



Archdiocese of San Antonio  
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Legatus Mass  
April 16, 2014

In St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians, he proclaims the unity of the Body of Christ on earth and that this unity is enriched by the many and varied gifts each member has been given. When Jesus returned to the Father he left the People of God with a command to carry the good news of salvation to every corner of the world. Now that Jesus is no longer physically present on earth, he relies on the Church, His mystical body, to carry out His mission of redemption and love.

In the document of the Second Vatican Council on "The Church", the Council Fathers explained that "...each individual part contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. Through the common sharing of gifts and through the common effort to attain fullness in unity." The diversity of the Spirit's gifts distributed throughout the Church is truly in itself a gift. However, that diversity should not lead to division that weakens the flock and weakens the whole body.

The Sacred Purpose of our local Church calls all of us to join together in a singular mission: "Seeking to live in sacramental communion with one another, the Archdiocese of San Antonio exists to make disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ to prepare for the promise of eternal life." Paul points to the many and varied gifts the Spirit gives us in order to fulfill this purpose. He says we need Apostles, prophets, and teachers, each possessing their own unique gifts which

brings to those seeking salvation to a transforming encounter with Christ, thus defining in the whole Church, our Future in Faith. The Psalmist proclaims the diversity of these gifts in one body, professing: "He made us, His we are; His people, the flock He tends."

Jesus prayed for us to be "United as Church" when he prayed for unity. I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they all will be one." In this loving prayer, it is easy to feel Jesus' love and understanding in the difficult challenges that lay ahead. That we would need the strength of the Holy Spirit and his many gifts. He knew that in order for others to see the glory of the cross, that we would have to carry it before them; each helping the other to share the burden as missionary disciples of Christ, as members of His body....His Holy Church.

I am blessed to travel throughout the Archdiocese of San Antonio. I see people of our parishes, schools, Catholic Ministries and organizations caring for the poor and marginalized, teaching our children and our adults about the living Lord, proclaiming the Word of God and sharing His love. Legatus contributes to this common mission through your "good works, good ideas, and high ethical standards." Each member is dedicated to be an "Ambassadors of Christ."

In that spirit Jesus is counting on you to share your considerable gifts with the rest of the Church. You have unique practical business experience, academic achievement, and real world success that when directed toward our sacred purpose in whatever way possible, will enrich and strengthen the whole body of Christ.

In this morning's Gospel we see Jesus responding to the deep sadness of the Widow of Nain, whose son had died. With understated Divine power and compassion, Jesus simply said, "Young man, I tell you, arise!" Without show or fanfare, Jesus responded to the widow's need in that moment, not just hoping she would stop crying, but in the fullest expression of His love, Jesus did what was necessary to replace her sorrow with unimaginable joy.

The people proclaimed in that miraculous moment, "God has visited his people." As Jesus mystical body on earth, and through our own baptism, we can be signs of God's presence among his people, working wonders giving witness of redemption in Christ. "United as Church" we must support the many ministries with our prayers and practical efforts. As St. Paul says in Romans, we cannot all do everything that needs to be done he professed, "For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another." So as we are each sent by the Spirit may we allow others to encounter Christ in us, United as Church.