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Cardinal Bertello ordains 31 priests from 16 countries

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This afternoon Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello ordained to the priesthood 31 faithful of the Opus Dei prelature from 16 countries: Australia, Belgium, Chile, Canada, Colombia,

Spain, the United States, the Philippines, Guatemala, Italy, Lebanon, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Kenya and Venezuela. The ceremony took place in the Basilica of Saint Eugene in Rome.

“Be priest-priests, priests one hundred percent”

During his homily, Cardinal Bertello, president of the Governorate of Vatican City State, reminded those present that in order to fulfill the priest's mission, "each priest must have the same relationship with Jesus that our Lord has with the Father: remaining united to Christ, without trying to pass on his own ideas, and always remembering that without Him he can do nothing."

"Dear ordinands," he said to them, "I am sure that all your ministry will merge into the service of that supreme Word of God, Jesus Christ

and his Gospel, in proclaiming the love of the Father and his mercy."

The Cardinal added: "In a few moments you will be transformed into Christ. You will be his living instruments, as though your person disappeared into His, so that He may act through you." From now on, he said, "the Mass will be the central moment in your day."

The ordaining cardinal invited the new priests to be "priests-priests, priests one hundred percent, as your holy Founder Saint Josemaria used to say. Exercise your priesthood with deep joy and ardent faith. The brothers and sisters you will encounter in your ministry expect from you the prophetic testimony that the Eucharist is the heart of the priesthood. It doesn't matter what sort of ministry is entrusted to you; always and everywhere you are called to build up Opus Dei, the Work

of God, in humility, obedience and charity."

During his homily Cardinal Bertello thanked the Prelate of Opus Dei, Monsignor Fernando Ocariz, for inviting him to preside over the ordinations and said that "this helps me to feel even closer to the Work, and obliges me to always accompany you with my prayer."

The ceremony was attended by numerous relatives of the new priests. "What sustains us at the moment," said the newly ordained Portuguese priest Diogo Brito, "are the prayers of so many relatives and friends." Italian Luigi Vassallo explained: "We have tried to live these days in a climate of prayer and accompanied by the prayers of many people. May we be able to bring the joy and mercy of Christ everywhere, as Pope Francis asks us."

The new priests had received the ordination to the diaconate six months ago from Bishop Javier Echevarría, Prelate of Opus Dei, who died on Dec. 12. Álvaro Mira, from Spain, said, "Bishop Javier Echevarría will have been very happy watching our ordination from heaven. He ordained us as deacons, and I believe we are all asking him to help us be good priests. I remember the hug he gave me at that ceremony. It gives me a lot of confidence to think that he is asking God for us to be good instruments for Him."

Here are the names of the new priests and their countries of origin:

- Alejandro Pardo Fernández (Spain)
- Etienne Montero Redondo (Belgium)
- Andrés Echevarría Escribens (Peru)
- Giovanni Manfrini (Italy)

- Erwin See (Philippines)
- Álvaro Ruiz Antón (Spain)
- Javier Ruiz Antón (Spain)
- Rafael Peró Baig (Lebanon)
- Salvador Rego Bárcena
(Canada)
- Carlos Aníbal Valencia Ospina
(Colombia)
- Diogo da Cunha e Lorena de
Brito (Portugal)
- Francisco José Chapa Sancho
(Spain)
- Luigi Vassallo (Italy)
- Pablo Rojo Mardones (Spain)
- Martin Mundia Gikonyo (Kenya)
- Álvaro René Villamar Rosales
(Guatemala)
- Álvaro Javier Mira García
(Spain)
- Alexander Vaz Serrano (Spain)
- Santiago Callejo Goena (Spain)
- Joseph Frederick Keefe (United
States)
- Daniele Guasconi (Italy)
- Francisco Javier Bordonaba
Leiva (Spain)

- Phillip Joseph Elias (Australia)
- John Paul Watson (Australia)
- Rafael Alejandro Quintero Pérez (Venezuela)
- António Maria Braga Dias Alves Mendes (Portugal)
- Benjamín Goldenberg Ibáñez (Chile)
- Gerard Jiménez Clopés (Spain)
- Dante Parado Estepa Jr. (Philippines)
- Adam Andrzej Sołomiewicz (Poland)
- Ricardo Guillermo Bazán Mogollón (Peru)

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