

INSTALLATION VESPERS

CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

JUNE 3, 2015

1. Welcome

- a. Grateful to Archbishop Viganó, brother bishops, my family, my friends from San Francisco and Utah and all guests. Know it is a journey and I deeply appreciate your time, expense and effort
- b. Grateful in a special way for all from Santa Fe Archdiocese. Your hospitality and warm welcome have been a great grace for me.

2. Importance of Vespers for me

- a. I wanted very much to pray with all of you tonight before the Mass of Installation tomorrow
- b. Time of quiet prayer. Important to pray with you who mean so much to me and important to pray with those with whom I will be sharing ministry:
 - i. Priests of Santa Fe. Closest collaborators
 - ii. Religious priests, brothers and sisters
 - iii. Deacons and wives
 - iv. Lay Ecclesial Ministers and Leaders
- c. Ask you to pray tonight and always that the Lord will guide me and us in the years ahead
- d. Pray that I will be an “elder” in the light of St. Peter’s words in the reading tonight
- e. I believe that this spirit is captured by the description given to the liturgical leader of the assembly, a leader who is Strong, Loving and

Wise. It is also captured in the life and ministry of Archbishop Oscar Romero

3. Archbishop Oscar Romero

- a. Last week, the El Salvadoran priests in the Diocese of Salt Lake City organized a beautiful Mass on the occasion of the beatification of Archbishop Romero on May 23
- b. The Archbishop had a profound influence on many because the many had a profound influence on him.
- c. It is my prayer to be influenced by you, the people of this local Church of Santa Fe. I strive to be a Good Shepherd in your midst and I need your prayers and guidance to do just that
- d. Pray for me that I will be the leader that St. Peter speaks about, indeed, that St. Peter is, in the reading tonight
- e. Oscar Romero gives us an insight into this leadership in an episode from his ministry in San Salvador

4. Episode in Oscar Romero's life

- a. Priest found killed in the streets. Gun in hand
- b. Advisors to the Archbishop said he should not go to the funeral because it would appear he condoned violence
- c. He eventually did go to the funeral. He said, "That priest's mother will be at the funeral. I am his father and I will be at the funeral."
- d. This exemplifies for me the important aspects of leadership, of "watching over the flock" that Peter describes
- e. Qualities of Shepherd seen in St. Peter and Oscar Romero

5. Humility

- a. Peter: calls himself a "fellow elder." He puts himself in the position of one who asks, "I make this appeal." Not, I command you. Only place in NT that we see "a fellow elder." Very humble

- b. Oscar Romero: Did not worry about his image, what others would say or think. Sacrificed himself for good of the priest's family, the good of his Church
- c. Pray that together with all those in this Archdiocese with whom I share ministry and a leadership role that I will be humble, relying on the Lord for strength and seeking only his honor and glory and the good of all in this local Church

6. Generous

- a. St. Peter exhorts the elders, and by association himself, to be generous. This means not seeking payment or other compensation for the work of shepherding. But it also means more than that: it means the willingness to suffer for the ministry and the people served. Peter speaks of himself as a witness to the SUFFERINGS of Christ.
- b. Oscar Romero suffered for his priest that was killed. Suffered pushback, criticism and even eventually suffered the loss of his life so he could be with his people, support his flock
- c. Pray that together with you, I will be generous on all levels and that I will give fully and completely for you, my fellow elders, as we seek to serve God's people with a Shepherd's care, not counting the cost

7. Urgency

- a. Verbs in St. Peter's exhortation tonight are in the aorist tense which implies a very real, concrete and urgent mood: guide, guard, feed and fold are all what Peter wants the elders to do NOW, with a sense of importance, priority and proximity
- b. Oscar Romero exemplified this same sense of urgency. He knew that he was targeted for assassination. He would not have a driver or body guard because he did not want their lives in danger. He ministered with urgency, knowing that his time was limited
- c. Pray that I will have this same urgency in your midst as together we serve God's people. Pray that this ministry entrusted to me will be

my priority and that nothing else will distract me or in any way attenuate my first priority to be a shepherd in your midst. Pray that with you, my collaborators in the ministry, we will all fix our sights on this goal

8. Finally, Joy

- a. "Willingly" watch over the flock, says Peter. This implies JOY. Yes, I will do it GLADLY, not because I have to but because I want to
- b. Oscar Romero exhibited this same joy. He was always smiling in photos that I have seen and yet he knew the risks, what was going on. He was close to the Lord. Captured this in an early diary entry (1943): "In recent days the Lord has inspired in me a great desire for holiness...I have been thinking of how far a soul can ascend if it lets itself be possessed entirely by God." AB Romero knew the joy that came from closeness to God and the service of his people
- c. Please pray that together with you, I will be joyful in my ministry, knowing that Christ is the source and summit of all we do and that this closeness will bring true joy in all aspects of the ministry

9. Thank you for praying with me tonight

- a. Grateful for his moment of prayer during these very full and rich days
- b. Feel the support and comfort of your prayers and love
- c. Very grateful for AB Sheehan and all that he has done to introduce you to me and for his personal support, friendship and guidance. He is another Oscar Romero, another great example of one who serves humbly, generously and with great joy
- d. I am eager to join you as a "fellow elder" and with you, to share in the "glory that is to be revealed" in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- e. God bless you all