



Ordination and First Mass of Fr. Antonio BETTONI, SMM in Rome

ROME, Italy - Fr. Antonio BETTONI, SMM, the newly ordained Montfortian priest from Bergamo, celebrated Thanksgiving Mass on May 12, 2024 at *San Luigi di Montfort* parish, Monte Mario in Rome.

Bishop Baldassare REINA of the diocese of Rome gave a sermon reflecting on the Readings of the Ascension of the Lord, the solemnity that reminds everyone to the sense of responsibility to serve. Jesus returns to the Father but does not leave us orphans.

“We will focus on three points of reflection of Fr. Antonio’s priestly life today and to all of you priests present here on how to put our feet on the ground. First, the question from Acts, why are you standing there looking up to heaven? the importance of prayer. Many people today are preoccupied with looking on earth, we have lost the excitement of looking up to heaven. For me, this is the first dimension of priestly life. We must pay attention to this, especially young priests when we are preoccupied with doing many things, organising many events and activities falling into the temptation. Secondly, to cultivate the virtue of humility, and thirdly, daring to have courage to open to new paths, the courage to face situations that seem humanly difficult...”

Before the end of the Mass, Fr. Antonio thanked Msgr. Baldo who accepted the invitation and shared the sermon, the Provincial, the religious and priests present, and, in particular, to the parishioners of *San Luigi di Montfort* parish.

“Truly heartfelt thanks to this parish which I carry in my heart and will always carry in my heart. I am truly happy to have met you all and have truly walked together for one year. A great applause for the choir and you all. Thank you from the bottom of my heart,” he said.

Father Antonio was ordained a priest on 27th April 2024 in Redona, Bergamo by Bishop Francesco BESCHI in the presence of hundreds of youths and parents, friends, the religious and priests from Bergamo, Villongo community home parish of Fr. Antonio, Monte Mario, Puglia and many parts of Italy. He had his First Mass on 28th April in San Filastro church. 40 priests concelebrated with the presence of the General Councillors: Fr. Marco PASINATO, SMM, Fr. Paul MASHONGA, SMM and Fr. Jesus Leopoldo CUCHO PUCHURI, SMM; the Provincial of Italian Province, Fr. Angelo SORTI, SMM and his councillors. In the evening of the same day, another Thanksgiving Mass was held in *Sant'Alessandro* church.

Fr. Antonio, aged 41, after graduating as a surveyor, obtained a degree in construction engineering. His life saw important stages that led him to the priesthood. He made his Perpetual Profession on 27th October 2023 followed by ordination to deaconate on 29th October 2023 by Bishop Baldassare REINA.

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