



The Holy See

HOLY MASS WITH PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

*Vatican Basilica
Sunday, 22 April 2018*

[Multimedia]

Dearest Brothers and Sisters,

Our sons have been called to the order of priests. Let us consider the position to which they are to be promoted in the Church. It is true that the Lord Jesus is the High Priest of the New Testament, and God has also made his entire people a royal priesthood in Christ. But Jesus Christ also chose some of his followers to carry out publicly in the Church a priestly ministry in his name on behalf of mankind, continuing his personal mission as teacher, priest and shepherd.

Indeed, for this reason he was sent by the Father, and he in turn sent into the world the Apostles, and then the Bishops and their successors. Priests are co-workers of the order of Bishops, to whom they are joined in the priestly office and are called to serve the People of God.

Our brothers have seriously considered this step, and are now to be ordained to priesthood in the presbyteral order. They are to serve Christ the Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd, in making the Body of Christ, which is the Church, grow into the People of God, a holy temple of the Spirit.

They are called to be molded into the likeness of Christ, the Supreme and Eternal Priest. By consecration, they will be made true priests of the New Testament, and in this role, sharing in the priesthood of their Bishop, to preach the Gospel, sustain God's people, and preside at rites of worship, above all the celebration of the Lord's sacrifice.

My beloved sons and brothers, you are now to be advanced to the order of the presbyterate. You must apply your energies to the duty of teaching in the name of Christ, the chief Teacher. Share with all mankind the Word of God you received with joy. Read and meditate on the Word of the Lord, believe what you read, teach what you believe, and put into practice what you teach.

Let the doctrine you teach be true nourishment for the People of God. Let the example of your life attract the followers of Christ so that by word and action you may build up the House of God which is the Church. In the same way you must continue the sanctifying work of Christ. The spiritual sacrifice of the faithful will be perfected through your ministry, united to Christ's sacrifice, and through your hands be offered sacramentally on the altar in celebration of the Holy Mysteries.

Know what you are doing and imitate the mystery you celebrate. In memory of the Lord's death and Resurrection, carry Christ's death within you and walk with him in the newness of life.

When you baptize you will bring new men and women into the People of God. In the Sacrament of Penance, you will forgive sins in the name of Christ and the Church. And here I would like to pause to implore you: please do not tire of being merciful. Think about your sins, about your miseries which Jesus forgives. Be merciful. With holy oil you will relieve and console the sick. You will celebrate the liturgy and offer thanks and praise to God throughout the day, praying not only for the People of God but for the whole of humanity.

Remember that you are chosen from among mankind and appointed to act in their favour by attending to the things of God. Carry out the work of Christ's ministry with genuine joy and love, seeking only to please God and not yourselves and others, nor seeking other interests. Only at the service of God, for the good of the holy faithful People of God.

Finally, conscious of sharing in the work of Christ, the Head and Shepherd of the Church, and united with the Bishop and subject to him, seek to bring the faithful together into a unified family and to lead them effectively to God the Father, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Always keep in mind the example of the Good Shepherd who came not to be served but to serve, and to seek out and rescue those who were lost.