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Filipino and 17 other faithful of Opus Dei ordained in Rome

On Saturday, 18 members of Opus Dei from 12 countries were ordained as deacons by Bishop Stephen Lee Bun-Sang of Macau. The ceremony took place at the Basilica of Saint Eugene in Rome.

11/24/2025

On Saturday, 22 November, Joseph Michael Nicolas Arbilo (Filipino) and 17 other members of Opus Dei were

ordained as deacons by Bishop Stephen Lee Bun-Sang of Macau. We invite you to join us in prayer and thanksgiving for these new deacons.

Bishop Stephen Lee: “As Pope Leo XIV reminds us, Jesus calls you first of all to a friendship with him”

In his homily, Bishop Lee reflected on Jesus’ words, “I have called you friends” (Jn 15:15), reminding the new deacons that friendship with Jesus “will touch every aspect of your life” and that “everything must be taken up and transformed, like the grain of wheat in the Gospel.”

The bishop then reminded the newly ordained that the Church, “our Mother, entrusts you with the authority to preach the Word of God, to distribute the Body of Christ in

Holy Communion, and to carry out works of charity in the name of the Lord himself. We all need to keep in mind, and remind our brothers and sisters, what today's liturgy teaches us: in the goodness of our Lord, mercy and law are interwoven.”

He encouraged them, in their new mission, to share “the great truths of our faith, hope, and love — especially hope — in a positive way,” because “this is a very important service in today's world, where there is a strong tendency in worldly souls, as St. Josemaría wrote, to forget the Lord's mercy, love, and hope.”

Quoting Pope Leo XIV, the bishop of Macau added that in friendship with Christ “you will be able to ‘become a joyful man and a joyful priest; a bridge, not an obstacle, for those who come to you seeking Christ.’”

Finally, he congratulated the families and friends of the new deacons,

asking them to pray for and support those who have begun this path toward the priesthood.

Msgr. Ocariz: “Through your closeness and your prayers, you have been part of God’s Providence”

At the end of the ceremony, Msgr. Fernando Ocariz, Prelate of Opus Dei and the new deacons’ ordinary, thanked the ordaining bishop and congratulated the ordinands and their families. He encouraged them to continue praying for the new deacons: “I would like to congratulate you and share in the whole Church’s joy at this diaconal ordination. We give thanks to the Lord, who continues to send labourers into his harvest. You,

deacons, are called to a special pastoral charity.”

He continued: “I thank the parents, siblings, relatives, and friends of the new deacons. Through your closeness and your prayers, you have been part of God’s Providence in making their response to the Lord’s call possible. Continue praying for them and supporting them with your affection.”

“We remember St. Josemaría in a special way today, and we ask for his intercession for everyone who is here and everyone who has joined us today.”

The 18 new deacons come from Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Italy, Kenya, Nigeria, the Philippines, Spain and Venezuela. Their names are: José María Álvarez de Toledo Martín de Peralta, Joseph Michael Nicolas Arbilo, Tobechukwu Ugochukwu

Attoh, Alfonso Carlos Aza Jácome, Pablo Bistué Muñoz, Alfonso Cabrera Salinas, Pedro José de León Chávez, Francisco de Paula Febres-Cordero Carrillo, Josimar Pereira Freitas, Juan Martín Gismondi, José Tomás Larraín Correa, Anthony Oluchukwu Momah, Peter Leonard Otieno Ndeda, Charles Ejike Ozoene, David Serrano Ariza, Federico Angelo Carlo Skodler, Víctor Torre de Silva Valera, Augustine Onyekachi Ufoegbune.

You can rewatch the live broadcast from the Basilica of Saint Eugene [here](#), and download the program for the ceremony [here](#).

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