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## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **State Legislators encouraged to pray and discern God's dream for Texas at 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Mass**

AUSTIN, January 27—Despite the plummeting temperature and frigid wind, many made their way to St. Mary's Cathedral in Austin to celebrate an evening Mass marking the opening of the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Session. The Mass was hosted by Bishop Gregory Aymond, Bishop of the Diocese of Austin, and the Texas Catholic Conference. Bishop Aymond offered the Mass for the intentions of the legislators as well as for a successful legislative session.

"The Legislative Mass is an opportunity for all of us, legislators, staff and those who follow the Texas legislature, to gather together and pray," stated Andrew Rivas, Executive Director of the Texas Catholic Conference. "We are not only a community of people working together; we are also a community of faith working together to fulfill God's call to love and care for one another."

State Senators Steve Ogden and Eddie Lucio, Jr. served as lectors for the Mass, while State Representatives Dora Olivo and Bill Callegari served as gift bearers.

"We gather here today to thank you for your public service," said Bishop Aymond during his homily. "We gather here today to pray for you and to pray with you, that God will continue to enlighten you and use you, your voice and your actions, as a prophetic one in the session."

Bishop Aymond also stressed the importance of being in dialogue with God in prayer, both by listening to God and in asking for God's guidance.

"For those who serve as legislators, the question you have to go to God with is 'God what do you want?' 'What is your dream for the state of Texas in this 81<sup>st</sup> Session?'"

After the Mass, participants were welcomed to Bishop's Hall for a reception. There, they had an opportunity to pick up a legislative agenda from the Texas Catholic Conference which outlined the Texas Bishops' public policy priorities, and meet Conference staff. For more information on the Texas Catholic Conference, visit [www.TXcatholic.org](http://www.TXcatholic.org).

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