

The Ordination of Friars William Burton, *O.F.M.*

and Friar David Rodriguez, *O.F.M.*

The Memorial of Saint Charles Lwanga and Companions

The Church of Saint Jude

New Lenox, Illinois

Saturday, June 4, 1989

"Anyone among you who aspires to greatness must serve the rest, and whoever wants to rank first among you must serve the needs of all." (Matthew 20:27)

My Brothers, Friar William and Friar David:

They grew up in the African country of Uganda. Their ages ranged from thirteen years to thirty. They were pages in the royal court. They refused to submit to the promiscuous sexual advances of the Bagandan ruler, Mwanga. They were burned to death. When Paul the VI canonized these African martyrs and converts to the Catholic faith, he commented, "...being a Christian was a fine thing but not always an easy one."

Friar David and Friar William, you decidedly chose to celebrate this Rite of Ordination with the commemoration of Saints Charles Lwanga and his companions, because in them you find a

reflection of Christ the High Priest / and a kernel of character essential to the priesthood of Jesus Christ, / in general, / and to the ministerial priesthood, in particular. Faithfulness to Christ and conviction about the ways of Christ was the hallmark of ^{the} lives of the Ugandan Martyrs even before their bodies were broken and their blood was spilled. Like Mary who had "conceived Christ in her heart before she conceived him in her womb," / the Ugandan Martyrs had conceived Christ in their hearts / long before they had been challenged to give birth to Christ / through the extraordinary witness of martyrdom. Courageous and unshakable in their convictions and faithfulness, these holy martyrs stood steady and sturdy for Christ.

If I may paraphrase Pope Paul VI, Friar William and Friar David, being a priest-servant is "a fine thing but not always an easy thing to do." Martin King once said:

Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or the darkness of destructive selfishness. This the judgement. Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

Martin Luther King, Jr.

My brother,

^ The hallmark of faithfulness and conviction for the ordained

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✓ priest ^{rests} is in that self-emptying service revealed in the life of Jesus Christ the High Priest (Matthew 20: 25-28). It is in conducting yourselves "to live a life worthy of the calling you have received" (Ephesians 4:1). It is in the striving for, the cultivation of, and the preoccupation with wisdom (Sirach 51: 12-20, ~~passim~~). All these qualities point to that fundamental requirement of Christ-like service: "Anyone among you who aspires to greatness must serve the rest, and whoever wants to rank first among you must serve the needs of all" (Matthew 20: 26). How well you stated this, Friar William, in your letter to me: *You wrote:*

[as in the Liturgy] the priest is first of all servant to the community. He is the voice of the community in liturgy, the agent acting in the name of and on behalf of the community. What is true particularly for the priest presiding at liturgy is true generally for the priest serving in all his capacities.

(letter to +JPL, April 24, 1989)

Thus, as priest-servants, you will proclaim the Good News to 61 million Americans (41% of all adults) who are not members of any church or religious community, or to a typical Catholic parish or

educational
~~school~~ community in which 30-50% of its members are inactive.

You will announce the gospel to the poor in a nation that suffers from systemic greed, class, ^{gender,} ethnic and racial discrimination.

You will serve the people of God in a land that values economic power and social prestige as key criteria for personal success.

In this context, - as priest-servants, uniquely the Lord's ambassadors - you hear the command of the Lord "not to be served but to serve; to give your own life as a ransom for the many" (Matthew 20:28).

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✓ You will give "your ^{own} life" to build community in a nation that has lost its sense of personhood and life and its belief in fidelity and commitment in marriage, family and friendship.

✓ And, clearly Franciscan, you will give "your ^{own} life" in serving the people of God with no personal financial remuneration/and a commitment to uprootedness in a society/that aligns service with personal gain, fixed properties, and investments,/with little understanding that God gave this earth to all people and not to a

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Yes, this is today's context for Christ's exhortation to stand in the midst of the flock; ^{Anyone who aspires to greatness must} ~~not to be served but to serve and to~~ ^{serve the rest.} ~~give your own life as a ransom for the many."~~

So, brothers, if as priest-servants you shall aspire to greatness, by all means do so! Yes, be great! Be superior! Great in humility, meekness, and patience. Great in bearing lovingly with those whom you pastor and for whom you celebrate the Sacraments. Great in laboring to preserve unity and to work for peace. Great in employing your gifts to build up the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4: 1-7; 11-13). Superior in humble service, in compassionate reconciling, in dutiful leadership, and in a love that knows no borders or boundaries. Superior in faithfulness to Christ, ^{to the Church} and in your conviction to serve.

Be great and superior in ~~the~~ utilizing the gifts you have. Sacred Scripture, Friar William, is the one sure word upon which all others stand and with which all Tradition must be consistent. As a priest-student and -teacher of Scripture, you will satisfy the deep yearnings of the people for the Word of God, that Word which best guides their human aspirations and decisions. Friar David, as a priest-student and -teacher of the arts, you shall arouse in the human heart a restlessness for God and help people see in the wonder of ^{the world} ~~creation~~ a pathway to the Creator. The exercise of both

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art and Scripture are forms of service for the common good. When you use these gifts as priests, you bring an incomparable ^{contribution} ~~dimension~~ to your exercise of priestly service.

Friar William and Friar David, from this reflection on priestly service, I would hope you understand that service is not simply a "doing" for others. Priestly service is a way of "being" for others and a way of "being" with others. Priestly service is a way of finding baptismal companionship with others and the companionship of God in others.

Our Holy Father Francis found companionship in the sun and the moon and the stars, | in the fruit of the fields and the works of human hands, | in the fragility of human littleness, | in the tears of repentance | and the hungers for justice and peace. Each particle of living thing, | even the smallest speck of dust or crumb of bread or scrap of written word, | were stamped with the mark of the Maker and fraught with the presence of God. Each encounter glowed with Divine Presence, | every meeting on the road, every touch or feel, smell, sight or sound was a call to adoration and undaunted love.

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Friar David, you summed up all this ~~at~~ quite well:

the meaning of ecclesial communion

A priest is one who is spirit-filled, a servant filled with actions of love, the love of Jesus which is honest and true.... My priesthood [means] allowing the spirit of God to work in and through my life. Yes, that can be frightening, and yet, if the spirit of God is working in and through me, how could I be scared, only honored and blessed.

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in this Holy Assembly, we are here because we all share in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ. We are here, too, / because each one here has played his or her role in shaping the character of David and William, / teaching them how to be a Christian and what priesthood is all about, / and preparing them for this sacred moment. From you, their families, they first heard the Word of God and learned the ways of faith. From you, friars,

they experienced Francis singing today the Canticle of the Sun and walking humbly before God. From you, teachers, they were guided in the art of plunging deeper and systematically into the mystery of God, the Church and the universe. From you, friends, they drew the sustenance of brotherly and sisterly love and witnessed a Christian commentary on life. In William and David's name, and in the name of the whole Church and Father Robert and the Franciscan friars, I express profound and unutterable appreciation *to all of you.*

Dear Friends, join with me now in the solemn rite of Ordination, on this ^{day} when we remember holy ^{✓ ganders} martyrs of faithfulness, ^{and supreme service.} ~~and~~ conviction. Bring with you all your faith, hope and love. Word and symbol now come together in this mystery of Divine Intervention, wherein these brothers of ours will be ordained priests of Jesus Christ.

Friar David and Friar William, may this Eucharist, ^{at} which today through the Laying on of Hands you will be empowered to ^{preside} ~~celebrate~~, be for you/ and for us all/ a sign of Christ the Servant. May it be a sign that you are never alone in your ministry/ and that we are never alone in our pilgrim journey. Amen.

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The Liturgy of Ordination to the Priesthood
for the Order of Friars Minor:

Friar John Abts, Friar Michael Barrett,
and Friar Thai Trinh

The Church of Saint Peter
Chicago, Illinois
June 2, 1990

SCRIPTURAL
CITATIONS

⊗ "I AM the Good Shepherd. I KNOW MINE AND MINE KNOW ME."

The story is told of the man - let's call him Peter - who was so deeply moved by the story of the Good Shepherd that he decided to travel to the Holy Land and to live and work like a shepherd. There, amid the beautiful hills and countryside of the land where Christ exercised his ministry, Peter was hired as a shepherd. For twelve months, he was on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Often alone and generally relying upon someone else to bring him food, Peter found time to think and pray - and to comprehend the life of a shepherd. Over time, he came to understand the image of Christ, the Good Shepherd.

Friar
Michael
Friar Thai
Friar John

⊗ → Shepherding in Christ's time was a tough life. The shepherd was never off duty. Since there was little grass, the sheep were known to stray; and, since there were no protecting walls, the sheep were under constant observation. The main part of Judaea was a plateau, and at any side of the plateau, there was a sharp dip. Thus, the sheep could easily jump or fall over the side, stray into the dessert and get lost. Then, there was the danger of wild animals, especially packs of wolves. Even worse, there were thieves who, like today's drug addicts, took the easy route to

making a living at other's expense.

One writer described the typical shepherd in this way:

On some high moor, across which at night the hyenas howl, when you meet him [the shepherd], sleepless, far-sighted, weather-beaten, leaning on his staff, and looking out over his scattered sheep, every one of them on his heart, you understand why the shepherd of Judaea sprang to the front in his people's history; why they gave his name to their king, and made him the symbol of providence; why Christ took him as the type of self-sacrifice. 'Constant vigilance, fearless courage, patient love for his flock, were the necessary characteristics of the shepherd.' [Confer Barclay, Volume 2, page 53]

Barclay

Given the heroic life of a shepherd, it is no wonder that the psalms depict God as a shepherd and the people as God's flock:

- ✓ The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. [Psalm 23:1]
- ✓ You led your people like a flock under the care of Moses and Aaron. [Psalm 77:20]

Then we, your people and the sheep of your
pasture, will give you thanks forever....
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O shepherd of Israel, hearken,
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The prophet Isaiah introduces us to God's Anointed One, the
Messiah, with the same kind of pastoral language:

He will feed his flock like a shepherd: he
will gather the lambs in his arms, and will
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✓ Years later, Peter would write:

At one time, you were straying like sheep, but

now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls. [1 Peter 2:25]

With all this scriptural background, it doesn't surprise us that Jesus would pick up on this imagery of the shepherd in describing himself and his relationship to us:

I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.... I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for my sheep. [John 10:11; 14-15]

The sheep hear his voice as he calls his own by name.... The sheep follow him because they recognize his voice.... I am the gate. Whoever enters through me shall be safe. [John 10:1, passim]

Thai, Michael, and John, there is surely a manner in which this image of the Good Shepherd must be appropriated by the entire People of God, for, after all, we are all called to care for each other and to tend to the needs of the world. In short, we are all shepherds, just as we are all a priestly people.

However, as ordained priests, as unique servant-leaders of

God's people, animators of their spirits and coordinators of their gifts, and as special "stewards of the mysteries of God," your role as shepherd takes on particular significance. Thus, I say to you, -- if you want to understand what the ministerial or ordained priesthood is all about, if you want to grasp its deepest meaning, if you want to explore the challenge of its lifestyle -- then ponder the way of life of the biblical shepherd. If you wish to learn how the priest best imitates Christ the Servant "whom God made both Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:15), if you desire to know how the priest patterns his life after that of Christ "who delivered himself up to the One who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23), if you seek the manner in which the priest uniquely takes up his cross in building the kingdom of God -- then contemplate Christ the Good Shepherd: "In his own body he brought your sins to the cross, so that all of us, dead to sin, could live in accord with God's will" (1 Peter 2:24).

Priesthood, my brothers, is a not job to be done; it is not a task to accomplish. Priesthood is a way of life. Priesthood is a journey inside the mind of Christ the Good Shepherd; it is fixation with the heart of Christ the Good Shepherd; it is a configuration to the soul of Christ the Good Shepherd.

Priesthood is about life, divine life and human life; it is about grace, saving grace and renewing grace; it is about wisdom, illuminating wisdom and pastoral wisdom.

Priesthood is about community, building community and sustaining community; it is about reconciliation, forgiving

reconciliation and unifying reconciliation. It is about fostering those Christian virtues in the life of the community: humility, meekness, patience, and bearing lovingly the burdens of the other (Ephesians 4: 1-7).

Priesthood is about witness, exemplary witness and sacrificial witness; it about inclusiveness, welcoming inclusiveness and all-embracing inclusiveness.

Priesthood is about sacraments and sacramental empowerment: signs of belonging, participation, unity, communion, fidelity, forgiveness and service.

Priesthood is about crying, craving and clamoring for justice and peace, for the dignity of all, for the poor, marginalized and disenfranchised, for female and male, for the little children in the womb and out of the womb. Priesthood is about bringing glad tidings, healing broken hearts, proclaiming liberty to captives, releasing prisoners, and announcing a year of favor (Isaiah 61: 1-3).

Priesthood is about liberating people from all forms of bondage, whether physical or spiritual: from materialism and militarism, sexism and racism and ageism - and individualism.

Priesthood is about finding gifts and sharing them, about destroying the Tower of Babel and building the City of God; it is about being a man for others, an instrument of peace, an agent for holiness, an advocate for the powerless, and a critic of the powerful.

Priesthood is about joy in the struggle, blessed joy in the

accomplishment, and eternal joy when the Lord shall come again in glory to claim the world.

Priesthood is about being a good shepherd - about caring, compassion, and commitment. It is about "constant vigilance, fearless courage, and patient love for [the] flock." The priest who is a good shepherd makes the words of Christ his own and lives them: "I am the Good Shepherd. I know mine and mine know me.... I lay down my life for my sheep."

My brothers, you can see how the figure of the Good Shepherd provides the model in which your own vision of priesthood can be incorporated.

Michael, when you were in Montana in 1982, you found, as you wrote, "a place on the shore of the lake which became my sacred space for Evening Prayer" (letter, May 7, 1990). The Good Shepherd drew from the solitariness of life time for contemplation.

John, you will find in the Good Shepherd the model of selfless service that characterizes priestly life. As you wrote, "I want to guard against any self-aggrandizement and clericalization. This goes against what Christ is all about. It is impossible to extend love, compassion, acceptance and leadership to anyone if I am too tied up in myself or the position" (letter, May 9, 1990).

Thai, in 1975, when you and your family escaped Vietnam in a dark night of fear and trembling, you learned what it meant to trust in God and you learned the meaning of freedom and what it meant to risk your life for it. Thus, what you wrote me is itself a commentary on the Good Shepherd: "[Jesus] ready witness of a

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God's people, animators of their spirits and coordinators of their gifts and as special "stewards of the mysteries of God," your role as shepherd takes on particular significance. Thus, I say to you, -- if you want to understand what the ministerial or ordained priesthood is all about, if you want to grasp its deepest meaning, if you want to explore the challenge of its lifestyle -- then ponder the way of life of the biblical shepherd. If you wish to learn how the priest best imitates Christ the Servant "whom God made both Lord and Messiah" (Acts 2:15), if you desire to know how the priest patterns his life after that of Christ "who delivered himself up to the One who judges justly" (1 Peter 2:23), if you seek the manner in which the priest uniquely takes up his cross in building the kingdom of God -- then contemplate Christ the Good Shepherd: "In his own body he brought your sins to the cross, so that all of us, dead to sin, could live in accord with God's will" (1 Peter 2:24).

Priesthood, my brothers, is a not job to be done; it is not a task to accomplish. Priesthood is a way of life. Priesthood is a journey inside the mind of Christ the Good Shepherd; it is fixation with the heart of Christ the Good Shepherd; it is a configuration to the soul of Christ the Good Shepherd.

Priesthood is about life, divine life and human life; it is about grace, saving grace and renewing grace; it is about wisdom, illuminating wisdom and pastoral wisdom.

Priesthood is about community, building community and sustaining community; it is about reconciliation, forgiving

reconciliation and unifying reconciliation. It is about fostering those Christian virtues in the life of the community: humility, meekness, patience, and bearing lovingly the burdens of the other (Ephesians 4: 1-7).

Priesthood is about witness, exemplary witness and sacrificial witness; it about inclusiveness, welcoming inclusiveness and all-embracing inclusiveness.

Priesthood is about sacraments and sacramental empowerment: signs of belonging, participation, unity, communion, fidelity, forgiveness and service.

Priesthood is about crying, craving and clamoring for justice and peace, for the dignity of all, for the poor, marginalized and disenfranchised, for female and male, for the little children in the womb and out of the womb. Priesthood is about bringing glad tidings, healing broken hearts, proclaiming liberty to captives, releasing prisoners, and announcing a year of favor (Isaiah 61: 1-3).

Priesthood is about liberating people from all forms of bondage, whether physical or spiritual: from materialism and militarism, sexism and racism and ageism - and individualism.

Priesthood is about finding gifts and sharing them, about destroying the Tower of Babel and building the City of God; it is about being a man for others, an instrument of peace, an agent for holiness, an advocate for the powerless, and a critic of the powerful.

Priesthood is about joy in the struggle, blessed joy in the

accomplishment, and eternal joy when the Lord shall come again in glory to claim the world.

Priesthood is about being a good shepherd - about caring, compassion, and commitment. It is about "constant vigilance, fearless courage, and patient love for [the] flock." The priest who is a good shepherd makes the words of Christ his own and lives them: "I am the Good Shepherd. I know mine and mine know me.... I lay down my life for my sheep."

My brothers, you can see how the figure of the Good Shepherd provides the model in which your own vision of priesthood can be incorporated.

Michael, when you were in Montana in 1982, you found, as you wrote, "a place on the shore of the lake which became my sacred space for Evening Prayer" (letter, May 7, 1990). The Good Shepherd drew from the solitariness of life time for contemplation.

John, you will find in the Good Shepherd the model of selfless service that characterizes priestly life. As you wrote, "I want to guard against any self-aggrandizement and clericalization. This goes against what Christ is all about. It is impossible to extend love, compassion, acceptance and leadership to anyone if I am too tied up in myself or the position" (letter, May 9, 1990).

Thai, in 1975, when you and your family escaped Vietnam in a dark night of fear and trembling, you learned what it meant to trust in God and you learned the meaning of freedom and what it meant to risk your life for it. Thus, what you wrote me is itself a commentary on the Good Shepherd: "[Jesus] ready witness of a

life rooted in the intimate relationship with his Abba helps not only himself but many others - especially, the outcasts, to have a taste of living their lives - living [it] to the full - as members of a compassionate and Spirit-moved community of faithful" (letter, May 7, 1990).

Dear parents and members of this Holy Assembly, these sons of yours, our friars and friends, are about to take a bold step and make a bold statement. In their name, and in the name of Father Robert and the Franciscan Friars, I would like to thank you for the example, encouragement and support you have given them to this day. What can I say - other than the fact that you have been for them like Jesus the Good Shepherd. Parents, especially, immeasurable has been your care, compassion and commitment. From you, early on, they learned the ways of the Good Shepherd.

Now, let us set ourselves to the task before us. On this eve of Pentecost, we shall we shall invoke the Holy Spirit to set these brothers apart for service in the Presbyteral Order as special agents and participants in extending the reign of God. Let us proceed.

Precursor — about Being + presence + Relationships
Relating +
Characteristics of Anamniotic

thought

Beyond (Train) — go to S. L.

Cyril Rowe

check → ~~Peace~~

~~Major~~
~~Chair~~
~~Director~~
~~Director - Endowment~~
~~Director - Text~~
~~Chairman~~

Eye Doctor - 1:00 p.m. - 3/29 or 3/30 / 5/28
Dillon - 6/4

As a teacher of the faith, you must hold high the lofty ideals which the Church draws from the ~~Word~~ Scriptures & Tradition and urge the people to accept in faith. These ideals cannot be compromised in favor of ~~worldly~~ culture, common view, and secular wisdom. What Diognetus ~~is~~ writes about the Xst in the world uniquely applies to the priest or teacher: — also, St. Francis & Pope ^{John} ~~John~~ ^{Paul} ~~Paul~~.
As pastor, you must take the people where they are at, in their uncertainty, ambiguity, ~~and~~ uncertainty, and confusion as characteristic of our time. ~~As a~~ ^{but firmly} ~~from~~ the perspective, let Xst be God's Word, you must "gently" lead the flock to the fountain of Xst wisdom. If you ever get impatient in doing this, just remember that ~~God~~ ^{people} ~~the~~ ~~Lord~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~One~~ ~~who~~ ~~can~~ ~~accept~~ ~~you~~ ~~where~~ ~~you~~ ~~are~~ ~~at~~. If they were to wait until you fulfilled all their dream or requirement, you would not be here today.