



Department of Communication

Archdiocese of San Antonio

For Immediate Release Request for Coverage

May 17, 2007

Archbishop Gomez to ordain 28 new deacons. First ever father and son to be ordained deacons, Saturday, May 19.

A father and son who will be united through the grace of their ordination to the diaconate this Saturday, May 19 at St. Mark the Evangelist Church. Rafael Lara, 64 and his son Paul, 35 will both be ordained by Archbishop José H. Gomez; Rafael as a permanent deacon and Paul as a transitional deacon. A transitional deacon is the final step before Brother Paul Lara will be ordained a priest in December of this year. This is the first time a father and son have been ordained deacons on the same day in the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

A decade ago, Brother Paul Lara worked in his father's building company. They joined together in building the first structure that has become Rolling Oaks Academy, a Catholic school in San Antonio. Not yet 25, Paul heard the calling to the priesthood and entered formation with the Legionnaires of Christ which, 10 years later has placed him in Rome where he will complete his studies and ultimately be ordained a priest. Rafael Lara, inspired by his son's commitment, with the support and prayer of his wife of nearly 40 years, Rosita, embarked of a path of increased service to his parish, St. Matthew's Church; a path that has lead him to the life-long commitment of becoming a deacon in the Catholic Church.

Deacons are ordained ministers within the Roman Catholic Church who perform various ministries in support of the Church, usually at a parish-level. The diaconate was established in San Antonio in 1969 when the Archdiocese was one of the original thirteen dioceses in the U.S. to begin Diaconate formation programs. Today, the archdiocese has 326 deacons, 250 of them active.

This year's class of deacons includes men with varied and interesting backgrounds, each with their own unique story of faith. They include: a former member of the U.S. Navy Submarine Service, a former long-haul truck driver, engineers, a 32-year veteran of the San Antonio Police Department, an insurance company owner, a former member of the Air Intelligence Agency, and many more.

Two other men will join Brother Lara on Saturday in being ordained transitional deacons: Brother Moses Jesus Pillari, a member of the Mission of Divine Mercy in New Braunfels, Tu Thanh Nguyen from Assumption Seminary.

The Mass of Ordination to the Sacred Order of Deacon will begin at 10 a.m., Saturday, May 19 at St. Mark the Evangelist Church, 1602 Thousand Oaks Drive, San Antonio. The media is welcome to cover this exciting moment in the life of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

For interview opportunities and more information, please contact:

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