

## News Release:

**Contact: Most Rev. Ken Nowakowski**

**Ukrainian Greek Catholic Patriarchal Commission for Priestly Formation in Seminaries**

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**Bishop Ken Nowakowski, Head of Patriarchal Commission, chairs meeting of formators of North & South America in Brazil, February 4-6, 2009**

**Curitiba, Brazil, February 6, 2009:** On Wednesday, 4 February 2009 the first meeting of the newly established Patriarchal Commission for Priestly Formation in Seminaries of the Ukrainian Catholic Church began with a celebration of the Divine Liturgy (Mass) in St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Curitiba.

The Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Most Rev. Ken Nowakowski, the head of the Patriarchal Commission and Eparch of New Westminster for Ukrainian Catholics in British Columbia and the Yukon, Canada, Most Rev. Volodemer Koubetch OSBM, Eparch of St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy (Diocese) of Brazil along with Auxiliary Bishops Myron Mazur OSBM, and Daniel Kozlinski, and the rectors and spiritual directors of The Ukrainian Catholic seminaries of North and South America also celebrated the opening liturgy.

Bishop Volodemer welcomed the participants of the meeting and read a letter of greeting from His Beatitude Lubomyr Cardinal Husar, Head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. In this letter, His Beatitude offered his full support and urged the participants to make bold decisions in developing the program of priestly formation so as to provide the Church with holy and highly qualified priests.

Rev. Dr. Michael Kwiatkowski, spiritual director of Holy Spirit Seminary, Ottawa, Canada lead the participants of the meeting in a meditation on Jesus Christ, the High Priest. Based mainly on Sacred Scripture, in particular the Letter to the Hebrews and the "Priestly prayer of Christ" John 17, a presentation was made of Jesus's example of priestly ministry and especially how Christ and His priests collaborate in the realization of this priesthood in today's Church.

Most Rev. Efraim Krevey OSBM, emeritus bishop of Brazil, Most Rev. Dionizij Lachovicz OSBM, Apostolic Visitor for Ukrainian Catholics in Italy, Spain and Very Rev. Theodoro Haliski OSBM, Provincial Superior of the Order of Basilians of Saint Josaphat in Brazil, also took part in the sessions of the meeting.

This was the first time that the formators of the seminaries in the Americas had ever met together as one body. The meeting took place in the context of the Patriarchal Commission's mandate: to develop norms and minimum standards for formation programs for priestly ministry. The Commission will hold a similar meeting for the formators of seminaries and houses of studies in the European Region later this year.

The participants at the Brazilian meeting represented both eparchial (diocesan) and monastic seminaries. Canada has one inter-eparchial seminary, located in Ottawa, Ontario, and one monastic house of studies, conducted by the Ukrainian Catholic Basilians of Saint Josaphat in Edmonton,

Alberta. In the United States of America, there are two eparchial seminaries, one located in Stamford, CT, and the other in Washington, DC. Brazil has one eparchial major seminary, an eparchial minor seminary and also a monastic seminary of the Ukrainian Catholic Basilian Fathers.

The three-day meeting provided the participants opportunities to exchange information about their individual programs of priestly formation, the challenges that they face in their respective countries, as well as discovering the many areas that they share in common. The participants had, as a working document, a draft program for priestly formation that had been developed over the last three years at meetings conducted in Ukraine by the rectors and formation staff of the various seminaries and houses of studies in Europe as well as representatives from North America.

Regional meetings of the formators of the Ukrainian Catholic Church both in the Americas and Europe will be held on a regular basis to continue the work of the Patriarchal Commission.

The second mandate of the Patriarchal Commission is the development of the theology of the priesthood in the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Bishop Ken advised the participants of the meeting in Brazil that in the very near future specialists in the field of Theology and Canon Law will be brought together to begin work on this document.

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Photographs:



Celebrants of the Opening Divine Liturgy at St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Curitiba, Brazil, 4 February 2009



Bishops and Formators of Seminaries and Houses of Study from North & South America participants of the Patriarchal Commission for Priestly Formation in Seminaries of the Ukrainian Catholic Church held in Curitiba, Brazil.