

Opening Remarks from Bishop Michael Olson

I have a few brief statements because we are going to eat dinner. I understand that situation. Hooray! The Lord has gathered us here in Grapevine, Texas in the Diocese of Fort Worth for an Encuentro with Him and in the presence of other people as the People of God. Christ's Church was founded by Christ and we are here because Christ has called us and he has given us the grace of responding to Christ's call to us, His missionary disciples.

Before Christ sends us out, he asks us to remain in Him during these days, to listen to and encounter Him as the Holy Spirit makes Christ's wishes known for His Church, for His people the response to his call has graced us with His presence as brothers and sisters. It is my privilege as the bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth to welcome you as one of your hosts to this site of pilgrimage in North Texas. We are all very glad that the Lord brought you here to the Diocese of Fort Worth and that in extending hospitality to you that the Lord has renewed our faith our hope and our love for God, for each other as members God's pilgrim people.

The one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church united with the successor of Peter, Pope Francis, here present through the attendance of the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States of America, Archbishop Christophe Pierre. I would also like to welcome I would also like to welcome from the Holy See the Secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, Dr. Guzmán Carriquiry and his wife Lídice. I extend words of welcome as well to the official delegation from CELAM and bishops from other parts of the world, our brothers in Mexico and South America. I welcome especially, his eminence Cardinal DiNardo, the Archbishop of Galveston-Houston and President of the United States Conference of Bishops. Archbishop José Gomez, the Archbishop of Los Angeles and Vice President of the USCCB. Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, our metropolitan Archbishop of San Antonio and Chair of the Bishops' Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church. And also, words of welcome and prayers for the recovery of Bishop Nelson Pérez, Bishop of Cleveland and Chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs who came down with pneumonia, so prayers for him.

In a special way, I would like to thank publicly the priests, the deacons, the religious women seminarians, diocesan staff Knights of Columbus and so many lay faithful from the Diocese of Fort Worth who have worked so generously to make this Encuentro a happy and safe event in which we can meet the Lord and be renewed in our missionary vocations. I am very privileged to serve as their bishop. So often we ask the Lord Jesus to accompany us throughout our journey, every day, although well intentioned, often it is a way to ask the Lord to fit into our own agenda and to approve of our plans and projects. In a spirit of welcome solidarity and communion I ask all of you, and all of us to remain with the Lord Jesus. Let's dedicate time to encounter Him and be aware of His plans and wishes for all of us who are united in the Church. Welcome and may our Encounter of the Lord in the presence of others bring us peace and joy in a moment of appearance. Thank you.