

Pontifical North American College
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Europe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORTY-FOUR SEMINARIANS INSTALLED AS ACOLYTES

ROME, March 15, 2009 – On Sunday, March 15, 2009, forty-four seminarians of the Pontifical North American College in Rome were instituted as acolytes during a celebration of the Eucharist. The Most Reverend Edmund Cardinal Szoka, Archbishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Detroit, was the principal celebrant of the liturgy and instituted the seminarians. Rheo Ofalsa of the Archdiocese of Omaha, who is in his second year of theological studies, was among those instituted.

These seminarians have now received both the ministry of Lector and Acolyte in anticipation of their diaconal, and then priestly, ordination. As Cardinal Szoka reminded the candidates, "being installed as an acolyte constitutes an official act of the Church by which you will in virtue of the office itself be designated to assist the priest in the celebration of the Holy Mass and in giving Holy Communion to God's people and also to the sick."

The ritual for the installation of acolytes includes the prayer: "Take this vessel of bread for the celebration of the Eucharist. Make your lives worthy of your service at the table of the Lord and of his Church."

This year the Pontifical North American College celebrates its 150th anniversary. Founded in 1859, the college serves as the American house of studies in Rome, where hundreds of priests have been formed near the heart of the Church for service in dioceses around the United States and Australia. The College strengthens the bonds between Rome and local churches worldwide, and it allows its students to study Christianity's rich religious and cultural heritage at close range.

Pictures of the Mass will be available on the college's website, www.pnac.org, in the coming days. Credit should be given to the Pontifical North American College.

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