

PRIESTHOOD ORDINATION 2019 REMARKS

ST. AGNES CATHEDRAL

Most Reverend John O. Barres

June 22, 2019

Fr. Cody Bobick, Fr. Matthew Browne, Fr. Kenneth Grooms, Fr. Nelson Marquez, Fr. Alexander Turpin and Fr. Roger Velasquez, I want to congratulate you, your parents, your families, your friends, your pastors, your brother priests, our auxiliary and retired bishops, your Vocation Director Fr. Joseph Fitzgerald and his predecessors.

The gift of your priesthood has providentially emerged from the love and sacrifices you have experienced in your families. In the words of Pope Francis, your parents, your families have “transformed the world and history” by joyfully forming you and offering the gift of your priesthood to the Church and to the World today -- this day of your ordination to the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Your experience of your own family life, the domestic Church you grew up in, will have a profound impact on the countless number of families you will serve and lay down your lives for in the parishes of Long Island.

El don de su sacerdocio ha surgido providencialmente del amor y los sacrificios que han experimentado en sus familias. En las palabras del Papa Francisco, sus padres, sus familias han "transformado el mundo y la historia" al formarlos con alegría y ofrecerles el regalo de su sacerdocio a la Iglesia y al mundo de hoy en este día de su ordenación, al sacerdocio de Jesucristo.

Sus experiencias de su propia vida familiar, la Iglesia doméstica en las que crecieron, tendrán un profundo impacto en innumerable familias a las que servirán y entregarán sus vidas aquí en las parroquias de Long Island.

We are grateful for the presence of your formators who are with us here today: Msgr. Peter Vaccari, Rector of St. Joseph Seminary, Msgr. Michael Curran representing both St. Joseph's Seminary and the Pontifical North American College, and Fr. Luis Saldana; Fr. Brian Kiely, rector of Pope St. John XXIII seminary, and Fr. David Thayer, SS, from Theological College and the Catholic University of America.

On this historic day for the Diocese of Rockville Centre, it is exciting to trace how the themes of Pope Francis' *The Joy of the Gospel* (2013), *Laudato Si'* (2015), *The Joy of Love* (2016), *Rejoice and Be Glad* (2018) and *Christus Vivit* (2019) are creatively connecting and reinforcing Pope Francis' global missiology and spirit of evangelization grounded in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

One of the critical themes that is emerging from the teaching texts of Pope Francis is a profound synthesis and practical application of the Sacred Scriptures to daily life.

Pope Francis has a passion for biblical texts and in the words of the Spencer Trappist Fr. Simeon wants biblical texts "to echo in our souls and establish their own rhythm in our thinking, feeling, and even breathing."

Pope Francis models this passion for the Scriptures for our newly ordained priests as they pray biblically the Liturgy of the Hours, engage in daily *lectio divina*, and preach the Joy of the Gospel.

Pope Francis models this biblical passion for Catholics of every vocation and location.

Permit me to offer a few examples of Pope Francis' charism for profound biblical synthesis and practical application of biblical texts to daily life.

In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis says, "All evangelization is based on that word (of God), listened to, meditated upon, lived, celebrated and

witnessed to. The sacred Scriptures are the very source of evangelization.” (174)

In *Laudato Si'* 236, Pope Francis discusses the relationship between classical biblical texts on the Eucharist and an Integral Ecology and Care for the Environment.

He writes: “The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation. . . . Thus, the Eucharist is also a source of light and motivation for our concerns for the environment, directing us to be stewards of all creation.”

In *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis synthesizes a kaleidoscope of Gospel passages in which Jesus is present to families experiencing a wide variety of family challenges, crises and tragedies.

From his miracle at the Wedding Feast of Cana turning water into wine to his parable about family alienation and parental heartbreak in the Prodigal Son, to his weeping with Martha and Mary at the death of his friend Lazarus, we see that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega of every marriage and family. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega of the family of the Church and the entire human family.

In *Rejoice and Be Glad* 144-145, we see Pope Francis aligning our love for the Scriptures with a contemplative attention to the small details of charity in daily life. He writes:

“Let us not forget that Jesus asked his disciples to pay attention to details.

The little detail that wine was running out at a party.

The little detail that one sheep was missing.

The little detail of noticing the widow who offered her two small coins.

The little detail of having spare oil for the lamps, should the bridegroom delay.

The little detail of asking the disciples how many loaves of bread they had.

The little detail of having a fire burning and a fish cooking as he waited for the disciples at daybreak.

A community that cherishes the little details of love, whose members care for one another and create an open and evangelizing environment, is a place where the risen Lord is present, sanctifying it in accordance with the Father's plan."

Finally, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit* addressed to the Youth of the World, Pope Francis writes: "Let us draw upon some of the richness of the sacred Scriptures, since they often speak of young people and of how the Lord draws near to encounter them." (5)

He then does a beautiful synthesis of heroic and holy young people in the Old Testament and in the New Testament with, of course, a special emphasis on the young Jesus and the young Mary.

Pope Francis' charism is to help us see more deeply things we already know about the Sacred Scriptures. Our newly ordained priests are called to follow in his footsteps and let the Word of God be a light and lamp for their steps and priestly ministry (Psalm 119).

Today "we ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest." We celebrate the harvest today of six new Catholic priests to serve the Catholic Church of Long Island.

We celebrate that two of the six priests are from our Long Island Catholic Hispanic community. In honor of our beautiful evangelizing Catholic Hispanic community on Long Island and in honor of the harvest of two of her dedicated sons to the priesthood, I am unveiling for the first time at this priesthood ordination, a vocation recruitment poster designed for our diverse over 500,000 Hispanic community.

This new bi-lingual vocation poster which honors our Long Island Catholic Hispanic community was very carefully thought through and prayed through.

We are celebrating through this beautiful poster -- which will be displayed in very strategic places in our parishes and Catholic schools -- that the Holy Spirit is calling for a rich new harvest of vocations to the priesthood from our Long Island Hispanic families and from all our Catholic families.

In so doing, we honor the many charisms, the 5th Encuentro spirit of family to family evangelization, the crosses experienced and the holiness shared by our Hispanic community with all of Long Island and globally.

In a very personal way as Bishop, I am thanking the entire Hispanic community for the way they have evangelized and inspired me.

The radiant and joyful faces on the poster of our newly ordained priests, Fr. Roger Velasquez and Fr. Nelson Marquez, along with Fr. Daniel Rivera who will begin studying Spiritual Theology in Rome this fall, and our seminarian Manuel Blanco will be a great inspiration and motivator for all of us to be instruments of a rich harvest of vocations to the priesthood.

And the beautiful picture of St. Oscar Romero reminds us of every priest's call to heroic and courageous holiness and mission.

Hoy "le pedimos al maestro de la cosecha que envíe obreros para su cosecha". Celebramos hoy la cosecha de seis nuevos sacerdotes católicos para servir a la Iglesia Católica de Long Island.

Celebramos que dos de los seis sacerdotes son de nuestra comunidad Católica Hispana de Long Island. En honor a nuestra hermosa comunidad evangelizadora Católica Hispana en Long Island y en honor a la cosecha de dos de sus dedicados hijos al sacerdocio, les presento por primera vez en esta ordenación sacerdotal, un póster de reclutamiento vocacional diseñado para nuestra diversa comunidad Hispana con más de 500,000 miembros.

Fr. Bobick, Fr. Browne, Fr. Grooms, Fr. Marquez, Fr. Turpin and Fr. Velasquez, with the change in your ontological identity today in your Ordination as priests, you have entered the inspiring presbyterate of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, a presbyterate deeply committed to holiness, the New Evangelization, the Splendor of Truth, the Divine Mercy and *dramatic missionary growth*.

Always go to the priest saints who were instruments of the Divine Mercy to the people they served in history.

Mary, Queen of the Priesthood, pray for us!

St. John Vianney, pray for us!

St. John Neumann, pray for us!

St. John XXIII, pray for us!

St. Paul VI, pray for us!

St. John Paul II, pray for us!

St. Junipero Serra, pray for us!

St. Oscar Romero, pray for us!

St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More, pray for us!