



Archdiocese of San Antonio

Most Reverend Gustavo Garcia-Siller



Homily – Initiations Mass at Connally Prison Unit

January 25, 2016

My dear friends, I am very happy to be here to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation during this Mass. This marks a new beginning in your lives. While the “outside” of your life – your daily routine here in prison -- will not change, your inner life will change if you make good use of the grace of this sacrament. Baptism brings you into life of grace in the Lord, Confirmation will renew and seal the relationship between you and God that began at your Baptism, and the Holy Eucharist joins us together in communion with God and with each other. Today’s readings help us understand what these Sacraments mean in your lives.

In the first reading God sends his Spirit upon a Servant, empowering him (or her) to bring forth justice in the world. Justice means setting things right, restoring right relationships – within a person, with others, with the environment, and with God. Moreover,

God's Spirit is compassionate: God's Servant does not shout but speaks firmly and gently. God's Servant does not break a reed that is broken or cast aside a person who is hurting. God's Servant, empowered by the Holy Spirit, shares God's enduring love, mercy, and compassion with others.

The second reading reminds us that, while the Holy Spirit is one, the gifts of the Spirit are many and diverse. Your task is to become more aware of your God-given gifts, to develop them, and to share them with all whom you encounter – especially the poor, the needy, the vulnerable, the forgotten, the lonely, the outcast, the neglected.

The Parable of the Talents highlights our responsibility to use our gifts wisely and effectively. At the time of Jesus, a talent, a unit of money, was equivalent to what a worker earned over a twenty year period. It is a lot of money! God is very generous. God is also wise. God gives each of us what we are capable of handling. God also leaves us free to decide how to use and multiply these gifts.

Whether you are a resident here in the Connally Unit for a shorter or a longer term, God loves you very much. He will forgive

your sins if you ask for his forgiveness. The Holy Spirit will make your inner selves strong so that you will be able to bear any burden, invest your time in productive ways, and allow the peace that only God can give to flow into your heart, into your whole being. May Our Lady of Guadalupe be with you always!