



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Most Reverend Gustavo Garcia-Siller



Homily – Red Mass
October 8, 2015

We gather this evening as the sun is setting, but we naturally expect another sunrise tomorrow. Our world today has lots of darkness, but we expect the noble vocation and practice of law to bring more light into our society through the pursuit of justice. Pope Francis has consistently pointed the way to justice and peace: authentic encounter with persons regardless of their status, mutually respectful dialogue, and inclusion of the poor and vulnerable in our personal lives and in decisions that affect all of us.

Our first reading speaks of the “day of the Lord” when God will ultimately set things right. The prophet Malachi says that “the sun of justice with its healing rays will arise” on those who are in a right relationship with God. While we are all sinners, the word of God calls us to constant conversion. We are comforted by God’s merciful, healing, compassionate love. We are challenged by God’s justice and his law. In praising one who studies the law, the Book of Sirach says

that the scribe's "care is to rise early, to seek the Lord, to petition the Most High, to open one's mouth in prayer, to ask pardon for one's sins" (19:5).

Is that not the reason why we celebrate this Red Mass each year? We are believers, and we turn to God in prayer -- not only individually but also as a community of faith.

Today's gospel encourages us to be persistent in our prayer, no matter how many obstacles we may encounter on our pilgrim way. It also speaks of God as a loving Father who listens and responds generously to his children. In his homily last Sunday in Rome opening the Synod of Bishops, Pope Francis said that the Church as a family "is able to show the closeness and love of a father, a responsible guardian who protects without confining, who corrects without demeaning, who trains by example and patience, sometimes simply by a silence which bespeaks prayerful and trusting expectation." He then added, we are, above all, "a church of children who see themselves as brothers and sisters, will never end up considering anyone simply as a burden, a problem, an expense, a concern, or a risk. Other persons are essentially a gift, and always remain so, even when they walk different paths."

My friends, let us ask our heavenly Father to make us that kind of Church in our broken, wounded world. Let us be light to others!