Canadian Engineer ordained a priest (2)

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2017-07-27

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Toronto, was ordained a priest in Rome on April 29, 2017 by Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello. He had previously studied at McGill and worked for a few years in Ottawa. In this interview he tells us about his ordination, the importance of the liturgy—the subject of his doctoral thesis—and of his work as a priest.

1. What is the work of a priest of Opus Dei like and how does it differ from that of other priests?

It seems to me that the main work is the same for all priests. We are instruments of Jesus Christ who desires that everyone in the Church has access to the sacraments, especially the Holy Mass and the sacrament of reconciliation, and that the Word of God be preached to them. And I would add that Catholics have pastors who accompany and lead them to God. The situations in which that work is done, be it within

a parish community, as the chaplain of a hospital or of a school, by providing pastoral care to a centre of Opus Dei, etc., can be many. What unites all priests is our common denominator: we are co-workers in the service of the local Church.

2. A lot of water has flowed under the bridge since you left Canada in 2014: physician-assisted suicide has been legalized by the Supreme Court, marijuana will be legalized next year, Canada is a world leader in accepting refugees, and in heeding Pope Francis's *Laudato Si* call to be environmentally responsible. What challenges and joys do you foresee as you prepare to come back home to work as a priest?

I hope that as Canadian Catholics we continue to honour our roots and feel very much part of the universal Church. What great examples of

commitment to God and country are the latest Canadian saints François de Laval and Marie de l'Incarnation!

3. Isn't it an uphill struggle to attempt to evangelize youth in a secularized, permissive society?

I agree that nowadays children and teenagers face new threats that can easily blind them to the important things in life. High on that list is access to online pornography with all the physical and emotional problems it burdens a person with. Priests can do a great deal of good giving support to individuals, families, schools, etc. through formation, the sacraments, and suggesting professional help when a person has developed an addiction. However, above all the youth are the future of Canada and of the Church. I have a great hope and confidence in them and in God's grace.

4. Who among your family members attended your ordination?

I come from a family of seven children. We all grew up in Madrid, in Spain. One of our younger siblings passed away a few moments after birth. Thankfully a religious sister was on call at the hospital, and she baptized him. My parents as well as one my brothers and his young family live in Madrid. Another brother moved to Mexico, where he met his wife. They live there to this day. The two youngest ones, Maria and Pablo, live in Galicia, Spain. Both are school teachers. During the days of the ordination and the first Masses, I have been surrounded by the prayers and closeness of my parents and siblings, even though not all of them were able to come to Rome because of family and professional commitments.

5. Do you have a younger brother who is a priest of Opus Dei and who taught you at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross?

Yes, it's my brother Juan. He is a year younger than I am but was ordained a priest back in 2006. He is a professor at the Liturgy Institute of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, where I'm doing my graduate studies. And yes, I took two of his classes in my first year here. I don't think he was thrilled about it, but then, after all, part of my interest in liturgy comes from his example and research.