

Sister Jane Ann Slater retirement Mass of Thanksgiving

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.”

I ask you, dear brothers and sisters to keep these words of St. Paul in mind as we celebrate together, with Sr. Jane Ann, her retirement from the office of Chancellor of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

I am not here to deliver a Eulogy! I am not here to beatify Sr. Jane Ann, either! But I am here to say “thank you,” from the depths of my heart, for your generous service to the People of God in the Archdiocese and for your honest and open friendship with me!

Shortly after I arrived as Archbishop I have wanted a team of leaders in the Archdiocese who would work together, sharing the ministry that Christ has given to us. In Spanish we call it “pastoral conjunto,” or shared ministry together. This approach to leadership helps to fulfill the vision of the Second Vatican Council that we should work together in mutuality and respectful subsidiarity. As I looked for someone who could help us move forward with the Office of Chancellor, a very important leadership role and one with many responsibilities in Canon Law, I looked to Sr. Jane Ann. She had the experience of shared leadership. She had born heavy responsibilities with grace in the past. She understood, already, the

dynamics needed to help the Church move forward! But most especially, she embodied the characteristics that St. Paul was talking about in his letter to the Collosians!

Again, this is not a eulogy! It is a thank you! And one of the things I want to thank you for, Sr. Jane Ann, is your truthfulness! You were never afraid to speak the truth to me and to the other members of the team, even if it was an uncomfortable truth! But you always told the truth in love! I always knew that the hard truths came from a heart of love -- love for Christ, love for the people of the Church, love of your own vocation, and love for the members of our team. In this, you have been an amazing example of how leadership can be exercised in a compassionate way, and I am grateful.

You know that I like to quote the Holy Father when I speak, because he is our shepherd and Christ's Vicar for the living Church. When he was asked less than a year ago, in the middle of the pandemic, about the leadership of women, he said this: Pope Francis says "countries with female leaders have handled the Covid-19 pandemic better than others and that he has increased the number of women in decision making roles in the Vatican because they are "much better administrators than men". So, Bishop Gary, you will now have to prove that the Holy Father is wrong on this point!

Sr. Jane Ann, I don't know what the future holds for you, but I know who holds your future! May you grow ever more deeply in love with Christ and his people. May your community be a source of strength and consolation for you. May your heart be glad in the goodness of the service you have given. And for goodness sake, take a vacation!!!