

Bishop José Ornelas Carvalho's concluding remarks at his episcopal ordination

English translation of the original Portuguese

Setúbal, October 25, 2015

In concluding this solemn celebration, it is with a very cordial and fraternal heart that I greet all of you who have been a part of it, here in the cathedral and elsewhere through various communications. We also welcome all other members of the Church of Setúbal, wherever they are, and all people living in this large peninsula.

I give praise and thanks to God who has chosen and granted me the gift of His Spirit to be at your service as bishop of this diocese in communion with the bishops of the Church in Portugal and other churches around the world, and with the Pope, here represented by His Excellency, the Apostolic Nuncio.

After that, my first words of thanks go to those who have been with me from my earliest days, giving me my roots. It is they whom I credit with helping me to become who I am as a person, as a Christian. I think first of all of the memory of my parents, who are certainly with us at this time with God. And with my parents, I also have the joy of having with me here my brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews and all other family members and friends who have taught me to look at life with joy, tenderness, freedom, faith and commitment.

I greet and thank wholeheartedly the Superior General of the Priests of the Sacred Heart, as well as many other confreres from several countries, for their presence here. With you I learned to know and follow the Lord, the Good Shepherd's open and supportive Heart, a source of reconciliation, fraternity and life that knows no boundaries or barriers, renewing and uniting people, languages and cultures.

I also appreciate the presence of authorities from Madeira: the representative of the republic, representing the Governor General, the Municipality of Machico and the village of Porto da Cruz, as well as many friends who give me the joy of their presence. Thank you to all!

I have been called to episcopal service with you. Pope Francis expressed this call in a way that shows me how to act in the way of God: "I do not *impose* you, but I *ask* you to go to be bishop of Setúbal." It is a gentle proposal of God's love for me and for you, which reaches us within the mother Church, by the mouth of Pope Francis and now sounds in this cathedral by the reading of the apostolic mandate. From that meeting with Pope Francis I accept this proposal with a full heart as a gift and a call from God, trusting in the presence of his Spirit and in your prayer, communion and cooperation.

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters of this Church of God in Setúbal, I beg that I may enter and be part of your community. Accept me as a brother and as your brother, I hope to become accepted as a part of this family with love. This is my hope, to serve as your brother, and in following the Lord Jesus, truly be your bishop, as an expression of the faithful and eternal care of the Good Shepherd to his flock.

As I start my ministry in the diocese, I greet in a very special way the priests and deacons, who along with me, assume the primary responsibility for the communion and mission of our Church. We were consecrated by the Spirit for the service of the people, and without giving up my functions and responsibilities as bishop, I have the firm intention to share, first of all, with you, the joy, brotherhood and responsibility born of service to the Gospel.

To the many who have responsibility and coordination of work within the diocese I wish to express appreciation and gratitude for the dedication and competent service you perform. I also want to confirm the trust placed in you and ask you to continue in these services so that the life of the diocese may continue smoothly without interruption.

I am particularly united with the men and women religious, especially this year, the Year of Consecrated Life. I thank them for their dedication and their testimony and for the service they give to the Church. It is with great joy and hope that I see the participation of so many people who generously offer their own time and skills to the task of evangelization, catechesis to groups of young people and couples, and to so many other pastoral activities. It is encouraging to note the active solidarity of thousands of people, of all ages, who voluntarily put themselves at the service of others, visiting the imprisoned, accompanying those who suffer illness and loneliness, providing bread to those who do not have enough or who are without an essential livelihood. I thank those who welcome refugees and place themselves alongside the most ignored. It is a Church of this kind that we want to continue to develop: a Church that does not think only of itself, but opens its eyes and heart to discover the needs of others.

A special greeting goes to young people, beginning with seminarians, acolytes, scouts and others present at our celebration. I appreciate your willingness, I ask you to not let yourself succumb to difficulties and become discouraged by a perceived lack of prospects and fully participate in the construction of your -- our --Church and society.

With heartfelt thanks I greet with great respect and warmth the authorities of the Setúbal region and ask permission to enter this city and this large peninsula. Following the tradition of my predecessors, the first two bishops of this young Church, I express my desire to be open and work in cooperation, while respecting the diversity of our functions, so that through our combined efforts we can benefit our people whom we are all called to serve.

This Church is not and must not be a closed organization unto itself. We want to be part of the Church of God that spans the world, which is represented here fraternally by the presence of the majority of the Portuguese bishops and the large number who have

come from other countries. This celebration is presided over by Manuel Clemente, Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon and also President of the Episcopal Conference, who has just returned from Rome, where he participated in the Synod of the whole Catholic Church.

Thank you, Cardinal Manuel, for accepting my request to preside at this solemn Eucharist. The long-standing friendship and the very special ties that bind the Patriarchate of Lisbon and this diocese now take on a new and crucial dimension because of the gift of the Spirit received through the laying on of hands by the bishops present here.

To all of you brothers in the episcopate, I pray that I may serve well with you, in communion with the Holy Father and the whole Church. I am particularly grateful and motivated by your friendly presence, your experience and solidarity in the service of God's people. It is with deep joy that I give thanks for the significant presence of bishops from other countries including Brazil, Mozambique and Sao Tome. In addition to their solidarity and friendship, they give evidence to the universal communion and mission of the worldwide Church.

I greet with special affection and reverence His Excellency the Apostolic Nuncio, whose presence here signifies the pastoral care of Pope Francis and the ecclesial communion. I ask you, Your Excellency, to convey to His Holiness my and our pledge of communion and fidelity.

I would also like to mention two symbols that are present at this celebration which I consider to be a reference and illumination for the life of our Church and for my ministry.

The first is the visit of the pilgrim image of Fatima, which we welcome today in the cathedral. It will be taken throughout the entire diocese in the next two weeks. In her days in Palestine, after receiving the gift of motherhood by the Holy Spirit, Mary did not close in on herself, but left this land toward the mountains of Judea, to celebrate with her cousin the Good News of God's presence in the world, to serve Elizabeth, who was to be a mother, and in a sense, promote the movement of God in the ways of people. Today, in the image of Fatima, Mary arrives as a pilgrim traveling on the roads of our diocese as she always done throughout history.

She invites us to listen to the Word of God with an open and transparent heart and welcome it with a transformative joy; to look beyond ourselves, our concerns and frozen certainties; to celebrate the liberating Good News of the Spirit in our communities; to take paths that lead us to the forgotten and discarded in our society.

It is with this symbol and this purpose that I decided to accompany the pilgrimage of the image as a sort of guided tour by the hand of the Mother of the Church. I invite each of you and all the communities to take part in this and be host to the Virgin of Fatima, who

dwells among us, and be with her and like her, for this new stage of our life as a Church of God in Setúbal.

The second symbol is related to the episcopal service and our Church. It is a coincidence, not a casual one, but one noted with great joy and gratitude: tomorrow is the 40th anniversary of the episcopal ordination of the first bishop of the diocese, Bishop Manuel Martins, and today concludes more than 17 years of episcopal service to Setúbal by Bishop Gilberto Canavarro dos Reis.

Bishop Manuel Martins, I wish to express the joy of having you among us, which I know is shared by the whole diocese. Joy is mixed with deep gratitude for your pioneering role not only by being the first bishop, but especially for your prophetic vision, your ability to build bridges of dialogue within and outside the Church and the solid legacy that you left in the evangelical mission and solidarity. Tomorrow we will have occasion to celebrate together and thank God for your invaluable contribution to the Church and Setúbal.

Bishop Gilberto, at the conclusion your dedicated service as shepherd of this diocese, I know that I can express, on its behalf, most sincere and warm feelings of gratitude and affection, for the testimony of his life and his ministry. His simple and human way confirmed and developed, in the words of Pope Francis, that priests should be “shepherds living with the smell of sheep.” This has characterized the episcopal ministry in this diocese. His life of dedication and selflessness follows the Gospel, his concern for collaborators in ministry has inspired communion, and his sensitivity to the humblest has shown solidarity and hope within and outside the Church. I had the joy and privilege to know him as a brother, guide and teacher in my first introduction to the diocese of Setúbal in these past months. His sincere friendship, availability and fraternal acceptance will always be in my heart as an example of a faithful friend and attentive pastor. Bishop Gilberto! I hope that I, and the diocese, can count on your presence and collaboration so that we may have further opportunity to express more clearly our friendship and gratitude.

For all of us and especially for me, the living memory of these first two bishops of Setúbal is an example to retain and a challenge to accept, so we can continue to build on the foundational stone of the Church, which is Christ, with the precious and authentic materials of the first workers. Now is our time to get down to the heart of this work.

Finally, I want to express a special thanks to the many people who have been preparing, with admirable competence and dedication, this special celebration of faith and celebration of life in our diocese: priests, deacons, seminarians, planners, journalists and technicians of communication and a variety of other services. God bless your efforts and may they bear fruit for the life of our diocese.

Also, I appreciate the availability and cooperation of the City Hall of Setúbal, the police and various other entities, which have overseen the set-up of the restricted spaces that

we have for our celebrations today and for their hospitality. This characterizes Setúbal as open to the Church Portugal and the world. I give thanks!

In conclusion, I ask you, priests, deacons and lay people, with Mary, to have an open and attentive heart so that the Word of God can help us set out on a path leading to the joy of the Gospel.

Together, led by the Spirit of the Lord, we will light new flames of life in our communities and ignite that spirit within our cities. Strengthened by the legacy of those who preceded us, we want to continue on a path of creativity that new times require.

We also want to say to all people of good will that we must cooperate together in building a more humane world marked by justice, dignity and hope; a world that is especially welcoming to those who most need to rely on an outstretched hand with a friendly voice and with a heart that loves.

José Ornelas Carvalho
Bishop of Setúbal