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Ordinations: Three Join Redemptorists

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THREE MEN were ordained as Redemptorist priests by Cardinal Seán Brady yesterday, the largest number to join the order for more than 10 years.

Brian Nolan from Limerick and Tony Rice from Belfast are 31 and Seán Duggan from Galway is 30.

Fr Rice, who worked in a bank for four years, says the difficulties in the church are symptomatic of a general lack of leadership in a number of areas in our society.

“People have reason to be disappointed with several institutions right now – banks, politicians, the church and so many others. Courageous and selfless leadership has been seriously lacking up to now. However, the mistakes and sins of some do not mean everyone else is the same or that things will always be this way.

“We need strong, just and accountable leadership to renew our vision and our hope in humanity.”

Fr Nolan, a former electronics student at Limerick Institute of Technology, admits that when he tells people that he is in religious life, “it can be a conversation stopper”, but he doesn’t “feel the need to hold back from telling people what I’m doing.”

Priesthood, he says, is a “life of service to others.”

Fr Duggan gave up corporate law to join the priesthood.

“The choices I have made are not knee-jerk reactions. They have been thought about and talked about over a period of eight years training. Those eight years have had all the mix that life can bring.

“The questions that people throw to me such as celibacy, inept church leadership, married priests and more, are all questions that I’ve thought about myself. It’s not as if I live in a bubble cut off from reality.”

Director of formation with the Redemptorists, Fr Dan Baragry, who has worked with all three as they made their decision to be ordained, said: “The ordinations come at an extremely difficult time for the Irish church.

“It is a very courageous decision and choice on their part but I feel they will shape a new future and understanding of priesthood.”