

# Canadian Jesuit to be made cardinal

Rev. Michael Czerny, a Canadian Jesuit and social justice expert who once volunteered to take the place of brother priests murdered in El Salvador, is among 13 men Pope Francis will elevate to the position of cardinal next month.

The 73-year-old Czerny, who was born in the former Czechoslovakia but raised in Montreal, is currently the undersecretary of the Section for Migrants and Refugees at the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Father Czerny and 12 other men will be installed as cardinals on Oct. 5.

Father Czerny, who had earlier been named as a special secretary for the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, was in Guararema, Brazil, when the announcement was made on Sept 1. He told Catholic News Service in a text message that he had not known he was going to be made a cardinal.

"It's very exciting. He's a real leader in social justice through faith," said Bob McKeon, who has known Father Czerny since 1989 when was the guest speaker at the 10th annual Social Justice Institute, an ecumenical event in the Edmonton Archdiocese.

At the time, Czerny said the Social Justice Institute was critical to the future of the Church.

"This is also an important experience which people have of the Church, when they come together like this to reflect, to share their problems, to share their successes and to renew their spirit," Czerny said.

This year's Social Justice Institute, focusing on refugees and migrants, was held in May.

Prior to their meeting, McKeon first heard of Father Czerny as the co-author of *Getting Started on Social Justice in Canada*, a textbook McKeon used as professor at Newman Theological College.

"His book, and Michael himself, focus on social analysis, theological reflection, as well as putting both into concrete action. Michael is really good at looking at 'How do we put into practice what we've learned as part of the bigger picture of the world?' He's been a leader in this area since the 1970s."

Czerny is the co-founder and longtime director of the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice in Toronto. He was one of several Jesuits who volunteered to replace the six Jesuits murdered at the José Simeon Cañas Central American University in San Salvador in 1989. Czerny was director of the human rights institute there, along with teaching philosophy and sharing in parish ministry.

In 1992, he was named by the superior general of the Jesuits to be head of the Secretariat for Social Justice of the Jesuit Curia in Rome. In 2002 he was missioned to serve as the founding director of the African Jesuit AIDS Network (AJAN) established by the Jesuit provincials of Africa and Madagascar.

Appointed to the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Father Czerny was involved in drafting *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical letter on ecology and care for our common home.

A year later, Pope Francis appointed him undersecretary of the Migrants and Refugees Section of the new Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development.

Like Pope Francis, Father Czerny is a Jesuit. But McKeon said that's not the only reason he was tapped to become a cardinal. "It's also a recognition of Michael's work and leadership in faith-based social justice."

In announcing the names of the new cardinals, the pope included 10 men who are under the age of 80 and therefore will be eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a new pope. Three of the future cardinals are already over the age of 80, and the pope said he chose them because of their service to the Church.

"Let us pray for the new cardinals so that, confirming their adhesion to Christ, they will help me in my ministry as bishop of Rome for the good of the entire faithful, holy people of God," the pope told pilgrims who had gathered to pray the midday Angelus with him on Sept. 1.

In addition to Cardinal-designate Czerny, two other members of the group are also Vatican officials: 67-year-old Bishop Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot, president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue; and 53-year-old Archbishop Jose Tolentino Medonca, Vatican archivist and librarian.

One of the over-80 cardinals-designate is 82-year-old Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, a Missionary of Africa born in England, who had served as president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and later as Vatican nuncio to Egypt.

The others, in the order they were named by the pope, were:

- Archbishop Ignatius Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo of Jakarta, Indonesia, 69.
- Archbishop Juan Garcia Rodriguez of Havana, 71.
- Archbishop Fridolin Ambongo Besungu of Kinshasa, Congo, 59.
- Archbishop Jean-Claude Hollerich of Luxembourg, 61.
- Bishop Alvaro Ramazzini Imeri of Huehuetenango, Guatemala, 72.
- Archbishop Matteo Zuppi of Bologna, Italy, 63.
- Archbishop Cristobal Lopez Romero of Rabat, Morocco, 67.
- Retired Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevicius of Kaunas, Lithuania, 80.
- Retired Bishop Eugenio dal Corso of Benguela, Angola, 80.

*-With files from Cindy Wooden, Catholic News Service*