

**Homily – Farewell Mass, Carmelite Srs. of the Divine Heart of Jesus
Friday, August 13, 2021 – St. Gerard Parish**

It is inevitable to suffer when there is loss. We live in a tension as straight as the Cross, between a world that abhors pain – trying to pull us down to escape from it – and our Lord on the Cross lifting us up. We embrace the Lord together with our own cross. Tonight we say goodbye.

As we close a nearly 108-year-long chapter of the continuous presence of the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus in San Antonio, we say goodbye with tears. We are overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude to God, who has given them to us for such a long time. So many children and families have been served with God’s tender caress through these true mothers, in the image of Our Lady. By establishing a home for children – at times an orphanage or a daycare throughout many years – your own hearts became home for generations, in the image of God the Father. Thank you for remaining faithful to the love of God. We thank God for you! God bless you, Sisters! Thank you!

The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross represents the fulfillment of the Father’s will by his Son, and the Son’s ultimate accomplishment to please the Father. Therefore, it is the triumphant expression of the Love between the Father and the Son. That Love is the Holy Spirit, who is sent to us right there on Calvary. The Holy Spirit “prepares the Church to encounter her Lord”¹ in the Resurrection. “By his transforming power, he makes the mystery of Christ present here

¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1092.

and now,”² at the Eucharist. “Finally the Spirit of communion unites the Church to the life and mission of Christ. The Holy Spirit prepares for the reception of Christ.”³ Like St. Paul says, “The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.”

Tonight is a night of celebration of over a century of fruitful presence of the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus in San Antonio. You have treasures stored up in heaven, which we are sure will continue to be poured out onto the world, as the Holy Spirit keeps multiplying them. Well done, good and faithful servants! The Church in San Antonio remains forever in debt to you, but she will keep you in her prayers, certain that nothing is lost. We remember with gratitude and your spiritual leaders St. Theresa of Avila, St. Teresa of Jesus, St. Elijah and St. John of the Cross/

As the Lord bid farewell to his disciples, he warned them that they could not bear any more at that time, but that the Spirit of truth would guide them and declare “the things that are coming.” The Holy Spirit has glorified the Lord through your work here and he will continue to glorify him. Keep up the good work! The Holy Spirit turns our sorrow into joy because he always opens brighter ways. So Godspeed, Sisters! That is our hope, which makes any feeling of loss be overcome by an overwhelming peace, because there is no end. God’s glory is forever.

With Our Lady of Guadalupe we thank God for so much, and we give glory to the Father, through Jesus, with the Holy Spirit: Blessed

² Idem.

³ Idem.

is your holy and glorious name, O Lord, “praiseworthy and exalted above all for all ages”.