

**April 28, 2025**

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In the first reading today, we hear of the return of Peter and John to their community after being held and questioned by the Sadducees. They recall all that has happened and how they were threatened; how they were released with a warning because all the people were praising God over what had happened including the healing of the man, crippled from birth. The power of the people was of such a nature as to turn the minds and hearts of the Jewish leaders. Is there a lesson here for us today?

The community prays that Peter and John may continue to speak God's word with boldness. Every time I read this phrase, I recall Chapter 2, vs 16 of our IHM Constitutions.

*In all we do to respond to the needs of God's people and to proclaim the reign of God, we rely on the strength and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.*

*For this reason, we dare to speak God's Word with boldness and to risk deeds our own hearts could never dream of, so that, whatever the outcome, we may say in the spirit of Louis Florent Gillet,*

*'I began without thinking of the future of the work, leaving it to God alone to bless and make it prosper if it were pleasing to God and useful for the good of others.'*

Similar sentiments are echoed in our recent Chapter Direction statement.

It is good for us to reflect on Chapter 2 of the Constitutions during these days of challenge in our country and church. These words can motivate us to action according to our abilities and in response to the inspiration of the Spirit.

In the Gospel, we are reminded of the importance of our baptism as Jesus clarifies for Nicodemus the difference between being born from the womb and being born of water and the Spirit. Being born of water and the Spirit means that God's Spirit has power and often leads by surprise, like the wind that blows where it will.

I cannot help but reflect on both the funeral of Pope Francis and the pending conclave. I prayed during the funeral for all the civic leaders, including our own president, that the Spirit may move them, the same Spirit that moved Pope

Francis, to seek peace with justice, especially for migrants and those on the peripheries of our world.

And for those Cardinals soon to gather in the conclave to elect a new pope, I pray that, as in the early church, the place where they gather will shake as they are all filled with the Holy Spirit. May listen to the Spirit and speak the word of God with boldness.

Let the Church say, "Amen."