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A Journey of Grace & Mercy

On 25 May 2024, twenty-nine faithful of the Prelature of Opus Dei will be ordained priests in Rome; among them is Wai Leung (Billy) Ng from Hong Kong.

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Billy was an English teacher in Hong Kong before going to Spain and Rome to finish his ecclesiastical studies. He taught for four years in Tak Sun Secondary School (TSSS), also his alma mater. Now, as he is preparing

for priestly ordination, he remarked: “It has been a long journey of divine mercy and abundant grace. I owe this all to everyone who has helped me along the way with their prayers, patience and company.”

Billy’s story in the Catholic faith began when he was allocated a nearby Chinese-medium school after primary school in Fo Tan. His parents however decided to put him in Tak Sun Secondary School (a Catholic school run by the Prelature of Opus Dei) to learn more English, which they felt would be beneficial for his future. His parents’ decision bore much fruit, as he not only became an English teacher, he even got baptised in the Catholic Church and is now about to become a priest.

How it all happened

While in TSSS he appreciated the daily gospel reading with commentary followed by the Our

Father in the morning, as well as the short examination of conscience at the end of the day with a Hail Mary. He learned more English by devouring a pocket-sized English Gospel book. He also witnessed his classmates getting baptised each year.

When he was in Form 3, his Catholic classmates invited him to an activity in a centre of Opus Dei in Hong Kong island. There he read some parts of the catechism in Chinese. About a year later, a new centre for young people called Sui Wo Study Centre opened in the New Territories, and he started going there for more catechism classes. After a year of instruction, he was asked if he wanted to get baptised, but he felt he was not yet ready. He appreciated that his would-be godfather respected his decision.

In 2005, St John Paul II passed away and Billy was moved watching the funeral ceremony on television with the people of the centre. It was around that time also when he made the decision to get baptised the following year on 15 April 2006. His younger brother, John, who was also studying in TSSS, got baptised the year after.

Diaconate ordination of Billy on 18 Nov 2023.

World Youth Day 2008

After his A-level exams in 2008, Billy held a summer job in a supermarket to earn money for the trip to World Youth Day in Sydney. “It was amazing to see so many young people from all over the world together with Pope Benedict XVI. After the trip I made up my mind to start reading the books of the Pope,” he said. While he was there, he got to listen to the then Prelate of Opus Dei, Bishop Javier Echevarría. During a get-together he

had with young people, he spoke words which Billy described as having “entered straight to my heart,” even though the Prelate spoke in Spanish and there was only a simultaneous translation to English for the audience.

In university, he studied English Language and Literature. The formation he was receiving in Sui Wo and the great desires after his baptism moved him to join the Catholic Society at the University. Later on, he became part of the federation of Catholic Societies in Hong Kong, which carries out social projects.

Summer Camp in Rocacorba

In 2010 he had a chance to teach English at a summer camp for secondary school students in Spain. Seeing these students spending time in the camp instead of enjoying the summer for themselves, and

knowing that these young people were also thinking about their vocation in the Church moved him. He was even more moved when he learned that the university-aged coordinators of the camp were Numeraries of Opus Dei. He started considering his own vocation to Opus Dei. In his enthusiasm after coming back from the summer camp, he suggested to the Director of Sui Wo how good it would be to set up a similar campsite in Hong Kong. The reply he got moved him once more: “The most important thing is to love Jesus Christ.”

Before becoming part of Opus Dei, he spoke to his parents about it. His parents, who knew the people of Sui Wo, told him to do whatever would make him happy, an answer similar to the one he received when he asked them about getting baptised.

English Teacher

Having finished his university course, he wanted to be a teacher. Part of the post graduate diploma training was a six-week immersion program in Wellington, New Zealand. While there, he appreciated the care of the people of Opus Dei who would visit the capital to take care of those attending the activities of Christian formation.

Having finished the teacher training, he started working in TSSS as a teaching assistant, and later as an assistant teacher and finally, a regular teacher. He taught English and also Ethics and Religious studies. Some of the students of TSSS went to Sui Wo for some activities of formation outside the school in which Billy helped coordinate.

Billy with some other deacons who will be ordained priests of the Prelature of Opus Dei on 25 May 2024.

Studies and his mother's Baptism

In 2017, he went to Spain to continue his ecclesiastical studies, then he moved to Rome in 2020 to do post graduate studies in theology, each time adjusting to a new language of instruction. In the transition from Spain to Rome, he learned from his mother that she had stage four lung cancer. He asked her if she was interested in receiving instructions in the Catholic faith but she was not ready yet. Soon after, she was similarly invited by a long-time swimming companion and later by a neighbour, and she started receiving classes. After a period of catechesis, she was baptised in the Vigil Mass of Divine Mercy Sunday in 2022.

The following year, when Billy was already preparing for the diaconate ordination, his mother's condition worsened. Billy was able to accompany her in person days before she passed away on 24 April 2023, exactly one year after her

baptism. She was already unconscious for two days, but just before receiving Holy Communion the day before she died, she was awake. She offered for the Church her sufferings during the night since cancer patients are unable to sleep due to pain.

Priestly Ordination 2024

His father, siblings and some relatives will be able to accompany Billy in Rome for the ordination. Attending as well are the Principal and Supervisor of Tak Sun Secondary School, and the Managing Director of the sponsoring body of the school, East Asian Educational Association (EAEA). Some former schoolmates, friends and the Director of Sui Wo will also be there. Billy is asking for prayers so that he “may be a holy and faithful priest following the Heart of Jesus.”

The bishop who will ordain the 29 deacons is Msgr. Paul Toshihiro Sakai, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Osaka-Takamatsu, Japan. The ordination ceremonies can be watched via live streaming using [this link](#).

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