

**Pontifical North American College**  
**00120 Vatican City State**  
**Europe**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**41 SEMINARIANS ORDAINED DEACONS**

**ROME, 3 October 2013** - On Thursday, 3 October 2013, 41 seminarians from the Pontifical North American College were ordained to the transitional diaconate during a celebration of the Eucharist. Peter Van Lieshout of the Diocese of Rochester was among those ordained.

His Eminence, Cardinal James Harvey, Archpriest of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls in Rome, was the ordaining prelate at the Ordination Mass, celebrated at the Altar of the Chair of St. Peter, in the Papal Basilica of St. Peter, in the Vatican. Cardinal Harvey, a native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, an alumnus of the North American College, who has served the Holy See as Prefect to the Papal Household, was created a Cardinal in the Consistory of November 2012 and participated in the Conclave which elected Pope Francis in 2013.

In his homily, Cardinal Harvey emphasized the beginning of the rite of ordination, in which the ordaining prelate asks of the one presenting the candidates, “Do you judge them to be worthy?” Cardinal Harvey encouraged those to be ordained that the worthiness to be ordained does not come from their own talents or preparations, but is a gift given by God for the service of the Church. Highlighting the words spoken to Jeremiah the prophet and Jesus’ words recorded in the Gospel of John, Cardinal Harvey reminded the new deacons that it was God who had initiated this plan for their service and has called them to this new life. He concluded by reminding them that the prayers of the Bishops and hundreds of priests, and thousands in attendance, most especially their families and friends who have prayed for and supported them, are for them to be joyful servants of the truth of the Gospel, whose messengers and preachers they now are.

During the ordination, the new deacons promised to live a life of prayer, celibacy and obedience to their diocesan bishop. The new deacons will have an additional year of theological studies and spiritual formation before being ordained to the priesthood in their home dioceses.

As part of the ordination rite, the Cardinal placed the Book of the Gospels in the hands of each candidate being ordained and said, “Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.”

The Pontifical North American College serves as the American seminary in Rome. Founded in 1859 by Blessed Pius IX, the college has formed over 5000 priests near the heart of the Church for service in dioceses around the United States, Australia, and Canada. The College strengthens the bonds between Rome and local Churches worldwide, and it allows its students to study the Church’s rich religious and cultural heritage at close range.

*Photos from the Mass will be available on the College’s website, [www.pnac.org](http://www.pnac.org), in the coming days. Credit should be given to the Pontifical North American College.*

Contact:  
Michael Dion  
Assistant for Media Relations  
Pontifical North American College  
[mdion@pnac.org](mailto:mdion@pnac.org)  
[www.pnac.org](http://www.pnac.org)

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