



**MEDIA ADVISORY – For Immediate Distribution**

**Diverse backgrounds yet a common call for Toronto's newest priests**  
*Archdiocese of Toronto celebrates ordination of five "Men in Black"*

TORONTO (May 9, 2014) Five men will be ordained to the priesthood to serve to the faithful of the Archdiocese of Toronto on Saturday, May 10. Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, will preside at the ceremony, which will take place at 10 a.m. at St. Michael's Cathedral. Close to 1,000 guests are expected.

These candidates have undergone a minimum five years of extensive spiritual formation, theological education and field training in preparation for priestly ministry. Following their ordination, they will be assigned to one of 225 parishes in the archdiocese, which stretches from Oshawa to Mississauga and north to Georgian Bay. The "Class of 2014" includes:

**Reverend Mr. Scott Birchall**, 32, born in Richmond Hill, the youngest of four children. Scott worked as an urban planner for the Town of Newmarket before entering St. Augustine's Seminary in 2008. He has also provided pastoral outreach to migrant workers in the Holland Marsh.

**Reverend Mr. Omar Hernandez**, 32, born in Colombia, the youngest of six siblings. Inspired by a spiritual retreat given by the Neo Catechumenal Way when he was 19, Omar entered the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Medellin in January 2003 and was sent to Toronto to complete his studies.

**Reverend Mr. Marijan Šiško**, 37, born in Croatia, the seventh child of eight. Marijan studied to be a chef and hotelier. The death of his oldest brother brought him back to the church, entering the Neo Catechumenal community in his parish. In 2004 he entered the Redemptoris Mater Seminary of Toronto.

**Reverend Mr. Michael Simoes**, 29, born in Toronto, the youngest of three children. Michael studied chemical engineering at the University of Waterloo. Upon completing his degree, he was accepted into St. Augustine's Seminary in 2008.

**Reverend Mr. Neiman D'Souza**, 31, born in Kuwait and moved to Ontario in the late 1980s. Neiman grew up in Markham, attended the University of Toronto, worked at Staples in downtown Toronto and entered St. Augustine's Seminary in 2008.

As one of the most diverse dioceses in the world, the Archdiocese of Toronto is home to 1.9 million Catholics, with more than 800 diocesan and religious priests providing pastoral leadership in churches throughout the GTA. Mass is celebrated each week in more than 30 different languages.

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