

Ordination Mass at
St Theresa's Stansted
15th June 2019

After three Years of Formation and Study, the day dawned Bright and Sunny, on which a "Once in a Lifetime" event and experience was due to take place at St Theresa's, and for which our Parish had been looking forward too, for many months. Our Parishioner, Des Connors, would be Ordained a Deacon of the Catholic Church. **D-Day** had arrived.

The Chief Celebrant would be Bishop Alan concelebrating with a number of Priests. These would include our visiting Priest, Father James .A Marquee had been installed in Our Lady's Garden for the visiting Deacons, while the Priests would change in the Sacristy .Although the Deacons would undertake the majority of Serving Duties, our Parish M.C. Michael, together with Servers Isabelle and Jeremy, acting as Familiaris for the Bishop, would form part of the Serving Team.

Shortly before the start of Mass, two groups of Ministers would form up in procession outside the Church, and then process inside. The Bishop then announced that our Parish Priest, Father John, was not well enough to attend to-day's Ceremony. Following opening Prayers, the two Readings and the Gospel, the Ordination Rite began. Des, as candidate was called forward, Elected, and then Examined by the Bishop asking a number of questions. (Order of Service) He then knelt in front of the Bishop for the "Promise of Obedience". There then followed an "Invitation to Prayer", at which point Des prostrates himself on the carpet below the Altar Steps. The Bishop and Ministers

turn and face the Altar with heads bowed. The Litany of the Saints is then sung finishing with a spoken prayer by the Bishop. At this point Des is allowed to stand. With Des kneeling again in front of the Bishop, he then places his hands over the head of Des, saying the "Prayer of Consecration".

Des's Investiture of his Stole and Dalmatic, assisted by two Deacons then followed. These had been brought up from the rear of the Church by his wife Jane and daughter Laura. Des then received the "Book of the Gospels" from the Bishop, followed by the "Kiss of Peace". This also included visiting Deacons. The Liturgy of the Eucharist commenced with the incensing of the Sacred Vessels on the Altar. Having incensed the Bishop and other Ministers, Des incensed the Congregation, and short time later the Thurifer and Acolytes took their place at the foot of the Altar in preparation for the Consecration. Communion followed the Our Father and the "Sign of Peace" and later the Bishop gave Des and his family a "Blessing of Marriage"

A Solemn Blessing brought this unique ceremony for our Parish to a close. Various Group Photos were taken after Mass, and there followed a Reception in the Parish Centre. In the Hall, before Des spoke, the Bishop read a List of Gifts that had been purchased with the Monetary Collection, donated by Parishioners. Des then thanked all those present, and Bouquets of Flowers were presented to his wife Jane and Bernardette Horton (Co-ordinator). Boxes of Chocolates were then given to Mary Rhead and Annette Richardson for arranging the Flowers on the Sanctuary, and also to Frances Roberts and members of St Theresa's Choir. This brought to a close a Very Important and Eventful Day in the Life and History of Our Parish.

Tony Aldridge

19th June 2019.