



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Most Reverend Gustavo Garcia-Siller



Homily – Bexar County Jail Inmates Mass
December 4, 2015

My brothers and sisters, it is good for us to be together today, anticipating Christmas. This season may be very difficult for you. You may wish you could be with family and friends during the holidays. Instead, you are behind locked doors, deprived of your freedom, feeling alone and forgotten, waiting and waiting for your release date. I assure you that you are not alone. The Church is praying with us today. God is present here among us.

Today's first reading describes a time when God will intervene in the lives of his people, and they will experience a new lease on life. The deaf will "hear the words of a book," the Bible. The blind – those walking in gloom and darkness – will see. The poor and the lowly will find their joy in the Lord! Those who make mistakes will acquire new understanding of the ways of the Lord.

This prophecy is being fulfilled in today's gospel. Two blind men encounter Jesus and follow him. They cry out "Son of David, have pity on us!" They follow him into a house, and Jesus turns to them and asks them about their faith. He knows what they want – they want to see! But their healing requires faith, deep faith.

Like all of God's children, you and I are sinners. When a reporter asked Pope Francis: Who are you really? The Holy Father replied immediately: "I am a sinner." But our sins are not the end of the story. We believe in a God who forgives us. A God who heals. A God who is merciful, compassionate, loving. If we turn to him and ask forgiveness, he will forgive us. At times we are deaf to his voice; we do not follow the Good Shepherd but someone else who leads us astray. At times we are blind to what really matters in life. At times we can only see darkness and gloom, only our faults. We need healing. "Son of David, have pity on us!" I want to see! I want to hear your voice! I want to become the person you want me to be. I want your healing touch. Touch my eyes! My ears! My heart!

This is the true message of Christmas: God loves each one of us more than we can imagine! God loves us even when we do not love ourselves! You are living behind locked doors. I urge you to open the doors of your hearts to receive God's love that comes to us through Jesus. Let him bring you God's peace. Let his gentle touch

heal your hurts and bring you to reconcile with those whom you have hurt. Jesus, Son of David, have pity on us! Deepen our faith! Release the goodness you have planted in our hearts!