



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Most Rev. Gustavo García-Siller



Homily – Easter Vigil April 20, 2014

This is the most awesome night of the liturgical year. We began in darkness and are now bathed in light – especially the light of the Easter Candle representing Christ, the Light of the world! We have listened to some of the most powerful passages in Scripture and responded with joyful song. We are celebrating the sacraments of initiation – baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist. It is as though we are filled with the very fullness of God this evening!

God is full of surprises! Something completely new and unexpected happens this evening – it happens to the guards at Jesus' tomb and to the women who have come there -- an earthquake and an angel who rolls back the stone at its entrance and delivers a totally unexpected message: Jesus is not here, he is risen!

Sometimes we do not like surprises. We become accustomed to routines and are comfortable with them. When something happens that we do not expect, we stop short. We don't understand. We do not know what to do. We become fearful, even if the newness comes from God. What is going on? Why is this happening? What does it mean?

This evening we heard the solemn words about God's creation of the world – and how good it truly is. We learned from Abraham's story how God provides for us in the most difficult of situations. We heard how God delivers his people from slavery in Egypt, how God brings his people back home from Exile, how he serves us a rich

banquet of food and drink in the Eucharist, how he cleanses us with the waters of his word and baptism, how we die to sin and rise to new life in baptism, in communion with the risen Lord. Each of these stories – although familiar to us – are full of surprises!

During the past year we have lived in communion with a new Holy Father, Pope Francis. There has been a renewal of life in the Church because he speaks and acts as Jesus did – and we are challenged to do the same. Listen to the words of Pope Francis:

Let us not be closed to the newness that God wants to bring into our lives! Are we often weary, disheartened and sad? Do we feel weighed down by our sins? Do we think that we won't be able to cope? Let us not close our hearts, let us not lose confidence, let us never give up. There are no situations that God cannot change, there is no sin that he cannot forgive if only we open ourselves to him. (Easter Vigil, 2013)

My dear sisters and brothers, let the risen Lord enter into your life this evening. Welcome him as a friend, with trust. He is life, light, and love. Don't be afraid. Be confident that he is close to you, with you. He wants to walk with you on your pilgrim way. May the risen Lord bring all of us new life and deep inner peace. Christ is risen! Alleluia!