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Homily, Photos: Deacon Ordinations (March 2018)

A photo gallery and text of the homily delivered by Bishop Klaus Küng at the ordination of three faithful of Opus Dei as transitional deacons on 3 March 2018.

03/04/2018

Photos from the Ceremony

The Mass of the ordination ceremony was held at Saint Josemaria Parish (Rome). The Prelate of Opus Dei,

Monsignor Fernando Ocariz, attended the ceremony from the presbytery. Before being ordained deacons, the future priests – Gabriel Robledillo, Javier Pérez and Emanuel Estrada – exercised their professional careers over a number of years, as they themselves describe in this article.

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Homily of Bishop Klaus Kung at the ordination ceremony at the parish of Saint Josemaria (Rome) on 3 March 2018

It is a great joy to see three professionals who have worked hard for many years receiving ordination as deacons, because they want to become priests. The founder of Opus Dei, Saint Josemaria, always had a strong sentiment in his heart whenever one of his sons was becoming a priest. On the one hand, he believed that all men and women

are called to holiness and apostolate in the middle of the world, constituting in itself a vocation of great worth; on the other hand, he knew all too well about the urgent need for good and holy priests.

I remember very well that when the date of my own ordination was drawing near, Saint Josemaria told us: “You don’t have to be supermen.” And he stressed that all men and women, priests or not, are called to holiness. What he did consider specific for priests – and the same goes for deacons – is that they receive a particular calling to serve. And he told us: “You need to be like a carpet so that the others can tread softly.” It’s the same thing that Pope Francis is repeating time and again, whenever he speaks to seminarians, deacons, priests or bishops. As Our Lord said, “The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

The diaconate is a triple service: a service to the Word of God, a service to the altar and a service to one's neighbor, to all those who suffer.

Today, at a time when so many people have left God far-away in their lives, service to the Word of God is a very demanding task. One needs to ask the Holy Spirit for help, to have a big heart, and to listen closely to the people on the street. But at the same time, it is a beautiful mission, because often those we help are like blind people who begin to see and to realize what they are receiving, that God seeks us and helps us, and therefore they are very happy.

Service to the altar draws us to the treasure that we have, and confers on us the precious task of serving Our Lord and the people of God. Discovering the sacred, discovering the presence of Our Lord and his

closeness and goodness, which we can bring to both the healthy and the sick, is a beautiful work.

Finally, the service of charity, central to the deacon's office, is also central to the mission of the Church herself, as Pope Francis rightly stresses, because it is precisely those people who have no knowledge of the faith, no knowledge of Christ or of God, who often begin to sense Our Lord's closeness when they experience the love of Christians.

What are the most important things in order to be able to carry out these tasks of the deacon and to prepare well for the priesthood?

Live your dedication well. Today you are making a solemn promise to live celibately for the love of God and for love of the Church, whom you wish to serve. I am personally convinced that for a priest's life to be effective, the example of a dedicated life is of

great importance, and this also includes celibacy lived out of love for the Kingdom of Heaven. And it seems to me that wherever the faith is truly awakened, there are born Christian families from which come children and vocations with the availability to live celibately and to serve others.

One thing is certain: to be faithful, to carry out a life of dedication, to be effective as a deacon, or as a priest, or as a bishop, one needs interior life. When you are ordained deacons, you also commit yourself to praying each day the prayer of the Church, that is, the breviary. Be men of faith! Take care of your prayer life! Have affection for the Holy Mass! Receive the sacrament of confession with due frequency! Keep always alive your struggle to be saints! These are the conditions for being happy, cheerful and optimistic, even in the most difficult situations.

We all need God's help. We have need of his Word, his Presence, his forgiveness and grace, his closeness. And He will never forget those who serve Him. Also in today's world, a deacon, a priest, can be very happy and fruitful.

May God bless you. If you have recourse to our Lady, she will protect you and always bring you to Jesus, keeping you on the sure path.

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