

We are sent by God to fulfill our role in salvation

written by Bishop Anthony B. Taylor |

Bishop Anthony B. Taylor delivered this homily Dec. 17.

As I think we all know, in this Mass we will be installing Emmanuel Torres, Ben Riley, Alex Smith, Omar Galván and Brian Cundall as lectors; Daniel Velasco and Joseph Friend as acolytes; and admitting Jon Miskin to candidacy for sacred orders. These three ceremonies mark the progress of our first, second and third theologians to eventual ordination to the diaconate and priesthood.

Emmanuel, Ben, Alex, Omar and Brian, by formal installation as lectors, you become official bearers of God's word in the liturgy and by extension all those other areas where you have the opportunity to bring God's word to others.

What we are sent to do, in one way or another, is to "testify to the light."

To do so faithfully, you need to embrace God's word fully yourselves, meditating on it constantly so that you will develop an ever deepening love of Scripture and give witness to Christ in all that you say and do.

Daniel and Joseph, by formal installation as acolytes, you become official ministers of the altar and special ministers of holy Communion during the liturgy and to the sick.

To do so faithfully, you need to model your life more fully on that of Jesus, allowing him to mold you more perfectly into his likeness. You should seek to develop an ever deepening love of the Eucharist and ever greater obedience of the commandment the Lord gave his Apostles at the Last Supper: "Love one another as I have loved you."

Jon, by admission to candidacy for holy orders, we recognize that you have come to the moment in your formation when you are ready to express openly, publicly and formally your desire to respond to the Lord's call to the priesthood ... and that we as Church consider you ready to make this commitment.

We have "asked the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" and you have responded with the words of the prophet, "Here I am, send me!"

Yesterday we shared in the ordination of Nelson Rubio to the priesthood and right now he's celebrating his first Mass in English in Hot Springs Village. You who receive today the ministries of lector and acolyte, and especially you, Jon, who are admitted to candidacy are not far behind. And yet there's still so much more to learn!

In our Gospel today we read about John the Baptist, that he was "sent by God to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but he came to testify to the light."

And the same is true for you and me. We too are "sent by God" — we each have a role in his

plan of salvation. And what we are sent to do, in one way or another, is to “testify to the light.” To proclaim Jesus Christ as lectors, to glorify him in worship as acolytes and to offer ourselves as candidates, ready for whatever the Lord asks of us. In our case to live a life of sacrificial love, serving him as priests of the Diocese of Little Rock.