



Archdiocese of San Antonio

Most Reverend Gustavo Garcia-Siller



Homily – Mass During the Day

December 25, 2015

“All the ends of the earth will behold the salvation of our God.”

“What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” These verses from the Prophet Isaiah and the Gospel of John help us understand the meaning of Christmas. Jesus, the Light of the World, became man to dispel the darkness that surrounds and engulfs our lives.

Jesus was born in the dark of night. Mary and Joseph were, in effect, homeless persons. There was no room in the inn, and they had to find shelter for the birth of their child. Mary tenderly wraps her baby in swaddling clothes. A feeding trough serves as a crib. How simple are these circumstances! They also give eloquent witness to the poverty and humility surrounding Jesus’ birth. Moreover, the good news of the Savior’s birth is announced first to poor shepherds working in the dark of night. They were among the least esteemed

workers of the time. The poor have the good news proclaimed to them! Jesus, the Light of the World, the Prince of Peace, the Royal Messiah, is someone like them—and us – in all things but sin. This child is the incarnation of God’s love for all of us.

The birth of Jesus calls each of us to experience God’s mercy, love, and tenderness. Pope Francis says that God’s love, which was incarnate in his Son Jesus, is also to take on flesh and blood in you and me! Especially during this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we are invited to walk through a Holy Door. The Holy Father says that “in passing through the Holy Door, may we feel that we ourselves are part of this mystery of love, of tenderness. Let us set aside all fear and dread, for these do not benefit men and women who are loved. Instead, let us experience the joy of encountering that grace that transforms all things.”

We need not be afraid of the dark. Jesus is the Light of the World and the Lord of our lives. We stand this day in the light of the Christ who has come into this world; in him a new day shines. Let us allow God’s love, mercy, and tenderness to embrace us today and every day of our lives. In turn, let us share this love, mercy, compassion, and tenderness with all whom we encounter. We need to move beyond fear of the unknown, anxiety about the future, panic at the darkness around us. Jesus is Immanuel: God-with-us! Let us live the gospel of

life fully! Let us take up a new missionary drive with enthusiasm! This is Pope Francis' prayer for us this Christmas – that we will proclaim the good news in our words and deeds to the poor, the needy, and the vulnerable. May Mary, the Mother of God, Our Lady of Guadalupe intercede for us as we come to adore her beautiful son, the light that conquers all darkness, the light of the world that shines forever.