



## **Auxiliary Bishop Gary Janak ordained as auxiliary bishop of San Antonio**

At a solemn Mass of installation and reception celebrated at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in San Antonio on April 20, Auxiliary Bishop Gary Janak was ordained as an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of San Antonio by Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSpS. Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the pope's delegate to the United States, read an Apostolic Letter, or Papal Bull, confirming the appointment of the 59-year-old Bishop Janak.

The new auxiliary bishop was presented several symbols of his pastoral ministry. These included a pectoral cross, an episcopal ring worn on his right hand, a mitre, and crozier, or shepherd's staff.

Bishop Janak's mother, Rose Marie Janak, was in attendance, along with his siblings, their spouses, his nieces and nephews, and other family members. Readers at the Mass included the bishop's sister, Sharon Janak Foltyn; and Sister Elizabeth Ann Vasquez, SSCJ, director of the archdiocesan Office of Consecrated Life. Co-consecrators at the liturgy included San Antonio Auxiliary Bishop Michael Boulette — Bishop Janak's former spiritual director when he was a seminarian at Assumption Seminary — and Diocese of Victoria Bishop Brendan Cahill. Chamberlains to Bishop Janak were Father Carlos Velasquez, pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in New Braunfels, and Father Greg Korenek, a priest of the Victoria Diocese.

John Michael Talbot, a friend of Bishop Janak for close to 40 years, sang prelude and mediation hymns.

Twenty-four archbishops and bishops attended the ceremony, along with Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. In addition to the hierarchy present, the Mass was concelebrated by about 200 priests of the archdiocese and visiting clerics.

“We celebrate this ordination in the season of Easter as we rejoice in the paschal mystery of Christ's dying and rising, which assures us of his presence with us forever” said Archbishop Gustavo in his homily. “I ask all of you here today to pray for our brother Gary. He shall need our support and strength in order to carry out this apostolic calling he has received.”

The archbishop then shared some reflections with the new auxiliary bishop in response to his call to the service of the apostles.

“Throughout the days of your announcement and then the preparations for this ordination day I have thought about the importance of God's call and the response of the human person. In truth, it is a central biblical motif repeated many times. We have seen this in the call of the prophets and their response of fidelity -- even when the message they were to deliver was hard,” Archbishop Gustavo explained. “My brother Gary, you have been called, and you are answering



with grace and humility. You are a man of integrity. Your reception and cooperation to the call, as a grace from God, will lead you to give it, to share it, to build up the body of Christ. The source is always the Holy Spirit.”

With humility and trust, the San Antonio prelate told Bishop Gary you have made yourself available for this great work of the Holy Spirit in this moment of the Church’s life, like in the liturgy readings from the Acts of the Apostle and the letter to the Ephesians.

“With humility, gentleness and patience, you have responded to God’s call in each moment of the past, and your faithful ministry has touched the hearts and souls of many people. But now God calls you, and equips you, for an even more profound self-sacrifice,” the archbishop emphasized. “Whatever dreams and plans you had a few weeks ago are now set aside. And in saying yes to God you will encounter moments of great beauty and joy, but also of great suffering and self-emptying. You, my brother, now set aside everything, ready for anything as you respond to the call from God for His Church in this moment.”

The Missionary of the Holy Spirit described how this occasion was a special moment in the life of the Church, especially here in Texas. When Bishop Gary left El Campo and came to Assumption Seminary, Victoria was part of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. When Victoria was elevated to a diocese, he became a member of that presbyterate. But from then until now so much has happened. The state has grown at an incredible pace. From the time of his ordination in the 1980s to now San Antonio is twice the size, as the population has grown so rapidly.

Archbishop Gustavo continued by saying that our faith, once so easily taken for granted in our neighborhoods and small communities, has seen itself challenged as many young people have grown distant from their roots, while the Church is often under attack from within and without.

“Social wounds from injustices and misguided ideologies have hurt so many people. And in this past year all of us have been touched by the pandemic from which we are only now beginning to emerge,” he lamented. “There are so many challenges for us, my brother, and I look forward to your assistance together with that of Bishop Mike, and the priests and laity of the archdiocese, as we move forward to meet the challenges of this moment in our history. We are called to be transformed by hope, in order to build our tomorrow.”

However, where the challenges are great, the grace of God abounds all the more, the archbishop exclaimed. He reported that Bishop Gary will find among the faithful of the archdiocese great dynamism, deep faith, a longing for what is true, and right, and good!

“You will find enormous energy and the desire to move forward, under the direction of our Holy Father, Pope Francis, in this time of New Evangelization, creating a culture of encounter, and accompanying our brothers and sisters in the pilgrimage of faith as instruments of mercy and



peace,” he strongly expressed. “While the sacrifices will be many, the fruits of your labors will be many more. So, don’t forget that God has greater dreams and plans for you than you ever did for yourself!”

Archbishop Gustavo briefly concluded, “Let us all listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, and simply say yes, when we are called.”

Bishop Janak’s appointment to San Antonio by Pope Francis was announced on February 15, 2021. He was serving as vicar general and chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria as well as rector of The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory there. He was ordained to the priesthood May 14, 1988. He holds a degree in canon law, a master’s degree in Counseling, and is licensed by the state of Texas as a professional counselor supervisor.

The Archdiocese of San Antonio is comprised of 19 counties, including Val Verde, Edwards, Kinney, Real, Uvalde, Gillespie, Kerr, Bandera, Medina, Frio, Kendall, Bexar, Atascosa, McMullen, Comal, Guadalupe, Wilson, Gonzales, and Karnes. This area has a population of more than three million people, with about 800,000 Catholics.