

S.E.R il Sig. Cardinale Baldassare
Audience with the Presbyters Carrying Out Their Ministry
in the Diocese of Rome

12 June 2025

Paul VI hall – Vatican City

Holy Father,

thank you for the opportunity of this meeting with the priests, deacons, and seminarians of the Diocese of Rome. I would like to briefly present to you all the people gathered in this room, as well as the many others who, for various reasons, were unable to be present.

The Roman clergy is composed of 809 priests. There are 149 permanent deacons. In addition, there are 500 priests from other dioceses serving in parishes for study purposes, 2,347 priests from other dioceses residing in university colleges, 211 priests from clerical associations and prelatures, and 3,914 religious clergy—for a total of 8,020 priests and deacons.

Specifically, the Roman clergy is configured as follows:

- 579 are in active service within the diocese (in parishes, offices, teaching, chaplaincies, and other ministries)
- 15 are serving in positions outside the diocese
- 132 are engaged in missionary work in various forms
- Over 50 have taken a period of pause for reflection or due to other personal hardships.

The Diocese of Rome has:

- 333 parishes
- 174 rectoral churches
- Over 100 hospital and care home chaplaincies
- 18 chaplaincies for migrants

- 3 prison chapels
- A strong presence in public schools and pontifical universities.

We also have over 50 elderly or ill priests who are being cared for at the Casa San Gaetano al Divino Amore, where we also host priests from other dioceses.

The seminarians for the Diocese of Rome are distributed as follows:

- 40 at the Pontifical Roman Major Seminary
- 40 at the Redemptoris Mater Diocesan College
- 4 at the Almo Collegio Capranica.

We thank the Lord—together with you—for this rich and diverse presence. For all the priests and deacons coming from outside the diocese, we seek to offer care through hospitality and formative accompaniment, while also respecting the demands of their academic commitments. Those who are not accommodated in university colleges are welcomed in parishes. It is a good and healthy custom for priests to live together, sharing both the joys of communion and the challenges of pastoral ministry.

Holy Father, your presbyterate is generous, marked by a strong sense of belonging and a deeply rooted pastoral passion. It responds positively to difficulties—frank in acknowledging problems or challenges, endowed with a vivid sense of humor, and always ready to start again for the good of the Church and its communities.

Of course, challenges remain. There is diversity of origin, culture, and sensibility, and various formative models, which can sometimes make it difficult to develop and convey a unified pastoral vision. We are not immune to the cultural pressures of our complex times, and we often ask ourselves how best to respond to the many influences that reach us from all directions.

Holy Father, on the day of our ordination, we were asked: “Do you promise respect and obedience to me and my successors?” Today we renew to you our filial respect and affection, in our desire to be your collaborators in pastoral service. Into your hands we entrust the obedience of our lives to the Father’s will, so that we may help to make our beloved Diocese ever more beautiful and holy.

Accompany us with your prayer, Holy Father. We love you, and we ask the Lord to fill you with every grace for the delicate ministry entrusted to you.

Thank you—and please bless us.