



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Most Rev. Gustavo García-
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C.A.L.L. Conference Mass
Feast of the Assumption
8/15/.2014

¡Buenas Tardes! Es Bueno estar aquí.

I am grateful to all of you and your kind invitation to participate in this conference. Today we celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On this solemnity we rejoice in Mary's fulfillment of the hope of our own spiritual destiny when, we too will share in the glory of heaven. Our Blessed Mother's Assumption is the first fruits of Christ's resurrection, thus giving the world a "Spiritual Revolution" when "The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

Today, as in Jesus' time, there is a human tendency to equate success with passing things: physical possessions, temporary emotional states, importance or status in a community, etc. Jesus came to initiate a "Spiritual Revolution" that would turn that thinking on its head, and his mother embodied this Good News in her life here on earth and as she went up body and soul to her life in heaven. In today's Gospel we are given a glimpse of the beginning of Mary's life of faith and obedience.

She was born without sin and yet our Blessed Mother's life would be marked with pain and sorrow (the Cross). Mary, who honored God with her profound "Yes" to becoming the Mother of God, would still suffer the uncertainty of giving birth to Jesus in the dark and cold of a stable. Her newborn child's life would be threatened and she would be forced to become an undocumented refugee and flee to Egypt. She remained an alien for an untold number of years before she and her holy family would be permitted to return home. Her heart would be pierced by the pain of being forced to watch her only son executed before her eyes (Jesus' death).

Looking at all that happened to Mary through the eyes of the world, it would be reasonable to ask, "Where was the reward for her sinless life? Where are these "great things" that the Almighty had done for her? But looking at the world through the eyes of God, we see his promise fulfilled in her. Mary's beautiful Magnificat proclaimed today shows us the mind of God, through the words of his daughter, who became the Mother of his Son, and our Mother. We see a God who lifts up the meek and the lowly with the strength of his arm, who fills the hungry with good things, and who remembers his promise to his people. God does not reward his people with riches, plenty, and power. In fact – while these things are not bad – they must be handled with eyes fixed firmly on the Lord lest they become destructive. After all, the other half of Mary's great hymn is one in which God "scatters the proud in their conceit," "casts down the mighty from their thrones," and "sends the rich away empty." Because they have lost sight of the Good News, the Spiritual Revolution that comes with knowing God; serving God and working with and for the poor as equals. That is a Revolution!

Mary did not reap the benefits of her spiritual greatness in worldly ways, but her faithfulness elevated her in the life that we seek in the world to come. She is literally a sign in the heavens. She wears a crown of stars, beckoning all to take to heart the Spiritual Revolution that frees us to be truly great in the Kingdom of heaven. Her great reward should be our life's goal as well.

It is true that none of us here will ever be able to experience the great Assumption as she did. Our lot will include the usual end to this life and a judgment at the fulfillment of time. However, our lives are to be lived in the same way as Our Lady's, the same way preached by her Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Our lives should proclaim the Spiritual Revolution that is preached through the lives of the poor in our midst, the lowly, the hungry, and the oppressed. This is a life lived in need of God and in need of solidarity with all of our brothers and sisters. This is a life lived as a great witness to the Spiritual Revolution that challenges these counterfeit "ways" to happiness that are nothing more than temporary distractions. But we, my sisters and brothers, are daughters and sons of the Most High God, children of Mary, and heirs to the Kingdom of God. The false and lowly "riches" of this world will not fool us. We will live here, work here, and be good stewards of what we have been given, but we will do so in order to bring glory to the Lord and to magnify His name! Our Lady will lead us to take on more fully our role in witnessing to the Good News. As Pope Francis put it: "By her example of humility and openness to God's will, [Mary] helps us to transmit our faith in a joyful proclamation of the Gospel to all, without reservation."

Through these days may we be lead to recommit ourselves to the Spiritual Revolution of the Gospel, drawing deeply from the example given to us by Our Mother, Mary.

Our Lady Assumed into heaven. Pray for us.