



Archdiocese of San Antonio  
Most Rev. Gustavo García-Siller



## Notre Dame Anniversary Mass November 22, 2014

In today's gospel, Jesus proclaims "Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Too often the "Second Coming of Jesus" and the end of the age is depicted with fear and trepidation. Why do we miss the glory of the moment when the Kingdom of God, the fulfillment of God's plan for mankind is not only near, but it is complete?

Jesus spent his whole ministry on earth telling us what the Kingdom would be like. There will no longer be sickness, suffering, or death. Human hearts will forever be filled with compassion and mercy when we learn to truly love one another, caring about everyone, transforming the world with peace and justice, and completing a final victory over every evil.

Just as Adam and Eve walked in the Garden of Eden with God, mankind will intimately converse with the Father who will always be in our midst. Humanity's relationship will be restored as our reconciliation by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is truly absolute.

Jesus tells us that "the righteous" will live eternally in the loving embrace of the Father. As Jesus' disciples, we need not fear the glory of this ultimate alleluia - this moment of the resurrection of those who belong to Christ. "The last enemy, death, will be destroyed...and God will be all in all."

Sometimes we see this celebration of God's ultimate victory over all that is evil is frequently distorted into a science-fiction drama where somehow the outcome is in doubt. We already know that God's victory over sin will be complete. As disciples of Christ, and led by the Holy Spirit, we will carry out our vocation to prepare the house of the Lord for all time.

This is not a science-fiction drama. The coming of Christ is a love story. Our hearts, transformed by the Grace of God, we will build His kingdom with a tenderness and mercy feeding the hungry and quenching the thirst of those who are suffering with living water. There will no longer be strangers among us, because we will live as a family, sharing the joys and sorrow of life, wiping away every tear and celebrating every happiness. We will use the keys of peace and forgiveness to unlock forever all that imprisons those who have been entrapped by the false promises of sin.

As we pray in the joyful hope of the coming of Jesus Christ who shepherds us through the darkest of valleys to the day when we will never fear evil, our souls refreshed, and our hearts filled to overflowing.

In his Apostolic Exhortation, the Joy of the Gospel, Pope Francis writes: "The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization... Every Christian is a missionary...we are always missionary disciples." It is in this spirit that we participate in the building of the kingdom, joyfully proclaiming Jesus Christ.

Your generosity and love, your missionary spirit, is what we celebrate here today. I am humbled by your willingness to share your personal treasure of faith and fortune to help enhance Notre Dame Catholic School for our children to be strong leaders and faithful disciples.

In the recent assembly of the USCCB, the bishops of the United States encouraged all Catholic Schools to "...reach out to Latino communities and other underserved populations as part of the Church's mission to preach the gospel, helping to build the Lord's Kingdom. In our deliberation, the bishops recognized that "Catholic schools provide lasting faith formation, vocations to the religious life and priesthood, high

educational attainment, and communities of the New Evangelization." This community's history is defined by its commitment to all segments of the community that extend back to the vision of Father Kemper and through your commitment and the leadership of Monsignor Boulette.

Saint Josemaria Escriva teaches us how we can begin to live in the joy of the Kingdom today, because Jesus lives in our hearts now. He said, "Christ should reign first and foremost in our soul. But in order for him to reign in me, I need his abundant grace. Only in that way can my every heartbeat and breath, my least intense look, my most ordinary word, my most basic feeling be transformed into a hosanna to Christ my King."