

Jeffrey Scott **Michael** Pearson

The 17<sup>th</sup> of May in the 2009<sup>th</sup> year of our Lord

Celebrant - Most Reverend Bishop Rassas

Sacrament of Confirmation Speech

A.M.D.G.

After graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade and seeing many of my friends receive their Confirmation at other churches, I wondered why Holy Family made us wait two more years. I think that today, the answer to that question is clear. The FLAME experience has allowed us to step up and want a better faith life. Having two additional years has given us the opportunity to mature and decide for ourselves that we want to become adults in the Church. Just think about it, we, as teenagers have gone outside our comfort levels by visiting ex convicts at St. Leonard's and those recovering from injury at interfaith house. Our parents didn't force us to do these simple acts of kindness, but by taking the initiative, we were able to be Christ for so many others.

Confirmation is different than anything we have ever experienced. Over the past two years we have discussed our faith, learned about the Church, and grown closer in our relationship with God. But it's clearly not the same Sunday school we used to attend back in elementary school. No, these past two years have been a unique experience. When we were younger it was our parents that put us in the car, drove us to Church, and made us sit through faith class each week. And before that it was our parents and Godparents who vouched for us at Baptism and First Communion. These past two years have given us a chance to stand up and make a decision for ourselves.

Okay, even after all the eye opening service trips and the thought provoking small group discussions, I admit -- I still wasn't sold on the whole Confirmation preparation thing. So, on Friday February 6<sup>th</sup> 2009, I was not looking forward to a weekend without cell phones, TV, internet, or hanging out with my friends. Yes, it was the night before our overnight FLAME II retreat at Techny Towers. I arrived at the retreat center way too early for a Saturday morning and got settled in. The rest of the day was spent with different speakers and activities strewn in between meals. By the time dinner rolled around, I was starting to wonder what we were really going to gain out of this weekend. After that, we were all herded into the church and told to remain silent. At this point, I was really worried that it was just going to be another hour of boring lectures. The subsequent events of that night quickly changed my mind. We gathered silently into our small groups in different places throughout the beautiful dimly lit sanctuary. Everyone was told to think about all the people that we were most thankful for in our lives. I soon realized just how many people had made such a profound difference in my life. My immense appreciation for all of the people that have touched my life was soon compounded by what happened immediately afterwards. We were moved into better lighting and then silently handed envelopes. Inside were letters from all of the family and friends that I had just silently thanked a few minutes earlier. They were all words of love, encouragement, and just an outpouring of pride and joy that I had made my own decision to continue on my faith journey and become Confirmed.

This brings me to why it matters so much that we are here today. Look around you. Look at this church full of people. These are all the people that care so much about you and me. This is our Catholic community of believers. This is the faith family that we can finally join today with

the Sacrament of Confirmation. And Confirmation is the final sacrament of initiation. Not a sacrament of graduation. Today we join the united community of the Roman Catholic Church not as the end of a journey or as idle bystanders but as soldiers with a renewed mission. Our teachers, sponsors, parents, Godparents have all guided us to this night. They now charge **us** with continuing the fight. The struggle to be more like Jesus Christ; the battle to give glory to God by having a positive impact on the world. Armed with your God given talents, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit of wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, wonder and awe, and the steadfast support of the Catholic Church at Holy Family and in every corner of the earth, go out and be the light that our world so desperately needs.

*Jeffrey Scott Michael Pearson*  
***Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam***