



NEWS ARCHIVE:

## Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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### Bishop Bolen ordains Hoang Nguyen to the order of deacons

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Bishop Donald Bolen ordained diocesan seminarian Hoang Nguyen of Saskatoon to the order of deacons May 19, 2011 at Holy Family parish in Saskatoon – another step on Nguyen’s journey to ordination as a priest for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Representatives of the Vietnamese Catholic community of Saskatoon and priests from across the province joined parishioners and diocesan representatives for the joyful celebration.

Diocesan vocations co-director Rev. Gerard Cooper presented the candidate to the bishop. Holy Family pastor Fr. David Tumback then provided testimony about Nguyen’s year of service in Holy Family parish, where he completed his internship year in 2009-10, before returning to the seminary for further study.

“This remarkable young man brought so much to our parish,” said Tumback, describing Nguyen’s energy, commitment and “deep, abiding hope.”

Nguyen’s service at the Saskatoon parish was characterized by authenticity, prayerfulness, generosity, and a willingness to join in the life and fun of the community, Tumback added.

Tumback recalled with emotion the weekday morning when Nguyen shared his family story of suffering and sacrifice – an experience shared by so many Catholic people in Vietnam. “It was without question one of the most spiritually moving experiences of my life,” said Tumback, before turning to address Nguyen: “I pray that as a priest you will share that story, because it is God’s desire.”



Holy Family pastor Fr. David Tumback, pastoral associate Garth Horn, and Bishop Donald Bolen (left to right) applaud for seminarian Hoang Nguyen, ordained May 19, 2011 to the transitional diaconate.



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The bishop began his homily by reading excerpts of a reflection about the ministry of deacon written by Nguyen. “The deepest, hopes and desires of the deacon are to have total trust in God’s providence,” wrote Nguyen, expressing his desire to “be a useful tool in God’s hands for the good of others and the Church, in order to serve and not to be served.”

A deacon is called to proclaim the gospel, and to serve God and humankind, said Bolen, listing some of the prescribed duties, including presiding over prayer, baptizing, blessing marriages, giving viaticum to the dying, and leading the rites of burial. “Do the will of God generously, be firmly rooted in faith, never turn away from the hope which the gospel offers you,” he said. “Express in action what you proclaim.”

Bolen reflected on the pattern of Christian discipleship revealed in the scripture readings chosen by Nguyen, which begins with “the treasure which we hold within us” – the life of God and the boundless riches of Christ. “Through the resurrection we are given and entrusted with the great hope, which is very deep, because it is rooted in what God alone can do, in what God rejoices in doing: giving life,” the bishop said. This abundant gift then calls forth a response, he described. “We are asked to give the gifts which we have been given.”

The scriptures also speak about the cost of discipleship, he added, describing the grain of wheat that falls to the ground and dies, bearing much fruit. “The gospel asks us to carry the cross,” he said. “In this ministry of diaconate there will be no shortage of opportunities to carry the cross for the people you serve, to suffer alongside them, to accompany them in their struggles like the Good Shepherd himself, to give of yourself to the people you serve.”

The “great paschal logic” of the seed that dies to bear much fruit includes the mystery that “our self gift and life in abundance are not contradictory,” said the bishop. “The more you can give yourself, the more free you become to share everything you have, to allow it to be poured out for others in your ministry.”



**The bishop and the assembly pray for Hoang Nguyen as he lies down before the altar**



During the ordination rite that followed, Nguyen made promises of celibacy and obedience. The community prayed for Nguyen as he lay prostrate on the floor before the altar during the litany of the saints. Ordination as deacon was conferred through the laying on of hands and the prayer of ordination by the bishop.

Rev. Phong Pham came forward to present the vestments of a deacon to Nguyen. The bishop then presented him with the book of the gospels.

At the conclusion of the celebration of the Eucharist, the newly-ordained deacon expressed his thanks to God, to the community, and to all those who have supported him in his faith journey. "All of you are in my heart," he said.

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**Bishop Bolen prays over the new deacon.**



**Bishop Bolen with newly ordained Deacon Hoang Nguyen May 19. The next day, seminarian Greg Roth (left) was also ordained to the transitional diaconate in a celebration at Rosetown, SK.**