

Good evening,

I am honored to join you for this year's Rose Window Gala; and to thank you for your commitment and generosity as you continue to work tirelessly to restore and preserve the Old Spanish Missions. Please join me in thanking Father David Garcia for his faithful service to the Missions and the people of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

We are here because of the great sacrifice, spirit, and faith of the early Spanish missionaries who came from Mexico, especially Father Antonio Marjil, as well as the Mexican and the Indigenous People; who together built these beautiful places that we honor tonight.

**As archbishop of San Antonio, I am honored to be standing on the shoulders of my predecessors whose love and respect for the Old Spanish Missions laid a foundation upon which we continue to build.** For each generation these historic and spiritual icons have been places of prayer, petition, and praise. Our missions are not simply museums of past glory, but remain living communities of faith where people continue to be nourished in faith each day. This, in no small measure, contributes to their distinguished World Heritage designation.

Tonight we will recognize the Charles Cheever, Jr. Family for their great example of generosity and leadership in our community. I personally thank them for their dedication to our Old Spanish Missions. They truly honor the memory of those who wrote a history of faith with their lives.

We have gathered here tonight, recognizing that our commitment to the Old Spanish Missions will never be complete. With your help we continue to ensure that these beloved missions will never become simply ancient

ruins. No, the legacy that we leave will remain alive and be the evidence for future generations to see how you honored and loved these missions.

I encourage you to keep your missionary vocation alive as you call upon others to join us in this important work. It is through you that the spiritual heartbeat of all those who have come before will never be stilled and their spirit will live on.

We live at a time of serious division in our country. Moments like these allow us to come together as people of good will and in a spirit of unity Pope Francis encourages us to continue our journey together in communion with one another. *“Walking in community with friends, with those who love us, that helps us. It helps us to arrive precisely at that goal...where we are supposed to be.”*

Let us pray,

Heavenly Father, tonight we offer thanksgiving for all those who have heard your calling and have worked to preserve these sacred places, the Old Spanish Missions. May they always be more than buildings and historical artifacts, may they always be living sources of faith and life to all who cherish them.

We pray that many will join us as we work to preserve and protect the missions as places of pilgrimage for those who search for your mercy and love in their own lives.

We ask your blessings be showered upon the Cheever Family and all those who share their time, talent, and treasure in ways that so clearly serve the common good.

## Remarks and Prayer-Rose Window Gala-10/25/2016

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**Tonight, we raise our voices, united as a “family of families” in service to your children. As we begin our celebration, we give thanks for your abundant love. May our bodies be nourished by the food we are about to receive, and may our soul be nourished by the friendship and communion we share. May we always be mindful of those who need your mercy. Amen.**