

Priestly Ordinations: “God always promises the future”

34 faithful of Opus Dei were ordained priests on Saturday, May 4th, at the Basilica of St. Eugene in Rome. The new priests come from 16 different countries and join the clergy of the Prelature.

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Cardinal Antonio Cañizares, Archbishop of Valencia (Spain), ordained the new priests. In his

homily, he told them, "Never forget: the good shepherd is the one who, like Christ, always thinks of the good of souls rather than his own personal interests. Thus he is capable of the greatest sacrifices, because he knows how to love."

The Prelate of Opus Dei, Monsignor Fernando Ocáriz, participated in the ceremony from the presbytery. Many relatives and friends of the new priests were in attendance.

"Only love," Bishop Cañizares said, "can give meaning to a life of dedication: a love that we want to endure 'to the end,' to the point of forgetting ourselves, and that leads us to live happily, working wherever God wants us, carrying out His will with loving care."

Citing Pope Francis, Cañizares insisted: "Accompaniment is the key to being pastors today. We need ministers who embody the closeness

of the Good Shepherd, priests who are living icons of closeness." He also encouraged the new priests to take special care of the Mass as well as the sacrament of Penance: "Faced with the marvel of being a confessor, of being a minister of God's grace, you should consider that we all need forgiveness: may you be good confessors as well as good penitents. Accompanying others means you are also striving to go forward, fighting against your own shortcomings while counting on God's grace."

Cañizares imagined what St. Josemaría might say to the families of the ordinands: "Fill yourselves with joy because the Lord has deigned to choose one of your family as His minister, so that he might bring God's peace to the whole world."

"God always promises the future," Cañizares assured them, "and today

He is announcing to us once again that He will never stop sending us shepherds and that the assistance of the priestly ministry will never be lacking."

Listening and understanding, not judging

A few days before the ordination, several of the ordinands were interviewed and asked to reflect about the path that has led them to the priesthood:

Yann Le Bras, from France, said, "There's no reason to be afraid, because a vocation is something that comes from God, and God always accompanies all of us, but especially His priests. If I had to be afraid of something, it would be myself! So I am asking God to help me and Our Lady, who is the Mother of priests."

New Zealander Samuel Fancourt converted to Catholicism some years

ago and is now receiving the priesthood. "When you look back at everything, you realize that God has been working in everything in your life. People, places, events... Even experiences that seem really far from the faith. But over time, you realize that there has always been a plan there."

Paul Kioko, from Kenya, worked as a doctor for several years in a hospital in Nairobi. "A priest is someone who is 'on call' not just 24 hours: he is on call every single moment of his life. Because he has souls that are entrusted to him, and he has to be ready at any moment of the day or night."

According to Italian Claudio Tagliapietra, from Venice, "the priest is someone who has to know how to listen and, when he is listening, he doesn't need to judge but understand. He is a person who

won't always have the answer to the question, because solutions are something built through patience."

Meet the new priests

The 34 future priests come from Brazil, Colombia, Spain, Mexico, New Zealand, Venezuela, Chile, the United States, Kenya, France, Paraguay, El Salvador, Uganda, the Philippines, Peru and Italy:

- Sérgio Sardinha de Azevedo (Brazil)
- Luis Miguel Bravo Álvarez (Colombia)
- José María Cerveró García (Spain)
- Miguel Ángel de Fuentes Guillén (Spain)
- Ernesto de la Peña González (Mexico)
- José Luis de Prada Llusá (Spain)
- Javier María Erburu Calvo (Spain)

- Samuel Thomas Harold Fancourt (New Zealand)
- Gerardo Andrés Febres-Cordero Carrillo (Venezuela)
- José Nicolás Garcés Lira (Chile)
- Óscar Garza Aincioa (Spain)
- Pedro González-Aller Gross (Spain)
- John Paul Graells Antón (United States)
- Diego Guerrero Gil (Spain)
- Jorge Iriarte Franco (Spain)
- Paul Muleli Kioko (Kenya)
- Yann Le Bras (France)
- Cristhian Alcides Lezcano Vicencini (Paraguay)
- Álvaro Linares Rodríguez (Spain)
- Miguel Llamas Díez (Spain)
- Eduardo Andrés Marín Perna (El Salvador)
- Javier Martínez González (Spain)
- Luis María Martínez Otero (Spain)

- Bernardo José Montes Arraztoa (Chile)
- Bernard Kagunda Nderito (Kenya)
- Deogratias Gumisiriza Nyamutale (Uganda)
- Nathaniel Peña Baluda (Philippines)
- Rafael Quinto Pojol (Philippines)
- César Augusto Risco Benites (Peru)
- Rafael de Freitas Sartori (Brazil)
- David Saumell Ocáriz (Spain)
- Cayetano Taberner Navarro (Spain)
- Claudio Tagliapietra (Italy)
- Fernando María Valdés López (Spain)
