



Rev. Mr. Eduardo Flores
Theology 4
Pontifical College Josephinum
Divine Savior, Downers Grove
Birthday: June 27

This year has been one of great blessings for me, the man whose life could be summarized in these three words: Mexican, Missionary, and Ministry of the Priesthood. I was doubly blessed, not only to meet Pope Francis and shake his hand, but also to serve on the altar with him on January 1, 2018. During that same trip to Rome, I was blessed to participate in a retreat in the town of Assisi. There I was able to reflect deeply on my path to the priesthood.

I first received God's call in 2001, which is why I entered the Missionary Servants of the World in Mexico. In 2007, God's call became stronger as I was sent to Chile to perform missionary work. Surviving the great earthquake in Chile, I realized that God was preparing me by testing both me and my faith. Accordingly, in 2011, I made my perpetual vows as a religious missionary. I decided to be complete by devoting my body and soul to God.

In 2015, the call of God redirected me to another land—here in the United States. Remembering the words Saint Paul addressed to the Philippians (3:13), I embraced "forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead." I began the process of becoming a diocesan priest for the Diocese of Joliet. Under the guidance of Bishop Conlon and Father Burke Masters, I started my studies at the Pontifical College Josephinum (PCJ) in 2016.

In times of reflection, I can easily recall the challenges I have experienced in learning a new language and culture. Yet, God's call to me—this Mexican, former missionary, and minister on the way to the priesthood—resounds even more loudly. I am meant to seek and do God's will.

Further blessings have been bestowed on me by God this year. On March 23, 2018, I was ordained as Deacon. In May, I finished the semester at PCJ, with only one semester remaining before I receive my Master of Divinity degree in December.

I anticipate added blessings the following year. "Straining forward to what lies ahead," I happily look ahead to returning to my assigned parish. Filled with deep joy and humility, I await my Ordination as priest.

Although my path to the priesthood has been rather circuitous, I have been blessed every step along the way. I can now appreciate more fully the words of Saint Therese of Lisieux, "Everything is a grace because everything is God's gift."