



Archdiocese of San Antonio

Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller



Mother's Day Mass

Bexar County Adult Detention Center Annex

May 6, 2016

“You will weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; you will grieve, but your grief will become joy.” These words of Jesus are very powerful. They take on different meanings depending on the life of the person hearing them. There are many times in life when people weep and mourn. These words comfort us in each of those times. But you, my sisters, you are here in this place – and you are experiencing a different kind of grief. The things that led you to this place, they give a different kind of grief. You are separated from your families, especially as we approach Mother's Day, and this gives a different kind of grief. You know what it is to weep and mourn, you know what it is to grieve and to have deep regrets. But, my dear sisters, the Lord has made you a promise: “Your grief will become joy!”

Jesus uses the image of a mother crying out in labor to make his point. What a perfect image for this weekend when we celebrate all mothers! Jesus says: “When a woman is in labor, she is in anguish because her hour has arrived; but when she has given birth to a child,

she no longer remembers the pain, because of her joy that her child has been born into the world.” The pain was worth it for the woman, and it is replaced by pure and beautiful joy! For all of you who are mothers, is this true? When you saw the face of your little baby after the pains of labor, was it worth the pain? Did the joy fill you up, and the love you have for that little one? It is the perfect image for our labors in this world. No matter where our sufferings come from, God is helping us to be born anew into joy and holiness. No matter what you have done in the past, when we turn to the Lord and ask for forgiveness, he gives us love and joy. The joy he gives is overwhelming and, “no one will take your joy away from you.”

Not only does God give us joy, but he gives us our families and our loved ones. Pope Francis started his most recent exhortation with these words: “The joy of love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church” (*Amoris Laetitia*, 1). Even though you are separated from your families, find a way to connect with them in your hearts this weekend. We celebrate mothers, but we also celebrate family. Remember your families with love this weekend. Forgive family members that have hurt you. Be free from mourning and weeping, and let your eyes be filled with tears of joy. It is joy that last forever, while our weeping is passing away.

In the first reading, the Lord told St. Paul: “Do not be afraid.” And he says these same words to you today. “Do not be afraid!” Be

women of joy, women of hope, women of mercy, women of forgiveness, women of love. Know that the Church of San Antonio is praying for you! Our Mother, Mary, is praying for you! We love you, and we rejoice with you in the risen Lord.