



Archdiocese of San Antonio  
Most Rev. Gustavo García-Siller



## **Jubilee Mass for Sacred Heart Sisters June 28, 2014**

On this weekend when we celebrate the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary his Mother, the readings echo with the theme of love. Not only is it appropriate for us to speak of love while celebrating the divine heart of our Lord and the loving heart of our Mother, but it is another wonderful blessing that we get to do so while celebrating the lives of our beloved Jubilarians! My sisters in Christ, congratulations on your Jubilee! The Church has been so blessed through your years of service and dedication. I hope that your hearts are filled as we take this time to thank God *for* you and to celebrate in thanksgiving *with* you.

Now, you dear sisters know as well as most that true love is not the kind you see in the movies. As St. Paul puts it so well, “love is not jealous,” or “pompous,” or “inflated,” and “it does not seek its own interests” (1 Cor). A far cry from the sad and selfish emotion that so many mistake for love these days, the love we are called to live is self-giving. It is “patient” and “kind” and is the kind of love that “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, [and] endures all things.” My sister Jubilarians, I think it is safe to say that your lives in consecrated ministry are true testaments to the truth that “love never fails.”

This does not mean that there have not been hard times in your lives. Sr. Anita, Sr. Mary Patricia, and Sr. Catarina you have 60 years of consecrated life, and Sr. Jo-Michele you have 50 years. I know they have been blessed years, but certainly there were times where your patience was challenged, or it was more difficult to be kind, and

certainly there must have been times where failure seemed very near. But we are not here to celebrate a perfect report card, but rather to celebrate lives given in love for the good of the Church and her people!

What beautiful news we hear from our Lord today in John's Gospel: "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain." You dear sisters were chosen by our Lord to bear fruit in this world in love. If you look around at the people present at this celebration, you will find people with so many stories to tell about the love they experienced through the ministry of our Jubilarians. No greater commandment is there than "to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John). This is the great gift you have given to God's people, you have given your life to serve them and to serve our loving God.

For all of us here with you, your Jubilee is a reminder and a challenge. We honor you today with words, and greetings, and especially with prayer, but there is one more thing we must do. We must all remember to fulfill the commandment of love in our own lives, every day. Our work in this world may be wonderful, but without love it means nothing at all. Again, Paul's words say exactly what we need to hear: "If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing" (1 Cor).

So, my sisters, we are united with you today, not in some quick emotion or easy sentiment. We are here, united with you today, in real love. We are here to celebrate the years you have lived following God's great commandment: "Love one another" (John). Pray for us dear sister Jubilarians, and know that we are praying for you. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary continue to guide us as we deepen our lives in this love.