

## FROM FR. SIFFREDUS

### A Special “Dear Brothers and Sisters” Column from Fr. Siffredus on the 25th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On my 25th Ordination Anniversary, first I want to bless and thank God for my vocation and for calling me to share in the priesthood of his Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Second, I want to thank all my benefactors and facilitators who helped me to reach ordination. In a special way, I want to thank my parents, siblings, and friends for their support, spiritually and materially. Last, but not least, I want to thank the faith community of Our Lady Mother of the Church where I have ministered for almost nine years. I can confess from my heart that since I arrived here in January 2015, I have experienced welcome, love, and support in my ministry. May God repay you a hundred-fold for your generosity.

My special appreciation goes to the Neocatechumenal Way for providing me with the itinerary of Christian formation through which I was able to discover my vocation. I began to walk in a community following the Neocatechumenal Way in my home parish, St. Maximilian Kolbe, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1987. After walking in the community for three years, through the help of my catechists and with prayerful discernment, I was sent here to the United States of America and entered the Redemptoris Mater Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary Newark in October 1990. After nine years of formation and discernment, I was ordained as a priest for the Archdiocese of Newark on May 29, 1999. My first assignment was to St. Joseph of the Palisades in West New York, NJ as a parochial vicar. I served there for three years, after which I was sent for missionary work back in Tanzania from 2002 until 2015. In 2015, I returned to the Archdiocese of Newark and was assigned as a parochial vicar to this parish until today.

The words of Jesus, "The harvest is plenty, but the workers are few..." (Mt 9: 35-38) is still valid even today. For this reason, I encourage everyone to pray for vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life. Moreover, I want to encourage everyone to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit and to respond to it, even if you discover that God is calling you to serve the Church as a priest or religious. Do not be afraid! Finally, I ask for your prayers that I may use the time God is giving me to serve as I promised when I was ordained.

God bless you all,

Fr. Siffredus B. Rwechungura



#### Prayer to Mary, Mother of the Church

O Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, to you we recommend the entire Church. You who are the helper of bishops, protect and assist the bishops in their apostolic mission, and the many priests, religious, and lay people who collaborate with them in their arduous tasks. You who were given as Mother to the best-loved Disciple by your Divine Son at the moment of His saving death, remember the Christian people who entrust themselves to you. Remember all your children; support their prayers addressed to God; make strong their faith; make firm their hope; increase their love. Remember those who are in tribulation, in need, in danger, above all those who are suffering persecution and who have been cast into prison for the Faith. For these, O Virgin, obtain fortitude and hasten the longed-for day of their just liberation. Look with benign eyes on our separated brethren and deign to unite us, you who brought forth Christ as the bridge of union between God and mankind.  
AMEN.