
**PRESS RELEASE
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Ottawa, October 15, 2015

**MICHAEL HARTNEY TO BE ORDAINED TO THE PRIESTHOOD
ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2015 AT NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL**

The Most Reverend Terrence Prendergast, SJ, Archbishop of Ottawa, will preside at the ordination of Deacon Michael Hartney to the priesthood at Notre Dame Cathedral Basilica – 385 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 18, 2015.

Michael Hartney was born in Ottawa in 1943. His family resided in Sandy Hill. He was baptized at St. Joseph Church (Laurier Avenue). After schooling at *École Garneau* and *École secondaire de l'Université d'Ottawa*, he studied philosophy at the universities of Ottawa, Western and Oxford, and theology at Saint-Paul University. He taught philosophy at *Collège de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue* and at the following universities: Western, McMaster and Ottawa. He was a church musician at many churches in Quebec and Ontario, including Notre Dame Basilica in Ottawa. He has been a chorister in many choirs including the *Cantata Singers of Ottawa* and *Seventeen Voyces* as well as at the National Arts Centre for 22 years. He was President of the Royal Canadian College of Organists for three years.

At the Church level, he was a member of the Pastoral Councils and Liturgy Committees of various parishes, a member of the commission studying the role of the bishop at the Diocesan Synod (Ottawa 1970), member of the team responsible for the publication of the Pastoral Services newsletter at *Collège de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue*, and team leader of a youth group at Ste-Geneviève Parish. He attended WYD 2011 (Madrid) and WYD 2013 (Rio de Janeiro) as well as the International Eucharistic Congress in Dublin (2012). He did his internship at St-Joseph Parish in Orleans.

Mr. Hartney was asked about the story about his vocation.

“I wanted to be a priest when I was young. I entered the Oblate order in my twenties, but four years later I was told I wasn’t suited. I took that as a final answer and stopped thinking about being a priest, all the while remaining a committed Catholic. In spite of the satisfaction I found in my career as professor of philosophy, I felt something was missing in my life. Close to forty years after the end of my first attempt to become a priest, specifically on March 24, 2006, following a conversation with a friend, I suddenly and unexpectedly realized with total certainty that I was indeed called to be a priest. I approached the diocese and set out once again on the path to ordination. The path has been long and convoluted, but the goal is in sight.”

We asked him how he saw priestly ministry today.

“For too long, we’ve thought that the priest’s task was to repeat what previous generations had done. But the state of the Church today is critical: everywhere attendance is falling, and churches are closing left and right. At the parish level, we think we’re doing well if we manage to slow the fall in numbers. But that means we’re just delaying the final collapse. We can no longer afford to copy the past. We must move from a spirit of *maintenance* to one of *growth*. A priest in parish ministry must be convinced he has two sets of “customers”: those who attend mass regularly and those who attend very little or not at all. He must expend as much effort – if not more – reaching out to those who aren’t there as serving those who are still there.”

Deacon Michael Hartney can be reached for interviews at 613-612-1633 or by email at hartneym@magma.ca

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Deacon Gilles Ouellette

Executive Assistant to the Archbishop

Office: 613-738-5025 ext. 238, Cell: 613-720-5025

gouellette@archottawa.ca