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Apostolic Trip of the Holy Father Francis to Myanmar and Bangladesh (26 November – 2 December 2017) – Holy Mass and Priestly Ordination in Suhrawardy Udyan Park, Dhaka

Holy Mass and Presbyteral Ordination in Suhrawardy Udyan Park, Dhaka

This morning, after leaving the apostolic nunciature, the Holy Father Francis transferred by car to *Suhrawardy Udyan Park* in Dhaka.

Upon arrival the Pope greeted the faithful from the popemobile and, at 10.00 local time (5.00 in Rome), celebrated Holy Mass during which he ordained sixteen priests.

At the end of the Eucharistic celebration, the archbishop of Dhaka, Cardinal Patrick D’Rozario, C.S.C., gave an address in homage to the Holy Father.

Before leaving, outside the sacristy, Pope Francis briefly greeted the cardinals and bishops of the region. He then returned to the nunciature.

The following is the homily with the ritual for the ordination of priests pronounced by the Holy Father during the Holy Mass.

Homily of the Holy Father

[Homily from the Ritual for the Ordination of Priests]

Beloved brothers and sisters: because these our sons, who are your relatives and friends, are now to be advanced to the Order of priests, consider carefully the nature of the rank in the Church to which they are about to be raised. It is true that God has made His entire holy people a royal priesthood in Christ. Nevertheless, our great Priest Himself, Jesus Christ, chose certain disciples to carry out publicly in His name, and on behalf of

mankind, a priestly office in the Church. For Christ was sent by the Father and He in turn sent the Apostles into the world, so that through them and their successors, the Bishops, He might continue to exercise His office of Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd. Indeed, priests are established co-workers of the Order of Bishops, with whom they are joined in the priestly office and with whom they are called to the service of the people of God.

After mature deliberation, these, our brothers, are now to be ordained to the priesthood in the Order of the presbyterate, so as to serve Christ the Teacher, Priest, and Shepherd, by whose ministry His body, that is, the Church, is built and grows into the people of God, a holy temple.

Now, dear sons, you are to be raised to the Order of the Priesthood. For your part, you will exercise the sacred duty of teaching in the name of Christ the Teacher. Impart to everyone the word of God which you have received with joy. Meditating on the law of the Lord, see that you believe what you read, that you teach what you believe, and that you practice what you teach.

In this way, let what you teach be nourishment for the people of God. Let the holiness of your lives be a delightful fragrance to Christ's faithful, so that by word and example you may build up the house which is God's Church.

Likewise you will exercise in Christ the office of sanctifying. For by your ministry the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful will be made perfect, being united to the sacrifice of Christ, which will be offered through your hands in an unbloody way on the altar, in union with the faithful, in the celebration of the sacraments. Understand, therefore, what you do and imitate what you celebrate. As celebrants of the mystery of the Lord's death and resurrection, strive to put to death whatever in your members is sinful and to walk in newness of life.

Remember, when you gather others into the people of God through Baptism, and when you forgive sins in the name of Christ and the Church in the sacrament of Penance; when you comfort the sick with holy oil and celebrate the sacred rites, when you offer prayers of praise and thanks to God throughout the hours of the day, not only for the people of God but for the world – remember then that you are taken from among men and appointed on their behalf for those things that pertain to God. Therefore, carry out the ministry of Christ the Priest with constant joy and genuine love, attending not to your own concerns but to those of Jesus Christ.

Finally, dear sons, exercising for your part the office of Christ, Head and Shepherd, while united with the Bishop and subject to him, strive to bring the faithful together into one family, so that you may lead them to God the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit. Keep always before your eyes the example of the Good Shepherd Who came not to be served but to serve, and Who came to seek out and save what was lost.

I would now like to say a word to you, my dear brothers and sisters who have come to this celebration, this great celebration of God in the ordination of these priests, our brothers. I know that many of you have come a great distance, a journey of over two days... thank you for your generosity! This is a sign of the love you have for the Church, a sign of the love you have for Jesus Christ. Thank you very much! Thank you for your generosity, thank you for your fidelity. Carry on, in the spirit of the Beatitudes.

I also encourage you, today, to keep praying for your priests, especially for these who will now receive the sacrament of Holy Orders. The people of God support their priests by prayer. It is your duty to support your priests. Some of you may ask me, "But Father, how do we go about supporting priests?" Trust in your generosity. The generosity of your heart will tell you how to support your priests. But the primary support of priests is prayer. The people of God – all of us, every one of us – support priests by our prayers. Never tire of praying for your priests. I know you will do this. Thank you! Now, let us continue with the rite of ordination of these deacons who will be your priests. Thank you.
