



## Historic Ordination of First Filipino Priest in the Northern Territory After Three Decades

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**May, 2023**

On May 24, 2023, a momentous event took place at St Mary's Star of the Sea Cathedral in Darwin, as Rev Mr Andric Dean Tobias Taberdo was ordained as a priest for the Diocese of Darwin. Bishop Charles Gauci led the ordination, which was concelebrated by Emeritus Bishop Eugene Hurley, Vicar General Father Malcolm Fyfe MSC, and numerous priests from across Australia.

Bishop Charles expressed his joy at the ordination of Fr Dean, a local from Palmerston, who has answered God's call to serve His people. He emphasized the importance of a priest's mission to walk alongside others, sharing Christ's message and growing in the love of God. Acknowledging that priests are human with strengths and weaknesses, Bishop Charles praised their dedication and love for their calling.

The bishop also encouraged others to reflect on God's plan for their lives and to live their Christian faith with humility and compassion. He expressed his excitement at ordaining Dean and asked for prayers as he begins his journey as a faithful follower of Jesus.

Father Taberdo expressed his gratitude to God, Our Lady, his family, and the bishops and priests who have supported him throughout his journey. He also thanked Vice Consul Angela Laurente of the Embassy of the Philippines in Canberra, who congratulated him on becoming the first Filipino priest ordained in the Northern Territory and the first priest ordained in the Catholic Diocese of Darwin in nearly three decades.

Vice Consul Laurente conveyed the personal greetings of Philippine Ambassador to Australia Ma. Hellen B. De La Vega to Father Taberdo. Honorary Consul General John Rivas also joined the meeting with Father Taberdo, who comes from a migrant family that settled in Darwin.

The Philippine Embassy and the local community extended their heartfelt congratulations and well wishes to Father Taberdo as he embarks on this significant chapter of his religious journey. The historic ordination coincides with the Philippines-Australia Friendship Day, celebrated on May 22, highlighting the strong ties between the two countries. Over 7,000 Filipinos currently reside in the Northern Territory.

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