



NEWS ARCHIVE:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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Fr. Geoffrey Young and Fr. Matthew Ramsay (left to right) were ordained June 10, 2011 in a joyful celebration at St. Patrick parish in Saskatoon.

Two priests ordained June 10, 2011 for the diocese of Saskatoon

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Geoffrey Young, 25, of Saskatoon, and Matthew Ramsay, 29, of Humboldt were ordained June 10 as priests for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.

Bishop Donald Bolen presided at the ordination of the two young men, who were surrounded by friends, family, parish and diocesan representatives, seminarians and clergy from across western Canada and the United States in a joyful celebration at St. Patrick parish in Saskatoon.

Seminary representatives offered testimony about each of the candidates, with Rev. Rory Pitstick, formation director at Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon presenting Ramsay to the bishop, and Rev. Shayne Craig, rector of St. Joseph Seminary in Edmonton presenting Young.

In his homily, Bolen cited the testimony that Ramsay and Young had themselves given the night before, at a prayer service organized by the diocesan Vocations Commission.

“We could hear how the winds of the Holy Spirit had blown in their lives, of how the unchained Word of God has been in the process of transforming them. Now, in being ordained to the priesthood, they are being sent forth,” the bishop said.

“When you baptize, you will bring men and women into the people of God. In the sacrament of penance, you will forgive sins in the name of Christ and the Church. With holy oil you will relieve and console the sick. You will celebrate the liturgy and offer thanks and praise to God throughout the day, praying not only for the people of God but for the whole world,” Bolen said, quoting from the rite.

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Before embarking on this mission, it is important to situate oneself among those that Jesus has come to set free, the bishop told the candidates for priesthood. “You also are the poor, you are the broken hearted, you are those in need of liberation,” Bolen said, citing St. Paul’s image of clay jars holding a great treasure.



Matthew Ramsay and Geoffrey Young lie prostrate before the altar as the assembly prays the Litany of Saints.

“As priests, you will always live in that tension between who you are as a clay pot, and the treasure that you hold, the treasure that you have been given to proclaim and to live. Hold fast to that tension, and live in that tension, because God dwells there.”

The paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus can be seen in the ordination rite, when the candidates for priesthood lie prostrate before the altar, he noted. “It is a letting go of the dreams and pursuits that you might have chosen for your life. It is an entry into our resurrection.” That paschal mystery of dying and rising is part of every human life, and it is the role of a priest is to identify, proclaim and call forth that mystery, he described.

“In your priesthood, you are invited to go into the depths of people’s hearts,” Bolen said. “So when you encounter those bleak moments, the moments where the connections aren’t being made, or the mystery is not being felt, trust that it is there, look deeper. Trust that God is at work in every human being’s life, immersing them somehow in the dying and the rising of Christ in a way that you may not see. Look for it. Look for it in the suffering of humanity, look for it in the need. Look for it in the search. Look for it in the complexity of their human experience.”



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After reflecting on the anointing and the sending forth proclaimed in the readings chosen for the celebration, the bishop concluded: “Live by the power of the Risen Christ, who will again and again give himself to you and give himself to others through your ministry. Live by that promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit in your life, wherever it takes you. May you always be filled with deep joy, a deep sense of purpose and (may you) be a great gift for others.”

The rite of ordination continued with Young and Ramsay promising to serve faithfully and reverently, and pledging obedience to the bishop and his successors. As a sign of surrender to God, the two young men lay prostrate upon the floor in front of the altar as the assembly prayed for the intercession of the saints and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The bishop then conferred ordination by laying his hands upon the head of Young and Ramsay – a gesture repeated by the many priests present at the celebration, as a sign of unity and shared spirit.

After a prayer of consecration by the bishop, Ramsay and Young were vested with the stole (a sign of the priestly office) and the chasuble (the Eucharistic vestment). Each newly-ordained priest then knelt before the bishop, who anointed their hands with the Sacred Chrism oil, blessed at the diocesan Chrism Mass in Holy Week.



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Members of the Young and Ramsay families brought forward the gifts for the Eucharistic celebration. A chalice and paten were presented by the bishop to each of the newly-ordained priests, who then joined him at the altar to celebrate the liturgy of the Eucharist.

Rev. Geoffrey Young is the son of Maureen and Jerald Young of Saskatoon. He grew up as a member of Holy Spirit parish and attended St. Bernard and Holy Cross Catholic schools in Saskatoon, as well as studying for two years at the University of Saskatchewan, before entering St. Joseph Seminary. He will begin his priestly service as associate pastor at Holy Spirit parish in Saskatoon this summer.

Rev. Matthew Ramsay is the son of Melanie and James Ramsay of Humboldt. He grew up as a member of St. Augustine parish in Humboldt and attended St. Dominic Catholic school and Humboldt Collegiate Institute. He attended John Paul II Bible School in Radway, AB., and was a member of the Behold the Lamb, traveling missionary team. He studied at Campion College in San Francisco before entering Mount Angel Abbey Seminary in Mount Angel, Oregon. He will begin his priestly service as associate pastor at St. Philip Neri parish in Saskatoon this summer.



Bishop Bolen presents Fr. Matthew and Fr. Geoffrey.

Below: the two new priests respond to requests for blessings after the celebration.

