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Ordination of Deacons and Priests – Swaziland
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Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 145:1-7; Romans 12:1-12; John 20:19-23.

- Key verses for us: ‘Here I am Lord, send me!’ and ‘Feed my sheep.’
- In these we find both bad news and good news:
- The ‘bad news’ is that these tell us ministry is ‘not about us’ – for all that today is a glorious celebration for those who are called to ordination.
- Rather, it is ‘all about God, and all about God’s people’.
- So we must beware of thinking ‘too highly of ourselves’ as St Paul puts it.
- In other words, if we find ourselves thinking as if it is ‘all about us’, and that we are the ‘head’ of our churches and parishes and congregations – who should just follow wherever we lead - then we have probably lost our way.
- But the good news also is that it is ‘all about God, and all about God’s people’.
- We are called to participate in God’s mission to God’s people and world.
- And those whom God calls he also equips, guides, directs, empowers ...
- Our responsibility is not to be ‘successful church leaders’ according to the criteria of success of secular leadership.
- Our call is rather to be faithful and obedient, dependent always, and in everything, upon God and his leading, empowering, directing.
- Like St John the Baptist (remembered on the 3rd Sunday in Advent) we must point others to Jesus, and ‘decrease, so he may increase’ (Jn 3:30).
- John suffered and was killed – but was ‘successful’ in God’s eyes.
- Counter-cultural awareness comes as we let God ‘renew our minds’ and transform us; ministering by living in his love, and his love for his lambs.
- So we commit ourselves to serve him, and serve others – not serve ourselves – as we say ‘Here am I, Lord, send me!’