



# **Archdiocese of San Antonio**

## **Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller**



### **Homily for Memorial Day San Fernando Cemetery No. 3** **May 30, 2016**

Delivering his Memorial Day Homily, Cardinal Joseph Bernadin remembered with love and gratitude those who sacrificed their lives to preserve the values and freedoms of our great nation. He said:

“Memorial Day demands a simple eloquence because the real homilies have already been preached. The true sermons have been proclaimed by the men and women we honor today, those who gave their lives for our country and indeed all the faithful departed. Their pulpits were not in churches but on battlefields...” More than 30 years later, new, brave homilies are written in blood and sacrifice. Today, we honor all those who traded their lives so that we may be free to call upon God’s mercy for their families who also have sacrificed so much.

We still live in a dangerous world in which our brothers and sisters are called to protect the innocent, defending the foundational truths upon which our nation was formed; “...that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” In San

Antonio we are surrounded by constant and loving reminders of those who live otherwise normal lives and who understand that at anytime they may be called to dangerous duty to protect those they love and those they will never know.

In our first reading, today, St. Peter extends a greeting and prayer for the peace of Christ. In turn we are all called to secure the peace for a world that yearns for the tranquility of God's love. St. Peter helps us to see more clearly what we must do to prepare ourselves to be a source of Christ's peace; "...make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, virtue with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with devotion, devotion with mutual affection, mutual affection with love." In this way we become missionary disciples of God's mercy, the antidote for the fear and hatred that robs the world of God's peace.

In today's Gospel Jesus tells us a parable that reveals the generosity, trust and patience of God. When his servants are sent to carry out their duty and responsibilities, they encounter violence and death. This shows us how Jesus, knowing that he must give his life, courageously carried out the Father's will, revealing that the price of true peace and victory over violence and evil is the blood of the cross.

Pope Francis tells us that we must work for peace, not just hope for it. "That peace, which God the Father wants to sow in the world, must be cultivated by us...This involves a real struggle, a spiritual battle that

takes place in our hearts, for the enemy of peace is not only war, but also indifference, which makes us think only of ourselves and creates barriers, suspicions, fears and closures of mind and heart.” In this way we honor God and the legacy of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. We honor their deaths by honoring their lives, thus ensuring that future generations need not add their names to these noble lists of heroes. Let us unite our hearts in memory of these fallen sisters and brothers, and let the homily of their lives be a plea for peace, mercy, and healing.