



Archdiocese of San Antonio

Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller



Homily – MACC Commencement Mass

May 7, 2016

This morning we stand on a frontier. We celebrate this milestone on our journey when candidates receive official recognition for the hard work they have put into their education and formation at MACC. We look back on where we have come from on our pilgrimage and give thanks to God for accompanying and blessing us along the way. Students breathe a sigh of relief at arriving at this border – as do the faculty and formation personnel, the administration and staff, and all who have supported the students! “All you peoples, clap your hands, shout to God with cries of gladness! (Ps 47:2)

However, we are not at the end of the journey -- only at the frontier, facing the future with growing confidence, hope, and trust in the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

Our first reading describes Paul’s travel “in orderly sequence” through both new and familiar terrain, “bringing strength to all the

disciples.” Notice that the narrative is not only about the great apostle Paul. We are introduced to Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew, who knew only the baptism of John the Baptist. He is skilled in the interpretation of Scripture as one would expect from an Alexandrian Jew who had access to a fine school of biblical study there. Two Christian lay people hear his eloquence and then catechize him about the risen Lord Jesus and his gospel. Apollos becomes a missionary disciple, and some people in Corinth later consider him to be a rival – rather than a brother – of Paul. Paul corrects this misconception. Paul himself was taught by members of the Christian community at Antioch rather than by the apostles themselves. While we focus much of our attention on the leaders in our thoughts about the early church, lay people were key to its foundations in Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome among other places. And the same remains true today, as Pope Francis has said many times during his pontificate. We are all members of the Church, missionary disciples, responsible for the Church’s mission and ministry.

This is important for all of us to remember. We will continue to be formed and educated by the people to whom we are called and sent to serve. God’s Holy Spirit works throughout the community of faith. We need to encounter each other as sisters and brothers in

the Lord – not as rivals or competitors – not lording it over others because of our degrees or accomplishments. Together, in faith, we are to discern the “signs of the times” and respond appropriately in the light of the gospel.

In the gospel Jesus invites his disciples to “ask the Father” anything in Jesus’ name, and God will answer our prayer because of the great, enduring, unconditional love God has for us. This is something we carry in the depths of our being as missionary disciples. Your studies at MACC have not only taught you about God. Through the liturgy and formation you have been led to **encounter the living God** – to **know** God in the biblical sense – that is, drawing near to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in an intimate way and loving God as fully as we are capable, holding nothing back, growing in communion with God and with our sisters and brothers in faith. Even as you continue to be formed and taught, form and teach others to encounter and dialogue.

May Our Lady of Guadalupe, who has promised to be with us always, accompany us with her beloved Son, guided by the Holy Spirit, as we boldly cross the frontier into the future!