

“ARE YOU PEOPLE IN GALATIA MAD?” (Gal 3:1)

Homily at St. Gabriel Church, McKinney, Texas on October 8, 2026

1. Preamble

I am happy to share the Eucharist with you. I know that many of you – parishioners and non-parishioners of St. Gabriel Church – made extra effort to be here this morning to honor me with your presence and share the Eucharist. I do not take it for granted. Thank you very much. I thank the parishioners for the warm relationship you have with Fr. Eugene, your pastor and a priest of my diocese. He has told me a lot about your support and appreciation of his ministry among you.

I visited the Woodlands in the Houston Area and I am on my way to Detroit. I decided to swing by and check on your pastor and other priests from my diocese exercising ministry in the Diocese of Dallas. They are all here. I thank Bishop Burns for consenting to my celebrating the Eucharist with you and for the support he is giving to these priests and to all the faithful entrusted to his care. Once more, thank you all for being here.

2. Are you People in Galatia Mad?

I want us to reflect on the outburst of St. Paul. He was so frustrated with the Galatians that he asked them: “Are you people of Galatia mad?” “What has come over you?” I can imagine that some of those who read that line in St. Paul’s letter might have been put off by his strong language.

But let us ask: what triggered such a strong reaction from St. Paul? My answer is that it is something similar to what is happening today. Indeed, our generation is facing more serious challenge. St. Paul was frustrated because the Galatians easily abandoned the Good News preached to them by St. Paul and attested to by God through miracles. They believed the new teaching preached by others. At the heart of this rival teaching is that the human being could achieve his salvation through observance of the Law. Paul, on the contrary, taught that salvation is from God and cannot be achieved through human efforts but by God’s grace freely given to those who ask persistently in prayer.

3. The Present Context

As said above, our generation faces a more serious challenge. There are myriads of opinions, visions and, ideals vying for attention. We live in an age when technology has provided powerful tools for manipulating the people. The mass media project and normalize visions, ideals and life goals that sometimes run contrary to the Good News. Because such ideals are widespread in society, they acquire a semblance of truth. From another perspective, no generation has had more information available to it. We can google anything and everything, We can ask Siri or ChatGPT. But information is not the same as truth. A whole lot of the information out there is fictional and curated, and aim at manipulating us. On another note, we have access to round the clock entertainment. Our online activities are fed to computer algorithms which generate feeds that are customized to our taste. The result is that our attention is hijacked. We are distracted from serious things and hooked on to one pleasure or another. Thus, in our present context, unless we pay close attention to the cultural dynamics we are caught up in, unless we consciously as well as conscientiously seek to remain faithful to the truth of the Gospel, we risk domesticating the Good News, making them serve us rather than allowing ourselves to be transformed by them. Without preaching against prayer, for example, our context places so much emphasis on work and paying bills, we also have gadgets for 24 hour entertainment that people no longer devote quality time for personal prayer or prayer in the family.

4. Asking for the Holy Spirit

We can claim that no generation has been more in need of God's grace than ours. There is much brokenness in the personal lives of people and in families. The prevailing context challenges us to consciously and without ceasing, ask for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit so that we can be led to the fulness of God's truth and truth about ourselves and our context. May the Holy Spirit renew us and renew the face of the earth – Amen.