



## *Homily – Ordination of Permanent Deacons<sup>i</sup>*

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*Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels  
Los Angeles, California  
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My dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Indeed this is a day of great joy for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, for all of you and your families. It is a special day for me too. You are the first men who I will ordain to the permanent diaconate as the new Archbishop of Los Angeles.

So I want to address my homily this morning in a personal way to you, my brothers.

But every time we celebrate a sacrament of the Church it is a chance for all of us to reflect on our Christian discipleship.

Cuando celebramos el Sacramento de las Ordenes Sagradas todos, no solo los que lo reciben, tenemos una nueva oportunidad de renovar nuestra llamada a servir a Nuestro Señor Jesucristo. Nuestra vida cristiana deber ser una vida de servicio. En el Bautismo cada uno de nosotros recibe los dones del Espíritu Santo y somos llamados a servir.

But the readings for today's Mass invite us to reflect in a special way on the meaning of the Diaconate as a service of love.

The first reading we heard this morning tells us about the origins of the Diaconate in the early Church

In this reading, it is very interesting the situation that the apostles find themselves in. The early Church is growing and this leads to "growing pains."

We see that it is hard for the apostles to serve all the people's needs — their physical needs and also their spiritual needs. So they lay hands on and ordain seven men to assist them in their duties.

My brothers, when you are consecrated today by the laying on of hands that comes to us from the apostles, your names will be written in that long line of deacons that begins with these first heroic men we hear about today — St. Stephen, St. Philip and the rest.

Los primeros diáconos ayudaron a los Apóstoles y a los sacerdotes en la Iglesia Primitiva. <sup>ii</sup>

La misión de los Apóstoles continúa en el ministerio de los Obispos que son los sucesores de los Apóstoles. Ustedes, como Diáconos están llamados a continuar el ministerio de los primeros Diáconos como colaboradores, junto con mis hermanos Obispos y sacerdotes, en mi ministerio apostólico en esta gran Arquidiócesis de Los Ángeles.

My brothers, you are not here just because you wanted to be, but because God has loved you in a personal way and he has called you to be especially close to him.

Your calling as deacons is an invitation to contemplate the face of Jesus Christ, to get to know him, to love him and to imitate his life.

That means you need to keep growing in your spiritual life. You need to keep growing in knowledge and wisdom. You must be men of prayer. Because prayer will always keep you aware of God's presence in your life.

In today's second reading, St. Paul tells you: *You must hold fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.*

As you exercise your ministry as deacons, always remember that you are more than a "functionary" or a "helper." You are ordained to the service of *the mystery of the faith.*

En la Iglesia primitiva, se describía a los Diáconos como 'ministros de los misterios de Jesucristo' y 'ministros de la Iglesia de Dios'<sup>iii</sup>

Esto es en lo que se están convirtiendo, mis queridos hermanos! Servidores de los misterios de Jesucristo! Siervos de sus hermanos y hermanas en la familia de Dios, la Iglesia!

Por este sacramento, reciben una nueva identidad sagrada!

Son configurados en la imagen de Jesucristo, que se humillo a sí mismo y vino a nosotros en la forma de siervo. Vino no a ser servido, sino a servir. Ustedes están llamados a servir, — *in persona Christi Servi,* 'en la persona de Cristo, el servidor de todos'<sup>iv</sup>

My dear brothers, your ministry of service is not about activities or external actions. You are called to be servants of love!

Jesus Christ tells you that in today's Gospel. "This I command you: *to love.*" To love, even to the point of laying down of your life for the love of God and the love of your brothers and sisters.

Jesus Christ is ordaining you today to bear fruits of love. You are to be heralds and missionaries of God's love.

Through your service of love, you will show our brothers and sisters how much God loves them. You will show them how God longs to touch each one of us personally with his love. How he longs to wash away our sins. To heal our wounds. To sanctify us and to make us holy.

As deacons you are called to be missionaries of God's love in the world.

I think this is something that is very important for our Archdiocese. As I have been saying in recent weeks, I am coming more and more to see that Los Angeles has a missionary vocation — to the new evangelization of our state, our country, and our continent.

Como Iglesia estamos llamados al *amor* –al amor de Dios y de los demás- a ser el alma y el corazón latiente de esta gran metrópolis de Los Angeles. Como Iglesia tenemos que renovar en la sociedad con el amor de Dios –llenando nuestras familias, nuestros lugares de trabajo, nuestras parroquias con el Amor del Espíritu Santo!

En esta gran misión de amor, ustedes como Diáconos están llamados a ser líderes del Amor de Dios en la palabra y el ejemplo.

Una y otra vez oímos, en los relatos de los primeros cristianos, la vida de los santos diáconos que dieron su vida como mártires junto con sus Obispos dando testimonio fiel de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

Let me leave you with this final reflection, my brothers.

As his deacons, you may not be called to martyrdom. But each one of you is called to give his life to the service of the Gospel. Each one of you is called to love Jesus Christ and to serve him with all your heart and all your strength.

As those early deacons did, I urge you: stay close to me as your Archbishop. And I will stay close to you as my deacons. Let us stand firm together as servants of God in this great Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Let us be courageous together in serving Christ in a culture that can be very hostile to the truths of his Gospel.

Hoy quisiera urgirlos a vivir como aquellos primeros diáconos: manténganse muy unidos a mí su Arzobispo. Y yo estaré siempre cerca de ustedes como mis diáconos. Mantengámonos firmes y unidos como servidores de Dios en esta gran Arquidiócesis de Los Angeles. Seamos valientes y muy unidos en el servicio de Dios en una cultura que se hace cada vez más hostil a las verdades del Evangelio!

Let us always remember that we are brothers in this great mission of love!

And let us ask for the prayers of Our Blessed Mother Mary, who gave us a perfect model of discipleship and service to God's will. May she help all of us to gain the grace we need to always serve our Lord Jesus Christ and our brothers and sisters in love.

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<sup>i</sup> Readings: Acts 6:1–7; 1 Tim. 3:8–10, 12–13; John 15:9–17

<sup>ii</sup> Acts 8:5, 12.

<sup>iii</sup> St. Ignatius of Antioch, *To the Trallians*, 2, 3; see also Blessed Pope John Paul II, Address to Permanent Deacons (Detroit, Michigan: September 19, 1987).

<sup>iv</sup> Phil. 2:7; Mark 10:45; Matt. 20:18; *Catechism*, 1570.