

HOMILY

Priestly Ordinations – Gladson Dabre OSA & Arthur Bolivar OSA St Augustine's, Hammersmith 5th May, 2018



The Church rejoices today and give thanks to God at the ordination of two new priests, and the presence of such a large congregation witnesses to that joy. The Augustinian Order also rejoices that two of its sons, Gladson and Arthur, will now minister to God's people as priests in the name of the Order. The Church stands ever in need of faithful priests after the heart of Christ, witnesses of his gospel to the men and women of the twenty-first century. Gladson and Arthur, the Church expects much from you as priests.

The young Jeremiah was appalled at the prospect of being called to be a prophet and protested both that he was too young nor a good speaker. As we heard, the Lord God brushed his protests aside, and Jeremiah became a prophet, a tireless herald of God's life-giving word to his people. The priestly ministry and its demands are always greater than our human capacity to discharge them. So, Gladson and Arthur, be humble as you step forward to receive priestly ordination, and bear in mind Christ's words that "*without me, you can do nothing.*" Yet also be confident that the Christ who has called you will not desert you as his ministers. St Augustine remarked that God will not abandon us provided that we do not abandon him.

During this liturgically rich season of Eastertide we are reminded constantly of the saving death and resurrection of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, what the Church calls the paschal mystery. It will be your vocation as priests to proclaim and mediate the new life from God which the risen Christ has gained for us. You will do this through baptising, and forgiving sins in the sacrament of Reconciliation. You will bring his healing touch to the sick and the dying through the Anointing of the Sick, and perhaps most of all you will gather his people around the altar to hear his word and share in the bread of life. Each time you celebrate Mass you will again make present in mystery his one saving sacrifice on the cross. Strive to be faithful and worthy ministers of the Church's sacraments. In the words of Paul to Timothy: "*Be conscientious about what you do and what you teach.*"

As Augustinians you are heirs of that wonderful spiritual treasury which St. Augustine of Hippo has bequeathed to the Church. The universal Church reveres and always has revered St. Augustine for his profound teaching and theological wisdom. Gladson and Arthur, share those sublime riches and insights of St. Augustine with those to whom Christ sends you, and that timeless truth he discovered: that in our

highly complex and often confusing world the human heart that can only find true peace in the One who created us, God alone. In the Lord's farewell discourse to his disciples, an extract of which we heard in our gospel, he wished for them to share his joy in all its fullness. Go out as newly-ordained priests and bring that joy of Christ with you. Pope Francis entitled his first encyclical "**the Joy of the Gospel**".

Make sure you bring that 'smile of Christ' to your work as heralds of his gospel!
Amen.

+Michael G Campbell OSA
Bishop of Lancaster

5 May 2018