



Priestly Ordination of Ghislain Kasereka in Belgium

LEUVEN, Belgium – The Priestly Ordination of Ghislain Kasereka was held in Leuven, Belgium on Sunday, May 5, 2019.

One of the initiatives undertaken by the previous General Team has gained a more concrete focus by the arrival of young priests in Holland and a deacon in Belgium. It was a daring move from the Belgian Delegation to invite a deacon with a desire to ordain him to priesthood here in Belgium since the last priestly ordination in this country happened decades ago way back in 1977. The last Belgian who was ordained to priesthood is Fr. Jos Van den Bergh, SMM. He is the current Delegation Superior and the youngest Belgian confrère who will turn seventy soon. A group of priests has expressed their willingness to welcome a young man into the Company of Mary whose priestly ordination would be planned by the Belgian Delegation.

Since the priestly ordination ceremony will be celebrated in Dutch, the delegation has originally decided to arrange the ordination later this year while Fr. Ghislain is still learning the language. But God works in mysterious ways. The delegation has made its own plan and approached Bishop Koen Vanhoutte, the new auxiliary Bishop in the Diocese of Mechelen-Brussels. After the conversation with him, they have sought also the help of the Dean of Leuven (deanery) as directed by the bishop. After consultation and in collaboration with the Bishop, the Dean, and the pastoral animation team of Leuven, a new plan was designed. The Montfort Fathers, as encouraged by the response of the Bishop and the Dean, have proceeded to consider practical matters concerning the preparation for the priestly ordination. The Delegation had been preparing for the ordination for almost three months. Deacon Ghislain was then sent to Pontchâteau for a week of retreat with Fr. Santino Brembilla.

When the ordination day has arrived, as expected, our Confrères from Italy, France, Holland, and Germany were present to join us in the joy of celebrating the priestly ordination of

Ghislain. The pastoral team of Leuven, who supervised the preparations for the ceremony and at the church, has excellently planned the event. Around fifty priests came to concelebrate in the Holy Eucharist. The priests went in a procession to the church. During the procession, onlookers were fascinated and began to take photos. It was also a moment of witnessing the faith in Christ, especially in a country where Catholic faith has drastically declined in recent years. This grand procession was also admired by the people who participated in the Holy Eucharist. Indeed, this ordination ceremony was memorable to the Bishop because this was the first priestly ordination he officiated. The choir was melodious and the presence of the Congolese choir had placed the crowd into an atmosphere of celebration with their uniform dance moves. People were content and cheerful as the ceremony lasted for two hours. Everything went well without even an iota of confusion.

Since this priestly ordination happened in Leuven and in the historical Sint-Pieters Church after decades, the City Municipal Administration also took remarkable interest in supporting the Montfort Fathers. The city agreed to host the reception in the historical (former) city hall. One of the administrators who studied in Montfort College, in Rotselaar, congratulated the Montfort Fathers and applauded the efforts of the Belgian Delegation in renewing faith in the Church. After the reception, a small number of invited guests came to Montfort College for a festive meal. Fr. Jos, the Delegation Superior, thanked everyone and complimented Ghislain with ice cream cakes on which a picture of Ghislain was imprinted.

Fr. Nepolean James Raj, SMM