is a Person-Gift, a Divine Friend. He will help you overcome sin and evil in your life. He'll help you find the right Way. He'll give you the gift of immortality, the love of Jesus to overcome death and to bring you one day to heaven.

One of the things we've been working on in the Diocese is a computer-mapping project of all our parishes, with their social and ethnic data. Did you know there are 250K Catholics in our Diocese, out of a total population of 3.1M? But did you know that 1 in 4 of those 3.1M, $\frac{3}{4}$ M, have no religion, no faith - no sacred Wi-Fi. This is why I wanted all the Confirmations to be at the cathedral, so that just as the Holy Spirit sent out Peter and the Apostles from the Upper Room, so too as the bishop, I could send you out as missionaries, as sacred hotspots. I want you to be sacred hotspots, missionaries telling everyone about the existence of God, the love of Jesus, the truth of our Catholic Faith. Just as Jesus in the Gospel said *Receive the Holy Spirit*, so He now says to you: *As the Father sent me, so am I sending you*. You are receiving the same Gift given to Apostles with the *sound of a powerful wind from heaven* and *tongues of fire*. Today you are receiving that same Holy Spirit, not in wind and fire, but by oil and the laying on of hands.

Come Holy Spirit; enkindle within us the fire of your love. So today as you are confirmed, be spiritual hot-spots for those with no faith, those who don't belong. Just as in a café it's great to find free Wi-Fi, so you must be spiritual hotspots for others to tether with, to pair with, to Bluetooth to, so that they too can be united with God. Jesus calls you to this. He calls you to be His missionary, by the way you think, by the things you say, by the love you show. It's not magic. It's better: it's a Sacrament! It requires your faith, cooperation, patience. So I ask you now: Say yes! Open your hearts! Open your hearts in welcome! Open your hearts to love Jesus every day in prayer, every week in Mass, every month in Confession! Love Him in the Gospels. Love Him in His Church. Love Him now. Say yes - and life will never be the same again.