

Homily – M.SP.S. Ordination to Priesthood

December 10, 2016

My dear sisters and brothers, we gather to celebrate a new beginning for our brother who is about to be ordained priest. My brother, this is a special moment of transition in your life. Yes, you will be the same person that you have always been, but you will now be clothed with the Holy Spirit to take on a new mission as a priestly missionary disciple of the risen Lord Jesus. The gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands will begin a transformation in your life that will continue to your final breath – as a priest of the Church.

God speaks to all of us – but especially to you – through the prophet Ezekiel: “I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you.” Why? So that you will always walk in God’s ways, faithful to the word of God. You are called to be in a right relationship with your true self, your neighbors, your environment, and God. You are also called to lead others along the path of the kingdom. You are being called and sent to work tirelessly for justice so that God’s peace may bear fruit in the lives of all God’s children – without exception. You are to make incarnate in your priestly life God’s enduring love, mercy, compassion, and fidelity.

To carry out this awesome responsibility, you will need to stay close to God in prayer: “My soul thirsts for you, my God. My soul clings fast to you.” These words of the Psalmist are to inspire your daily prayer. Seek the Lord’s counsel and wisdom. Rely on Jesus who will accompany you every day and help you carry out your responsibilities.

Recognizing your weakness as a human being, a sinner, you will need to be patient with the weakness, sins, and lack of understanding of those whom you will encounter and serve – not overlooking their sins but offering them the healing embrace of God’s mercy and compassion. You are to be a beacon of light when they wander in the darkness -- to help them on their pilgrim way to the Father. Like Jesus, you will learn to say Yes to God’s will through the suffering you will endure. Jesus will be with you, the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen you. Do not fear. Have courage.

Jesus tells us -- and especially you today -- “As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.” That will enable you to bear much abundant fruit in your priestly life and ministry. Our Lady of Guadalupe will be with you, holding you in her maternal love and showing you the way to be a priestly missionary disciple.