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**North American Old
Catholic Church**

Press Release

Old Catholic Clergy Ordination Set for Baltimore, MD

Church cites new effort, and new national concerns for sharp increase in vocations to the Old Catholic Priesthood

[5/28/08] Washington, DC- The North American Old Catholic Church, one of the largest Old Catholic bodies in the United States, announced today the ordination of Mr. Joe Steward, of Baltimore, MD to the transitional diaconate. This step is the last before ordination to the priesthood.

“We have had a great increase in the amount of vocations to the Old Catholic Priesthood this year.” stated Archbishop Michael Seneco, Presiding Archbishop of the North American Old Catholic Church. “Currently, we have twelve highly qualified men and women studying at our seminary, Saint Wolbodo, towards eventual ordination and service to the people of God.

Mr. Steward’s ordination is scheduled for 2:00 PM at Saint Mark’s United Church of Christ at 1805 Wickes Avenue, in Baltimore. The ordination will be presided over by Archbishop Seneco, and both the press and the public are invited to attend.

This is the third ordination for the church this year. By comparison, the church ordained three people in 2007.

When asked why the North American Old Catholic Church has seen a sharp increase in vocations to the priesthood, Mr. Matthew Velic, who sits on the board of trustees for Saint Wolbodo Seminary said, “We have a unique educational program that allows for a great amount of flexibility in the educational process, while still giving the students a good feel of community that one would find at a more traditional institution.”

The Archbishop continued, “We also feel that the state of our Nation- with poverty on the rise; the exploding cost of gasoline; the housing market falling flat are just a few of the reasons people are answering the call God has given them. All our seminarians and applicants have expressed a strong concern for these and other issues, and a desire and commitment to work together to change things for our country, and her people.”

Additionally, church officials site an outreach effort to clergy who left larger, institutional churches over marriage or sexuality, as well as a significant and deliberate campaign to increase vocations in the African American and Latino communities.

Upon ordination, Mr. Steward will establish a parish church in Baltimore, Maryland, and it will be the churches third parish in that city, where Mr. Steward resides with his life partner, Bill.

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*Fostering a continued, strong commitment to catholic tradition, and the search for contemporary meaning, the North American Old Catholic Church is part of the worldwide, universal church of Jesus Christ. For more information about the church, and to review or download our press kit, visit <http://newsroom.naoldcatholic.com> and click on *PRESS KIT* You may also request a press kit by emailing pressroom@naoldcatholic.com*

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