

**Installation of Ministries Mass
Assumption Seminary
February 3, 2018**

As we gather for this beautiful moment in the formation of our brother seminarians, we are blessed to hear the story of Solomon. The king asked for one thing from all of God's abundance. He asked for wisdom to serve God's people. Dear brothers, it is especially important as you are installed into the ministries of Lector and Acolyte, to reflect on the gift of wisdom in your own lives. As Pope Francis reminds us: "The first gift of the Holy Spirit, according to [our] traditional list, is wisdom. It is not merely human wisdom, no... At the time of his coronation as king of Israel, God asked Solomon what gift he wanted to receive. Solomon did not ask for wealth, success, fame, or a long and happy life, instead he asked for 'an understanding heart that knows how to distinguish good from evil.' This is wisdom: it is the grace of being able to see everything with the eyes of God." (12 April 2014).

God sends us out as his missionary disciples, not to preach our own word, or to conform ourselves to some mundane ideals. He sends us out to do his will, with his words in our mouth. You who will be received into the ministry of lector, remember whose word you are to speak. You who will be received into the ministry of acolyte, remember whose work you are called to carry out. Conform yourselves to him and not to any vain human design. You are here to serve the Lord, and "to see everything with the eyes of God." You are here taking on these new ministries faithfully. May you take the opportunity to ask God for his gift of wisdom in this important moment of your formation.

The Church celebrated the Presentation of Jesus in the temple yesterday. We saw Simeon and his fellow prophet Anna give thanks to God for rewarding their lifetime of service and faithfulness. They had

kept a tireless vigil, speaking the Word of the Lord and serving his people at worship. Let them be your example, and glorify the Lord by your lives. We see Jesus and the Apostles in today's gospel passage, exhausted and seeking rest. But when the people of God come looking for the grace that only God can give, Jesus goes to work again. He pushes himself beyond human ideas of what is fair or what he deserves. He lives for the people who he was sent to serve.

So, my brothers, the Church sends you once again. These ministries are not only holy duties. They also serve as a reminder of the call you have received. God has called you to see like he sees, and to carry out his saving mission in the Church in a special way. Renew your commitment to your call. Be moved by the needs of God's people. Be motivated to pour yourselves out for them. Go beyond what the world sees as "enough", and give your lives like Jesus did.

There are enough people in the world trying to serve the world with human wisdom. We Christians know well that this is insufficient. Through the Lord, we offer a better way. Conform your ministries not to this world, but to the wisdom of God that surpasses all human wisdom. Humble yourselves, and let the Lord teach you his statutes. Only when you speak the Word of the Lord, and only when you serve with the heart of the Lord, will the sheep hear his voice in you, and find his grace in your ministry.

We ask Our Lady of Guadalupe to intercede for you today and always, she who presented the Lord to the world and conformed herself to the wisdom of God. My brothers, make your prayer the prayer of Solomon: "O Lord, my God, you have made me, your servant... I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen... Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart."