



Archdiocese of San Antonio  
Most Rev. Gustavo García-Siller



## Children's Immigration Mass 1/2014

Good Morning,

I asked Father Carlos if I could please celebrate Mass with you today. This week we are asked by the Church to pray for migrants, people who come to this country to live with us and help their families find a happy life. Many of them come here because they are afraid of the violence in their home country; others are so poor that they come to the United States to find a better life for themselves and their families.

Most of these moms and dads and children come to the United States, following all the rules. For others, they are so afraid or so poor that they don't follow the rules and come here sometimes in very dangerous ways. Sometimes they just need to be with their families so much that they will do almost anything to be together again. I hope that someday our rules for immigration will be easier to follow because they will be fair and give children and their parents the hope for a better life. It's up to us adults and our leaders to fix the rules that aren't fair and don't work very well. This will make it possible for migrants to do the right thing and the best thing for themselves and their families.

This morning you heard in the scripture that because God loves us, "we also must love one another." That means we are supposed to love all people, no matter the color of their skin, the language they speak, or the country where they were born. We are family....God's family. He is our Father, and all of his children are our brothers and sisters.

Let me tell you a story about a little child I met a few months ago. Let's call her Angela. She has been living at a place called a detention center since she was two years old. Sadly, she doesn't have a mom or dad. They were afraid that someone might hurt them in Mexico and, even though they broke the rules, escaped to the United States. They had their baby girl here and she is an American Citizen.

It seemed they were finally safe and life would be good, but one day they got caught by the authorities and because they had broken the rules for coming to the United States, they were sent back to Mexico. The mom and dad weren't allowed to take their baby girl with them and Angela hasn't seen her mom and dad since then. She is now six years old and is without a family and nobody really knows what is going to happen to her.

Angela is your little sister in Christ. She is loved by God and God asks you to love her. I ask you to pray that adults and our leaders will change the rules so that the many children like Angela will not have to be separated from their families. The scripture reading this morning tells us that "God is love...and if we love one another God remains in us." We show that God is in us best, when we love those in need, so that all children will know they are a part of God's family and so that someday the Angelas of the world will not be afraid because "There is no fear in love".

I would guess that most of us here today are children of immigrants. Some of you may actually be immigrants yourself. Remember that God loves us however we got here. Migrants are worthy of our love and we are blessed by the gifts and love they share with us. Sometimes we think of migrants are just a big group of poor people. They are more than that. They are families, just like yours, and they are children just like you.

So what can you do to help these migrant children? Well, first, when you go home today, would you please retell the story of Angela? Now that you know about her it's important that others do too. Then I ask you to pray for her and for all the migrant families who have been separated from one another. Pray that we will always be people who care about keeping families together. Pray that God will wipe away the tears of the children who are sad, and moms and dads who miss their children.

Let us pray that God will grant His protection to all migrants who have left their homes in search of new opportunity in another land, and lead them to a place of safety.