

Eminences,  
Excellencies, distinguished guests,  
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you – all of you – for attending this ordination ceremony. I'd like to start by thanking Cardinal Harvey for coming from Rome. Cardinal Harvey was my first boss when I went to the Secretariat of State, and he used to tell me of his time in Edinburgh as a deacon - and so it was an easy step for me to ask him to come back to be the principal consecrator at my ordination today, and I know he's happy to be here. I also thank Cardinal Murphy O'Connor and Cardinal Brady for their presence, as well as the Bishops from both north and south of the border here today. It is a very touching gesture, and all of us in the Archdiocese appreciate it very much. I'd also like to thank the Apostolic Nuncio and would ask him to convey the affectionate greetings and prayers of St Andrews and Edinburgh to the Holy Father. And I'd like to thank in your name Archbishop Tartaglia for taking such good care of the Archdiocese, and with prompt and fatherly concern. I'd also like to express our gratitude to the Cathedral parish, its administrator and our seminarians who have prepared everything for today. Thank you very much.

We are honoured by the presence of the First Minister, the Lord Provost's representative, and a considerable number of those present in the name of the political and consular bodies here in our ancient capital. I look forward to getting to know you and to working with you for the good of all the people we try to serve.

I'm pleased to see diplomatic colleagues from Rome, including Ambassador Nigel Baker and Ambassador Francis Campbell, current and former British Ambassadors to the Holy See, and Ambassador Francis Okeke of Nigeria. They bring with them happy memories of simpler times, and of some very fruitful work together, including, as a highlight, the preparations for Pope

Benedict's Visit to the United Kingdom in 2010. Thank you very much for your presence.

I'm especially pleased to greet our friends from the other Churches and communities, including the Moderator of the General Assembly, Dr Lorna Hood, Bishop John Armes of Edinburgh, Dr Iain Torrance and many others. Know that you are all very welcome here, and that I look forward to walking together with you to renew and strengthen the bonds of fellowship we already share in Christ Jesus.

I see many friendly faces from my home Diocese of Motherwell and the Province of Glasgow. Although I'm now going to live somewhat to the East of the Kirk o' Shotts, I hope we'll still see each other from time to time!

I also see many colleagues from the Holy See's diplomatic service, some of whom have come a very long way indeed to be with us. God bless you and support you in your service to the communion of the universal Church.

There are also several colleagues from the Secretariat of State and from the English-language section in particular, my old friends and colleagues, who also represent many others spread throughout the world: thank you for being such good friends and co-workers, and please take my affectionate greetings to those who are manning the fort back in Rome.

There are many other special people here – my mum, brother and sister and their families, and representatives of both my mum's and dad's own families. Thank you all for your love and support at home and throughout this adventure in the priesthood.

I'd now like to say a few words to the people and clergy of St Andrews and Edinburgh. As you may know, a couple of weeks ago the Holy Father called me in to see him. He wanted to know about all of you and to hear what I could tell him about my plans and priorities, and he listened and commented at length, with the sympathy and understanding of a man who had been an archbishop in a big capital city for many years - Buenos Aires. One of the

things he communicated then and in the coming days was the idea that I should be ‘merciful’ in my ministry here. Merciful. This has already become a key word in his pontificate, and it’s an idea that comes to him from the Gospels but filtered through his thinking about a quotation that he likes from the Venerable Bede, the famous English historian. The Pope told me to look up the Office of Readings for the day and to find his motto - the words ‘miserando atque eligendo’ where Christ ‘mercifully’ looks upon Matthew and chooses him. But he explained that being merciful doesn’t mean being soft. It means being gentle but also firm at the same time. This is what the Pope asked me to be for all of you. It is also Pope Francis’ proposal for the way we priests ought to be with each other: firmly resolved to be merciful, to forgive, to be humble, to re-build, to dialogue. The Holy Father proposed this in his own gentle and fraternal way, but also with the strength of loving conviction and experience. So, my brother priests, I look forward to meeting all of you shortly, and to getting to know you and to working with you closely for the good of the people we are called to serve. I have a lot to learn and rely upon your fraternal help and support. My dear people, help me and my fellow priests as we re-dedicate ourselves to our priestly promises. Help us by your prayers and example to model our lives on the mystery of the Lord’s Cross. This is surely the highway for all of us towards the renewal of the life of the Church that we all desire. Mother Theresa was once asked famously: “If there was one thing you could do to change the Church, what would you change?” And she replied simply: “Change myself”. This is surely how we can cooperate with God’s grace to renew our joy in living the Gospel of love and forgiveness that is Christ’s message to us from the Cross. It will no doubt take time and patience for us to see results, but with God's grace and with goodwill towards each other, we will live to rejoice again in our common service of Christ. And so, as we begin this journey together, please pray for me and for all your priests and give us your blessing.

The final word goes to the young people. You're all very welcome here today! I see lots of uniforms, one of which I used to wear myself. This must be the longest Mass you've ever been to.... but it's nearly over now! Pope Francis also had a word for you too: he told me to have a special care for all of you, and to make sure that you have the best preparation for your adult lives from our Catholic schools. You are the future – you are our future fathers and mothers, priests and sisters. Sitting among you are the next priests of this Archdiocese: you will stand here too one day and guide this Church. This is your greatest challenge – don't be afraid to become priests, to pick up where we will leave off and to give the Gospel, entire and whole, to the next generation. Dear young people, all our eyes are fixed on you, for you are our future and our hope!

Once again, thank you to everyone for being here today. May God bless all of you abundantly!