Given by Bishop F. Eduardo Cervantes Merino

Ordinands: Rodel Cervantes Sapalo and Marciano López Solís



We gather today on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on which the Church celebrates her triumph in Christ by being raised in body and soul to heaven and exalted above the choirs of angels. We, disciples of Christ and still pilgrims on this earth, encouraged by this hope, gather together in this parish community for the priestly ordination of our brothers Rodel Cervantes Sapalo and Marciano López Solís. As we know well, these brothers are part of the Congregation of the Augustinians of the Assumption, who we lovingly call the “Assumptionists.”

It is cause for profound joy that these brothers of ours will receive sacred orders in our Diocese of Orizaba on this feast that *fills us with joy in God our savior*. May this celebration encourage us to imitate the missionary drive of Mary by being a Church that brings the joy of the Gospel wherever we go, that communicates and brings those we encounter closer to the Lord Jesus, especially the poor, needy and marginalized. Adopting the attitude of the Blessed Virgin is important for every Christian, and in a particular way for the Augustinians of the Assumption.

My dear brothers Rodel and Marciano, remember that a vocation always flows from the mercy of God, who gazes upon he who is humble and simple. The Lord looks upon us and calls us without any merit of our own. It is God who first gave us life and called us to be part of his Church on the day of our baptism. We know that in the Church, He continues to call *some from among the people and, through the imposition of hands, makes them participants in his ministry of salvation*
. Yes, the Lord Jesus
appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message
(Mark 3:14), called to make the people who encounter Jesus jump for joy, like in today's gospel. He who responds positively to this call fills his life with joy and lives a disciple-like process of permanent configuration with the Teacher, within the community, to sanctify himself by consecrating his life to God and working for the salvation of souls. Whoever has encountered Jesus fills his entire life with joy and meaning and goes out to communicate this joyful experience of encounter, especially
wherever the need for the light and the life of the Risen Christ is greatest
(EG 30). My brothers: The Lord calls us and sends us to evangelize.

Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation (Mark 16:15). This is the news that must be proclaimed by you and every disciple who has encountered the Risen Christ: Christ is the merciful face of the Father revealed; Christ's death and resurrection for our sins is the greatest expression of God's love for us; he gives us life and renews it; he fills it with joy and meaning. This is the assignment you are now accepting. I invite you to announce this news with creativity, breaking the boring schemes by which some try to contain the eternal newness of the Gospel. All of us need to renew our encounter with the Risen Christ and recover the original newness of the Gospel; in this way
new avenues, paths of creativity with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words
with new meaning for today's world will spring up (EG 11);
everyone has a right to receive the Gospel. Christians have the duty to proclaim the Gospel without excluding anyone…as people who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet
(EG 15). To achieve this, it is necessary to
go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel

(cf EG 20), as Pope Francis tells us.

Dear brothers, in the solemn *Prayer of Ordination*, which will be recited in a few moments, the Bishop, after reminding us of the story of salvation, recalling how God was always willing to provide sacred ministers for the communities of the Old Covenant, and confessing his own human limitations and needs, will ask Almighty God to confer upon Rodel and Marciano, deacons presented by the Church, the dignity of the presbyterate. He will ask Almighty God to unfurl all his power and *renew the Spirit of Holiness in their hearts*, and in that way they will receive *the second degree of priestly ministry and will be examples of life in community*. The prayer and the imposition of hands by the Bishop bring with them the presence and the restorative power of the Holy Spirit upon the candidates, so that the sanctity of their priestly life may become a living example to the community. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the person of Jesus Christ, thereby making us witnesses of Christ's holiness within the Church and in the world. We are called to experience and to grow in this holiness.

We also ask in this prayer that the *Holy Spirit* lead you on the path of holiness and make of you an example for the community: the priest is asked to be *an honest collaborator of the Order of Bishops so that, docile to the grace of the Holy Spirit, he may preach the Gospel in such a way that it bears fruit in the hearts of the people*; this he is asked to do, without limitation, *to the ends of the earth*. It is clear that the fruit of a priest's preaching does not depend on ability but on his docility to the Spirit. Let us not forget that the Lord does not judge as men do and isn't fooled by appearances; rather, he sees the true interior, and looks upon those who are simple and humble of heart. In addition to the preaching of the Gospel, the priest is also called to the *faithful celebration of the sacred mysteries* – in particular, the sacraments: *Baptism*, to renew the Christian family, the holy *Eucharist*, as the bread of life, the *Forgiveness* of sins, and the comfort of the sick in the *Anointing of the Sick and holy Viaticum*. The celebration of the sacraments are privileged moments of encounter with the holiness of God.

Next, we ask the Holy Spirit to grant the priestly ordinands the grace to live a *spirituality of*

communion , not only to make your pastoral work and your experiences in religious community more effective, but to feed the very source of your life, which is prayer. The spirituality of communion has common prayer as its source. The *Prayer of Ordination* outlines the way of life for priests. I invite you brothers, Rodel and Marciano, to keep this in mind and meditate upon it frequently, remembering the particular ways in which the priesthood of Christ is a work and gift of the Holy Spirit. It is a way of life that must be fully embraced.

Assumptionist brothers, may the grace of this day strengthen your vocation and charism in full communion with the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. May you not have sad faces! As Pope Francis says: *Where there are religious, there is joy. We are called to know and show that God is able to fill our hearts to the brim with happiness; that we need not seek our happiness elsewhere; that the authentic fraternity found in our communities increases our joy; and that our total self-giving in service to the Church, to families and young people, to the elderly and the poor, brings us life-long personal fulfilment* (Letter to All Consecrated People II, 1; Year of Consecrated Life).

May Our Lady of the Assumption, anticipation and image of the perfection that the Church will one day attain, encourage your priestly ministry, your consecrated life and the Christian life of all who participate in this holy Eucharist so that, full of hope, we may work to build up the Kingdom of God.

So be it!

August 15, 2019