



Archdiocese of San Antonio

Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller



Homily – Easter Vigil

April 4, 2015

This evening we are invited to join the women at the empty tomb.

None of the disciples had understood Jesus' words that he would rise from the dead. They are overcome with grief over his crucifixion. He had called them in Galilee, and they had followed him. Now he was gone. What should they do next? The light had gone out of their lives. They sat in darkness.

At daybreak, when the women see the empty tomb, they are amazed. They are seeking Jesus of Nazareth. They are told to tell the other disciples that they are all to go **back to Galilee** where they will see the Lord – just as he had told them!

Yes, Galilee is where it began, where it begins for each of us. Today, we are told to go back to Galilee to relive the beginning of our relationship with the Lord. For each of us, it begins with our baptism. Some of us were infants and do not remember the event, while others were older and do remember. Still others will receive baptism this very evening. As Pope

Francis has said: “to return to Galilee means...to return to that blazing light with which God’s grace touched me at the beginning of the journey” and from that flame you and I can light a fire “and bring heat and light to [our] brothers and sisters” – especially the most vulnerable, those living in darkness.

There is another “Galilee” in our lives – a personal encounter with Jesus who called us to follow him and to share in his mission and ministry. It may have happened in the solitude of our room or in a large congregation. It may have happened in a Cursillo or ACTS retreat. It may have happened in a cathedral, a hospital, or a correctional center. Some time in our life, Jesus passed by and caught our eye. As Pope Francis said, to return to that “Galilee” experience “means reviving the memory of that moment, of that moment when his eyes met mine, the moment he made me realize that he loved me!”

The command in the gospel is clear: we need to go back to Galilee to encounter the risen Lord, to become witnesses to his resurrection. When we look back on our journey of faith with the eyes of faith and in light of Jesus’ resurrection, we see things clearly for the first time – as God sees them. Let us hasten back to Galilee! Let us return to our first love! Let us receive the fire and light of the paschal candle to bring that fire to all – to the very ends of the earth!