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**Invocation & Meal Blessing – 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Catholic Charities  
Archbishop’s Prayer Breakfast – 8:00 a.m, May 30, 2023**

Good morning, my sisters and brothers in Christ. I am honored to welcome our guest speaker, Dr. Pat Castle, the founder of LIFE Runners, who has inspired people across the world, in 44 nations and 3,367 cities, to be witnesses for the protection of the most vulnerable. Thank you for your introduction, Bill Taylor, Chief Meteorologist for KENS 5 TV, and welcome. I am happy to welcome all of you to our annual Prayer Breakfast. Thank you for being here today. I thank Catholic Charities, José Antonio Fernández, and his entire staff for sponsoring this opportunity for us to gather in prayer and reflection each year.

In proclaiming the Good News, it is quite challenging to make sense of things amid narrative distortions. But God’s Word allows us to see everything from the perspective of salvation history. Our Lord Jesus Christ is constantly made present among us by the Holy Spirit, who’s coming upon the disciples we commemorated last Sunday, on the Solemnity of Pentecost. The Life-Giving Spirit helps us, Christians, to remain at peace, even when veiled misrepresentations resort to making no distinction between truly charitable work – advocating for basic human dignity – and abetment with crime. “Nothing is new under the sun!” (Eccl 1:9). “Blessed are the peacemakers...” (Mt 5:9). Let us be concerned when evil is not falsely uttered against us, when we are not insulted or even persecuted. It would be a sign that we are not doing the right thing.

I think we should be proud of the work carried out by the great Catholic Charities of San Antonio team. Together, the members of

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**this great team witness to the Lord’s challenge for all of us to empty our hearts of self-serving passions and make room for others... to make room for the vulnerable.**

**Today we join in prayer and ask God for His healing touch in a world that yearns for His mercy. Speaking of the power of prayer, Pope Francis says, “In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could lead to a hardness of heart, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of the boundless love of God, in order to experience his tenderness.” So, we pray.**

**Blessed Mother of Jesus and the Church, Our Lady of Guadalupe, “blessed is the fruit of your womb.” (Lk 1:42). Protect all children in the womb as you protected the Son of God. Nourish us with your faith and your love. Keep us close to your Son, Jesus, in all our sorrows and joys.**

**Holy Spirit, make us worthy servants after the example and commandment of Jesus. Help us love God and our neighbor with humble hearts that seek the hidden and forgotten who hunger and thirst for justice and mercy. May we be led by you to bring the light of Christ into the darkness they suffer, your joy into their sadness, your hope into their despair.**

**Lord Jesus, you came so we “might have life and have it more abundantly.” (Jn 10:10). You have instructed us in how to live fully in God’s design by giving us the life-giving beatitudes. Help us know your heart. You are our compass to discern what is right, what is true, what is just, what is most fulfilling and life-giving. Remain with us, guiding your Church to be the faithful sign of your presence in the world. Help us be instruments of peace. Grant that love,**

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strengthened by grace, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which the most vulnerable must pass. May we always have you at the center of our hearts, our homes, and our societies, until we are all one family, happy and at peace in our true home with you.

Almighty Father, we come together this morning as a Church to rejoice in how you created the world with perfect order and design. You sent your Son Jesus to teach us not to be afraid, as you do not abandon us. You call us to listen and keep our eyes fixed on Him and be deeply convicted in our home life and our work life that He is Lord. The truth that He is the face of your mercy must permeate everything we do and make us unwavering in persecution for the sake of the Cross. We pray that Catholic Charities will always be a sign of your merciful care for the most vulnerable among us. We give thanks to all here, who strive to live your command to love one another. Let this gathering be a reminder of your abundant love that we all must share, as faithful disciples of your Son. As we celebrate in peace and comfort, may we be mindful of those who are hidden and forgotten.

And as we begin this day in faith, let us join our voices and hearts together and pray: Bless us O Lord and these your gifts which we are about to receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

*¡Buen provecho! Enjoy!*