

EXCLUDE NO ONE FROM GOD'S FAMILY

MOST REVEREND GUSTAVO GARCÍA-SILLER, MSPS

The homily below was given by Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSPS in the St. Joseph Chapel at the beginning of the ForMission winter session at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio on January 24, 2023.

“It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sins.” (Heb). The letter to the Hebrews uses Psalm 40 to highlight the attractive novelty of Christ in our history. All the eloquent signs and rites from the old covenant that Yahweh established with Israel, are now replaced by Jesus through his own body and blood. The sacrifices of the old law are proven to be a mere image. They not only had to be insistently repeated, but they provided no assurance of forgiveness. On the contrary, Jesus of Nazareth shares our history to give humankind the opportunity to enjoy a redeemed and hopeful life.

The death and resurrection of Jesus – the culmination of an itinerary of fidelity and loving obedience to the Father – make the new covenant possible. It is presented to us as the possibility of salvation for all humanity. External rites do not open for us a horizon of hope. The living presence of the person of Jesus connects us with the goodness and tenderness of God once and for all.

“For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” (Mk). In the New Covenant, it is no longer useful to show titles, prove or even have certain human lineage. David’s heir, who is also the Son of God, gives us his royal and divine blood to drink. It is no longer enough simply not to commit adultery, not lie, not kill. The Giver Of Life wishes to make us sharers in his own life. The new commandment does not simply demand bare minimum standards for coexistence but living the life which has been offered through God’s mercy for our salvation. Through Him, with Him and in Him, we are called to be givers of life.

Those called to form others no longer simply do it – so to speak – “out of the dust of the ground.” (Gn 2:7). As imitators of the Giver Of Life, they are called to blow the breath of life for people to become true living beings. Your work is not your own, so your job is to allow the Divine Mystery to blow where He wills. Through our experience and acceptance of the Lord’s mercy for us,



we become participants in the mission of the Lord’s mother, and in his own mission. The Divine Word continues to become incarnate through the work of the Holy Spirit through the meekness of his missionary disciples.

A vocation for universality, becomes clear. The Lord seeks to establish another type of kinship as he conveys to us the experience of a God who is our Father and who wishes to exclude no one from his family. Our proclamation, therefore, begins by witnessing that we have been forgiven, looked upon with mercy, and chosen to be instruments for the loving gaze of the Father. To use the words of Pope Francis, we are called to participate in the “revolution of tenderness,” by becoming the Lord’s mother and brothers, increasing the size of this family.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, make us worthy to be called your children, your Son’s sisters and brothers.

Gustavo García-Siller was named Archbishop of San Antonio by Pope Benedict XVI on October 14, 2010. Installed as Archbishop on November 23, 2010 at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in San Antonio, TX, he succeeded Archbishop José H. Gomez as the sixth Archbishop of San Antonio.