

Good Morning (Sister Taylor), Mrs. Gillingham-Rivas, Mr. Coyle, faculty, staff, students, and guests. My name is Lillian Figueroa, a senior campus minister, and I am honored to be speaking with you today. I've been in Carrollton for 15 years, therefore I've been at a lot of Holy Spirit masses. Although I understood the textbook meaning of the Holy Spirit, I've never found myself able to internalize it. But facing you all today, I can confidently say that I finally identify with it now... it only took 15 years.

As we've learned throughout the years in religion class, we are the body of Christ. All our abilities have come together to create a functioning body. However, without the Holy Spirit, a body is just a body with no purpose or passion. The Holy Spirit fuels us, gives us a soul, therefore making the body of Christ a living being. With the Spirit's help, we can reach our fullest potential as sons and daughters of our Creator.

This year, the theme of our school is to "slow down to the speed of joy." Joy is a Fruit of the Holy Spirit. We are not only slowing down to it but to the speed God works in. When we stop rushing, we have the time and ability to notice all the beautiful things God has done for us in our lives.

My senior class is a good example of the Holy Spirit working in my life. The first day of school, of course I was extremely excited. Who wouldn't be for senior year? But I was also terrified. It felt like the beginning of the end, and the thought of starting college applications sent fear coursing through me. But that morning, before the senior drive-through, I truly felt peace. We all gathered in the parking lot of Plymouth and

spent time talking with each other. The sun was shining through the trees and I could truly feel the Holy Spirit working inside each of us. At this moment I slowed down to the speed of peace, resting in the Holy Spirit. When I'm stressed about college applications, or what the rest of this year may bring, I know that if I slow down and take a breath, I will be able to better identify the Holy Spirit working through me and my sisters who were placed in my life to support me and reflect the goodness of God.

If we slow down to the Holy Spirit's pace, we will find wisdom, guidance, and inspiration...words that we can find in Father Vallee's "wisdom of God" song. "The wisdom of God," he says, "is fiercer than a cloudburst, greater than the heavens, deeper than the sea." The Holy Spirit, which is the embodiment of everything God is capable of in our lives, is all of these things. The Holy spirit isn't just a quiet whisper in our lives, its a great fire that should be engulfing our hearts, inspiring us all to live with the wisdom, peace and joy that only God can give us.

Thank you, and have a great day.