



Ordination Remarks from Bishop Gary Janak

When I spoke with my mom, prior to the announcement of my appointment as auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of San Antonio, her first words were, “*But you’re not from San Antonio*” Well mom, I am now! *Sí, ahora lo estoy.*

La gratitud llena mi corazón hoy. Os agradezco vuestra presencia aquí y les agradezco a nuestro Dios amoroso. Gratitude fills my heart this day for so many, most especially our loving and merciful God.

Thank you Archbishop Pierre for your presence with us here today, as an extension of His Holiness, Pope Francis. Please confer to our Holy Father our love for him and the assurance of our prayers for his universal ministry. I am humbled by the trust he has placed in me, by appointing me as an auxiliary bishop to this historic and faith-filled archdiocese. I also appreciate the presence of his Eminence, Cardinal Daniel Di Nardo. Thank you for being with us.

Archbishop Gustavo, Bishop Michael, Bishop Cahill and Bishop Fellhauer. Thank you for your kindness and ongoing support. Since February 1, when Archbishop Pierre informed me of the appointment, you have provided guidance and exemplified calm and peace to me. I am also grateful for the presence of so many bishops here at this ordination Mass. I appreciate your prayers and support, as I join with you in the episcopal ministry entrusted to us.

To the priests, religious men and women and the faithful from the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Victoria, thank you for being present to celebrate this occasion. I am grateful for the almost 33 years I have had the opportunity to serve in the presbyterate of the Diocese of Victoria. We will always be connected by the priesthood we share. I look forward to serving with the faithful and devoted priests of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. This day is about the glory of God and joining together in praise of his Holy Name. *En realidad, todo tiene que ver con Jesucristo y nuestro servicio a Él.*

I am grateful for all who did so much to prepare for this celebration, including the archdiocesan choir and the Office of Worship and so many members of various departments at the Pastoral Center. I am also grateful to Monsignor Kevin Ryan and the parishioners and staff of Saint Mark Catholic Parish, for your hospitality in hosting us. Thank you to all for your attention to so many details.



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I also thank John Michael Talbot for sharing his gifts with us today. I will be forever grateful to you for introducing me to the beautiful people of Nicaragua and the opportunity to spend time at the mission you once sponsored on the island of Ometepe. It shaped greatly my ministry. So many were poor and many were hungry, but their faith in Jesus was so strong. In ministering to them, they in fact ministered to me. *Los pobres tienen mucho que compartir y enseñar.* They taught me how to hunger more for Christ and how much the people of God hunger for priests who will love them unconditionally and lead them closer to Christ.

To my family, thank you for your love and support. I pray my father, who died 22 years ago, is resting in God's peace. He taught me the importance of education and of working hard. By the witness of his life, he exemplified how important it is to think less of myself and more of God and others. He truly embodied the Scripture passage, from St. Luke: "*When you have done all you have been commanded, say 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do'*" (Lk. 17:10). To my mother, who at 87 years of age is filled with faith and energy: Thank you for teaching me the importance of prayer and how to have a close relationship with Jesus.

I am grateful for my sister Cindy and her husband Larry and their children. Cindy could not be here today. She continues her treatment for bone marrow cancer, but she is strong and is praying with us from her hospital room at MD Anderson. To my brother Allan and his wife Jeanie and their children, thank you for always helping me to trust God more and to enjoy the gift of family. To my youngest sister, Sharon and her husband Jake and their children: Thank you for your acceptance and unconditional love. My eight, soon to be nine, great-nieces and nephews are the joy of my life. I am their Uncle G. and I love them dearly.

Indigno como estoy para esta oficina, estoy listo para servir. Unworthy as I am for this office, I, with all of my weaknesses and deficiencies, am ready to serve. Once you come to know my heart, you will find that I have a simple and trusting faith in God. *Amo a Jesús y he dedicado mi vida al servicio de su Iglesia.* I love Jesus and I have dedicated my life in service to his Church. Now, more than ever, I believe we can read the signs of the times and recognize the call extended to us to return to the practice of our faith, to take time for daily prayer and the importance of the reception of reconciliation and Holy Communion. We are hungry and we only have to look around and recognize our technology, our wealth and our politics will not feed us. Only Christ can feed us. *Sí, sólo Cristo puede alimentarnos.*

Pope Francis has said, "*Jesus announces to us that God is not an idea or an abstract doctrine, but God is the one who 'contaminates' himself with our human woundedness and is not afraid to come into contact with our wounds.*" My priesthood truly began when I embraced my own



brokenness. It was then that I began to find ways to reach the hearts of those who were equally broken. In ministering to God's people, I have come to better understand the words of Psalm 34: *"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted."* *"El Señor está cerca de los desconsolados."* *En nuestra herida, la Iglesia está llamada a ofrecer sanación y esperanza.* In our woundedness, the Church is called to offer healing and hope.

If anything has prepared me for this responsibility to serve the Church as a bishop, it is found not in the degrees I have obtained or the diocesan responsibilities with which I have been entrusted, but in sacraments I have celebrated, the people I have buried — including too many children, teenagers and young adults — the spouses I have known that, though struggling in their marriages, choose to fight for their sacrament, and in the incredible faith of God's people who, in their hurt and pain, embrace the suffering Christ. Indeed, if anything has prepared me for this ministry, it is walking the journey of faith with the hurting, the confused and the dying and humbly embracing the trust people have placed in me for one reason and one reason only: *Soy sacerdote de Jesucristo.* I am a priest of Jesus Christ.

There has never been a more exciting time to be a Christian, to be a Catholic, than right now. Not because the times are easy, but because they are difficult. It is in these challenging times, we proclaim boldly that we are the Body of Christ and the Catholic Church is alive and well. *Sí, somos el Cuerpo de Cristo y la Iglesia Católica está viva y bien.* To those considering a possible vocation to the priesthood or religious life, dare to say yes. The Church needs you. God is calling you. *La Iglesia te necesita. Dios te está llamando.*

As a bishop, I want to join with you in bringing back into the fold those who have strayed; in proclaiming without hesitation the truth found in the Gospel; in standing up for life and protecting the right of all to be born and to live with dignity, from the moment of conception until natural death.

I will join with you in ministering to the poor, the immigrant, the homeless, the suffering and the Lazarus' in our community too often ignored. I stand ready to join you in telling the world, including those who feel left out, left behind and hurt by the Church, that the Lord heals the brokenhearted; *Para que podamos unirnos de nuevo para seguir a Jesucristo como miembros de la Iglesia Que Él nos ha dado y la Iglesia que ha prometido proteger.* Yes, we can join together in following Jesus Christ as members of the Church He has given us and the Church he has promised to protect.

I stand ready to assist you, Archbishop Gustavo and Bishop Michael, and the dedicated and faithful priests, deacons, consecrated men and women, devoted lay leaders and the faithful of the



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Archdiocese of San Antonio, in bringing to a hurting and broken world the Good News of Jesus.
Estoy aquí para servir, en el Nombre de Cristo. Que el Señor me dé a mí, su débil siervo, un corazón que escucha. I am here to serve, in the Name of Christ. May the Lord give me, his weak servant, a listening heart.