

Vocations Awareness Supplement



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Promoting priestly and religious vocations is the work of all the faithful

This fall, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson announced a restructuring of the Office of Priestly and Religious



Fr. Eric Augenstein

Vocations for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. After serving as director of vocations for more than six and a half years, I have transitioned to a new role as director of seminarians, while a new team of priests has been

appointed to oversee vocations outreach, promotion and discernment.

In looking back over my time as archdiocesan vocations director, I have recognized several lessons that I have learned about the promotion and formation of vocations, especially to the priesthood and consecrated life. I'd like to share some of those lessons with you.

First, many of us in the Church have a hard time understanding what we mean when we use the word “vocation.”

While vocations are often associated with priests and consecrated religious, the term is much broader, speaking to the call we have all received to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Within that universal call, many of us are then called to a particular vocation: marriage, priesthood, diaconate, or consecrated life. But vocation, first and foremost, is a call from God.

Second, when it comes to promoting the particular vocations of priesthood and consecrated life, I have learned that priests beget priests, seminarians beget seminarians, and religious beget religious.

In other words, the best way to help young people discover if God is calling them to the priesthood or consecrated life is to spend time with priests and religious. I have especially seen this with our seminarians.

When young men spend time with our seminarians, they discover that they are regular guys who take their faith seriously and are trying to follow Jesus. Visiting a seminary or a religious community is one of the best things a young person can do to see if that might be their call.

Third, we have a great challenge in our Church of calling forth new priestly and religious vocations from different cultural communities, especially the Latino community. The ethnic makeup of our seminarians and priests does not match the ethnic makeup of the people in our parishes. There is much work to be done to call forth vocations from these communities.

Fourth, the best priestly vocations resource we have in the archdiocese is Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. The wisdom of the late Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein in founding this seminary has opened the door to so many more young men actively discerning the priesthood here in our local Church.

We are blessed with two great seminaries in our archdiocese—Bishop Bruté and Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad—and I believe we will reap the fruit of these seminaries for a long time to come.

Finally, if there is one place where we should concentrate our efforts of

vocations promotion, it is on college campuses. There is some great ministry happening on college campuses these days, and also great potential for listening and discerning God's call, even in the midst of many competing voices.

We as a Church, and as those who promote priestly and religious vocations, need to be connected wherever young people are, but our college-age young people especially are thirsting for God and for meaning in their lives—and we would do well to accompany them on that journey.

So there we have it—some lessons from a half-dozen years of full-time ministry promoting priestly and religious vocations. And as a final reminder—this is not the work of one person or one office. We are all called to assist the Harvest Master who never ceases to bring forth laborers for the harvest.

(Father Eric Augenstein serves as pastor of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis and as archdiocesan director of seminarians.) †



'Get on the bus'

Father Michael Keucher gets behind the wheel on parishioners' journey of faith

By Sean Gallagher

SHELBYVILLE—Look at the curriculum of a seminary and you won't find a course titled "School Bus Driving 101."

But Father Michael Keucher says the training he undertook in his first year of priestly ministry for a bus driver's license has been a key part of his priestly life and ministry.

With it, he's taken parishioners of all ages on a wide range of journeys to build up and live out their faith. The bus has been an effective tool for Father Keucher to achieve his simple goal for his ministry: "to care about people and to care about their relationship with Jesus."

"If my goal is to get people to Jesus Christ, to get them to experience the Lord and his grace, maybe it's just a matter of getting people on the bus," he says with a smile. "Get on the bus. And God has allowed me to be behind the wheel."

A contagious enthusiasm

As pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville and sacramental minister of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County for the past two years, Father Keucher has found great joy in accompanying the Catholics in those faith communities on their journey of faith.

"I have discovered a lot of joy in just being with people," he said. "I've experienced a lot of joy in trying to be Christ to them and bring Christ to them. I feel more alive now than I've ever felt in my whole life because of what God has called me to do."

As the new vocations director for the archdiocese, Father Keucher will accompany men in central and southern Indiana who are considering if God might be calling them to the priesthood.

"I'm looking forward to walking with young men as they're thinking about the priesthood," he said. "Jesus wants us to be happy, to have that joy that he alone can give. So, it's exciting to help others come to the water, to come to Jesus. There's so much joy in that."

Unlike previous archdiocesan vocations directors who were assigned to that ministry on a full-time basis, Father

Keucher will continue in his ministry to the Catholics in Shelby County.

He'll also be assisted in promoting the priesthood and consecrated life by five priests in various parts of the archdiocese, most of whom are serving in parishes.

Father Keucher said having priests serving in parishes taking on the mission of promoting the priesthood will give a "fuller taste" of ordained ministry to the men who are considering God's call in their lives.

Those who might observe Father Keucher's ministry to the Catholics of Shelby County would experience a taste of the priesthood that has a bold flavor which is the result of the diverse ingredients he has put together to create a feast of faith.

Since arriving at the two parishes of Shelby County, Father Keucher has formed a popular youth group, established a perpetual adoration chapel, started an annual Octoberfest of "music, brats and brews," and gotten behind members of both parishes' efforts to start a local council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which has opened a thrift store in Shelbyville.

And in addition to bus driver, you can add "playwright" to Father Keucher's job description. With the help of retired high school English teacher Carolyn Disser, now teaching music at St. Joseph School, Father Keucher has penned three plays for St. Joseph's students.

"He's always thinking of new projects," said Disser. "Everybody loves to be around him. His enthusiasm is so contagious."

One person who has caught Father Keucher's enthusiasm is Austin Perry, a 17-year-old St. Vincent de Paul parishioner and member of St. Joseph and St. Vincent's youth group.

"He has such a positive attitude and has so much energy," Austin said. "He'll give a homily at Mass and ... he'll start jumping up and down. He has so much energy. It's awesome."

At a time when she has several grandchildren enrolled at its school, longtime St. Joseph parishioner Susie Fischer is glad to see Father Keucher lead her faith community. She loves going to the twice weekly daily Masses that the students attend.

"They look up to him. They love being around him," Fischer said. "He's so excited on Tuesdays and Fridays with the kids. He makes you want to sit up and be excited with him."

'The measure with which you measure'

With an ever-burgeoning parish ministry and more set before him in promoting priestly and religious vocations, Father Keucher seems to have an endless supply of energy to get it all done. He points to Christ as the source of that energy.

"It's like Jesus says, 'The measure with which you measure will be measured back to you,'" said Father Keucher, quoting Matthew 7:2. "The more that I give of myself, the more I get in return."

He and his parishioners encounter



Father Michael Keucher's infectious enthusiasm for the faith bubbles over while teaching a fifth-grade religion class on Sept. 30 at St. Joseph School in Shelbyville. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

Father Michael Keucher

Age: 33

Parents: Stephen and Diane Keucher

College: Indiana University in Bloomington

Seminary: Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad

Favorite Scripture verse: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you besides" (Mt 6:33).

Favorite saint: St. Philip Neri: "My confirmation patron and the saint of joy."

Favorite prayer or devotion: "Anything with Mary, especially the *Memorare* and the rosary. Our Lady has taken possession of my heart."

Favorite movie: *The Sandlot*: "It reminds me of the beautiful childhood God gave me, which every child deserves."

Favorite book: *Gilead*, by Marilynne Robinson: "Never has a book struck so many chords in my soul."

Hobbies: Jesus and prayer, work, simply being with family and friends, bus driving, writing plays, blogging, dogs, running, biking, poetry, and travelling—especially to Central America.

Christ, most especially in the sacraments.

"The sacraments bring joy, the sacraments which have been handed down for 2,000 years," Father Keucher said. "And yet every single celebration of a sacrament is a personal encounter with Jesus—and I get to be a part of that. It's absolutely mind-blowing."

Then he gets to see how the grace of those sacraments deepens the life of faith of his parishioners.

"The joy on a kid's face after first

Communion or a man, head in hands, crying in confession, having been set free from his personal demons," he reflected. "Grace unfolds in very storied and personal ways—and the priest gets to be right there. He gets to be a small part of the great action of grace and mercy that's going on in the world."

(To learn more about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.) †



Father Michael Keucher, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, carries a monstrance holding the Blessed Sacrament at the head of a eucharistic procession on June 23 at the Batesville Deanery faith community. The procession ended with the blessing of the Divine Mercy Chapel, the newest perpetual adoration chapel in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Vocations Awareness Supplement highlights priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life in the local Church

This issue of *The Criterion* features our annual supplement that highlights vocations in the Church to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life.

It is ordinarily published during the U.S. bishops' annual Vocations Awareness Week, which this year is on Nov. 3-9. The supplement has been renamed the "Vocations Awareness Supplement."

From the beginning, the Church has recognized that marriage is also a

vocation, a pathway to holiness, to which God calls people. *The Criterion* publishes two marriage supplements annually, usually in February and July.

In addition, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has three offices which promote vocations. For information on the Office of Marriage and Family Life, visit www.archindy.org/marriageandfamily. For information on the diaconate, go to www.archindy.org/deacon. For information on the priesthood and consecrated life, visit www.archindy.org.

'California girl' embraces call to religious life at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods

By Jason Moon

Special to *The Criterion*

ST. MARY-OF-THE-WOODS—For a long time, God tugged at Jessica Vitente's heart strings.

In 2015, after an encounter with Providence Sister Editha Ben at the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress, the Pomona, Calif., native took God up on an offer and decided to pay a visit to the motherhouse of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in St. Mary-of-the-Woods in western Indiana.

After the weekend retreat she attended there, Jessica continued to discern the life of a woman religious. She entered the Sisters of Providence as a postulant on Sept. 10, 2018.

"I was touched and inspired by the women in initial formation and the many sisters who responded with great love and generosity to a call that is bigger and greater than themselves," Sister Jessica said. "I intentionally explored the idea of religious life because I knew God was tugging. As I faithfully followed, there was peace and joy that led to happiness ... so I trusted, surrendered and followed Jesus."

During her first year with the Sisters of Providence, Jessica hoped to sharpen her prayer life. She said she was successful.

"I had the opportunity to get to know myself a little more deeply," she said. "I have been able to work on areas of my life that I deeply desired to mold but never made a priority. ... I have been able to learn creative ways to live a contemplative lifestyle, through a buffet of various prayer styles—an all-you-can-choose buffet!"

"These and many other opportunities have helped me on the way to becoming the best version of myself."

During the yearlong postulancy, Jessica continued to discern her decision while also continuing to grow within herself. Sister Jessica already had an associate degree in accounting from Mount San Antonio College in Walnut, Calif., and a bachelor's degree in human development from California State University, Long Beach.

God kept tugging. And Jessica was listening.

"Postulant life is an opportunity for long-term coming and seeing, as well as tasting and hearing, what religious life is about as a young woman in the 21st century," Sister Jessica said. "It was an experience that welcomed me to jump into a new lifestyle with both feet.

"I left three decades of a 'California-girl' lifestyle. It was difficult, but through the grace of God, I was able to



Providence Sister Jessica Vitente, right, meets with Providence Sister Marceline Mattingly, the oldest member of the community, after entering the congregation's postulancy in September 2018. (Submitted photo)

build new relationships."

Living with the Sisters of Providence also brought a new perspective to life, Sister Jessica said.

"The experiences of community living have taught me much," she said. "How to discover what my limitations are and how I can make healthy choices ..."

"I am what I am, and I am who God made me to be. And I am loved and accepted by my sisters because I belong!"

On Aug. 3, she was received into the novitiate, the next step in formation with the Sisters of Providence. There are two stages in the novitiate program.

In the first year, Sister Jessica, as a "canonical novice," will deepen her relationship with her God through intense study of Scripture, prayer, theology and the vowed life, among other topics. She will also delve more

deeply into the Catholic faith, religious life and the history and traditions of the Sisters of Providence.

The second year will be her mission novice year in which she will enter into a particular ministry, often away from the campus of the motherhouse.

She readily admits that hearing her new title "Sister Jessica" sometimes sounds unfamiliar to her.

"When I hear Sister Jessica, my name rings differently in my ear," she said. "I am still adjusting and allowing myself to go through the process of owning the title. Surely, it will take more time for it to blossom."

(Jason Moon is the media relations manager of the Sisters of Providence. To learn more about the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, visit SistersofProvidence.org.) †



Providence Sister Jessica Vitente, right is welcomed into the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods' novitiate on Aug. 3 in the sisters' Church of the Immaculate Conception on the campus of its motherhouse. Providence Sister Dawn Tomaszewski, general superior of the community, left, and Providence Sister Marsha Speth look on. (Submitted photo)

Separated by two minutes at birth, sisters continue their strong bond as religious sisters

By John Shaughnessy

Jill and Susan Reuber were born within two minutes of each other, part of triplets with their brother Eric.

Growing up, the sisters shared a bedroom and a car, became best friends and did many of the same activities—from playing in their high school marching band to working together at Dairy Queen.

"We pretty much answered to each other's names, too, because people couldn't tell us apart," Susan says with a laugh.

One of the few places where they were separated growing up was during Mass at their parish church.

"Our parents didn't let us sit next to each other," Jill says.

"Probably because they thought we would talk to each other," Susan says.

"Or hit each other," Jill adds, smiling.

Yet despite this remarkable closeness, Susan had a quick, emphatic reaction years later when older sister Jill chose to make her vows as a Sister of St. Benedict.

"I wasn't going to do what Jill did," she says forcefully.

That response makes both sisters smile at the same time.

So begins the story of

how these two 39-year-old sisters are not only connected by blood and love, but now also by their faith and shared vows as Benedictine sisters.

'I wanted God to give me a lightning bolt'

Sister Jill's journey to religious life took its defining turn when she was a student at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods.

"In my freshman and sophomore years, I went on a mission trip during both spring breaks to Nazareth Farm in West Virginia," she recalls.

"I was in elementary education and after my freshman year there, I wanted to teach in the Appalachian Mountains. In my second year there, we prayed together in the mornings and the evenings. That's where I found I wanted that prayer life, that community life. That's when I started discerning that [religious life] is what I wanted to do. I also wanted God to give me a lightning bolt, to tell me what to do."

There was just one problem with that lightning bolt plan.

"During one Mass at camp, the priest's whole homily was that God doesn't give lightning bolts," Sister Jill says.



Part of triplets with their brother Eric, Benedictine sisters Susan, left, and Jill Reuber have often shared the same path in life, but their roads to their vocations took different turns. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Still, by her senior year, she started visiting the Benedictine sisters' community at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., in the Evansville Diocese.

"I fell in love with prayer, community

and the way the sisters loved each other."

Following her college graduation, she entered the Benedictine community in Ferdinand in August of 2003 and professed her final vows

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New deacon candidates come from varied backgrounds

By Sean Gallagher

Twenty-two men from across central and southern Indiana were accepted by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson on Sept. 21 as candidates for the diaconate during a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

They have completed one year of formation. Over the next three years, they will continue participating in the four dimensions of deacon formation: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral.

During that time, they will meet as a group for classes or on retreat one weekend a month for 11 months each year. Additionally, they will participate in various ministries of charity in parishes to which

they will be assigned as well as other places outside of parishes (e.g., jails, hospitals, etc.).

Deacon Kerry Blandford, archdiocesan director of deacon formation, leads the candidates in their formation. Retired Father Jeffery Godecker serves as the director of spiritual formation for the deacon program.

This fourth class of deacon candidates range in age from 32 to 66. They have been married as few as 10 years and as many as 43.

Most continue to work at careers in the secular world, although five are retired. Their occupations vary from mechanical engineer to firefighter to claims consultant.

Nine of the 11 archdiocesan deaneries are represented

in the new class of deacon candidates, which is the fourth such class in the history of the archdiocese. †



Christopher Arvin
 Age: 65
 Wife: Andrea
 Children: 3
 Parish: St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis
 Occupation: Retired educator



Paul Baugh
 Age: 55
 Wife: Theresa
 Children: 3
 Parish: St. Bartholomew, Columbus
 Occupation: Attorney



Jerome Bessler
 Age: 51
 Wife: Astra
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Roch, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Firefighter, paramedic, respiratory therapist



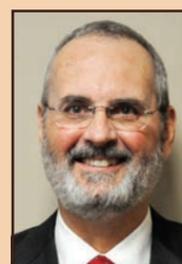
Kevin Daily
 Age: 55
 Wife: Anna
 Children: 3
 Parish: St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
 Occupation: Corrections officer



Dennis Dininger
 Age: 53
 Wife: Liz
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Gabriel the Archangel, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Director of Commercial Operations



Timothy Elder
 Age: 60
 Wife: Shari
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Joseph, Corydon
 Occupation: Army contracting



Mark Henry
 Age: 62
 Wife: Brenda
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Retired mechanical engineer



Elvin Hernandez
 Age: 47
 Wife: Maria T. Colom
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Anthony, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Safety engineer consultant



Thomas Hosty
 Age: 56
 Wife: Julie
 Children: 5
 Parish: St. Barnabas, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Director of Enforcement



Karl Knable
 Age: 64
 Wife: Lynda
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Jude, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Chief Actuary



Jorge Leanos
 Age: 47
 Wife: Amalia Cisneros
 Children: 3
 Parish: Holy Trinity, Edinburgh
 Occupation: Mechanical engineer



James Martin
 Age: 66
 Wife: Debbie
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Retired U.S. Air Force



Neil May
 Age: 60
 Wife: Kristin
 Children: 2
 Parish: St. Susanna, Plainfield
 Occupation: Educator



Michael Nygra
 Age: 53
 Wife: Susan
 Children: 4
 Parish: St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Claims consultant



James O'Connell
 Age: 66
 Wife: Louise
 Children: 2
 Parish: Our Lord Jesus Christ the King, Paoli
 Occupation: Retired guidance counselor



Chris Rainbolt
 Age: 59
 Wife: Barb
 Children: 3
 Parish: St. Michael, Bradford
 Occupation: Retired firefighter



Michael Rouselle
 Age: 46
 Wife: Michelle
 Children: 1
 Parish: St. Mary, Lanesville
 Occupation: Pastoral Associate



Mark Schmidl
 Age: 52
 Wife: Leah
 Children: 5
 Parish: All Saints, Dearborn County
 Occupation: Senior Facilities Director



David Urbanowski
 Age: 63
 Wife: Chris
 Children: 1
 Parish: St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
 Occupation: Retired pilot



James Velez
 Age: 36
 Wife: Angelica
 Children: 6
 Parish: St. Joseph, Shelbyville
 Occupation: Die change tech



James Wood
 Age: 55
 Wife: Andrea
 Children: 1
 Parish: St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis
 Occupation: Archdiocesan Coordinator of Catechesis



Jared Wuerzberger
 Age: 32
 Wife: Brenna
 Children: 1
 Parish: St. Joseph University, Terre Haute
 Occupation: Professor

Turning points keep marking seminarian's journey of faith

By John Shaughnessy

Tyler Huber mentions that he usually has tears in his eyes by the time he finishes the story.

The story unfolded on a summer morning in 2018 at Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis. Huber was assigned there as part of his formation as a seminarian at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

He was talking with parish staff members that morning when Msgr. Paul Koetter, the pastor, asked him if he wanted to come along on a visit to a woman in a nursing home.

"Father Paul explained that the woman's husband had passed away recently," Huber recalls. "This lady also suffered from dementia. Her daughter was there, and Father Paul asked if he could do the anointing of the sick. I looked at the lady and wondered if she was getting any of this. She was unresponsive at this point.

"Then we started praying the 'Our Father' together. And she started praying the 'Our Father.' I was at a loss for words. When we finished, she said, clear as day, 'Thank you.' That was all she said. I found out later that she passed away that night.

"When I got in the car with Father Paul, I asked him if that's why he became a priest. He said, 'Preparing people for heaven is a special gift of the priesthood.'

"It was a turning point in my discernment. There was a lot of grace in that moment. I walked away thinking it would be incredible to be a priest, and this would be an awesome sacrament to celebrate one day."

'Where is God calling me?'

That experience is one of the defining moments in Huber's journey of faith as he continues to follow his path to the priesthood. Right now, the 24-year-old Huber is on schedule to be ordained as a priest for the archdiocese in 2023.

Yet as in nearly all journeys of faith, there have been high points, low points and turning points for Huber as he tries to answer the universal question that all people of faith are asked to consider, "Where is God calling me?"

For much of his young life, Huber thought the answer would include getting married, creating a family and having a career in construction engineering—the major he pursued at Purdue University. Yet that focus started to change during his sophomore year when a female friend at Purdue invited him to join a group of people going to the 24-hour adoration chapel at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Lafayette, Ind.

"Usually, a group of us would go there, especially in the midst of mid-terms when we were all stressed

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Archdiocesan seminarians Matthew Perronie, left, and Tyler Huber pose in front of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City last summer when both seminarians were in Mexico to learn Spanish and continue their priestly formation. (Submitted photo)

Serra Club members show promoting vocations is the work of all Catholics

By Sean Gallagher

In September, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson announced a restructuring of the archdiocesan vocations office that emphasizes a team approach to promoting priestly and religious vocations in central and southern Indiana.

A dedicated group of archdiocesan lay Catholics, though, has worked as a team for nearly 70 years in this vital task of all the Church's faithful.

The Indianapolis Serra Club, founded in 1951, has as its mission to nurture vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life throughout the archdiocese.

It is part of Serra International, an organization founded in Seattle in 1935 to promote such vocations there. It was named after St. Junipero Serra, an 18th-century Franciscan missionary priest to the West Coast who was declared a saint in 2015.

As Catholics in other parts of the country embraced the same mission as the original chapter in Seattle, including those in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, the Serra Club became an international organization.

The Indianapolis Serra Club sponsors an annual vocations essay contest for students in the seventh through 12th grades in schools in the archdiocese. It presents awards to eighth-grade altar servers across central and southern Indiana. And it hosts an annual appreciation dinner for archdiocesan seminarians.

Members, who are known as "Serrans," also assist with vocations promotions programs of the archdiocesan vocations office, such as Bishop Bruté Days, an annual vocations camp and retreat for junior high and high school boys, held at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

They also gather monthly for a vocations Mass and make praying for vocations

a priority in their lives of faith.

"Being part of the Serra Club has enhanced my faith life through my interaction with the seminarians," said Rick Santangelo, past president of the club and a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish in Indianapolis. "Their faith is so strong, and they are so focused. It has caused me to deepen my prayer life.

"Going to Bishop Bruté Seminary and taking part in evening prayer is deeply spiritual and moving. All members of the Serra Club have great hope for our Church, having met the seminarians and recently ordained priests. The future of our Church is in good hands."

Serran Larry Timko of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg said that the mission of the Serra Club is growing in importance as the broader society becomes more "focused on careers that pay well, not vocations that serve our fellow man or God."

"Success is defined in dollars, and the idea of becoming a priest, sister or brother gets lost in our quest to get ahead," Timko added. "Parents, grandparents, friends and relatives are quick to offer young people advice about the best career paths: engineering, computer science, the medical field, or business management. But who says, 'Have you ever considered becoming a priest or sister?'"

That's where the Serra Club can make a difference, Timko said.

"The need for lay people to pray for and foster religious vocations is very important today," he said. "Working with the archdiocese, our parishes and schools, we can help make religious vocations a viable and rewarding consideration for our young people as they discern God's call."

Father Eric Augenstein worked closely with the Serra Club for more than six



Members of the Indianapolis Serra Club assist in serving a meal at Bishop Bruté Days, an annual vocations camp and retreat for junior high and high school boys, held at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. They are, from left, Rick Santangelo, Jim Cain, Louise Collet and Joe Dwenger. Also pictured is Ann Berkemeier, right, the wife of Serran Art Berkemeier. She often assists at club events. (Submitted photo)

years in his role as archdiocesan vocations director. He appreciates how the club's members see promoting vocations as a responsibility for all Catholics.

"In a way, the Serra Club is the connection between the archdiocesan vocations office and the rest of the [local] Church," Father Augenstein said. "Serrans are members of local parishes and can help keep vocations promotion front of mind in their parish. On the other hand, they can bring ideas and resources and people to assist the work that the vocations office does."

Father Augenstein now serves as archdiocesan director of seminarians and as pastor of Nativity.

Santangelo recommends that all archdiocesan parishes have a vocations committee to help its young members consider if God might be calling them to

the priesthood or religious life.

As important as such committees can be, Santangelo also noted the importance of personally offering such invitations—and seeking God's assistance in this mission in prayer.

"Remember to ask the youth you meet who have the qualities of a good priest or religious to consider a vocation to the priesthood or religious life," Santangelo said. "Most importantly, pray regularly for vocations to the priesthood and religious life that high quality men and women will not only hear God's call, but respond enthusiastically to it.

"Prayer is very powerful, and the most important instrument we as Catholics have."

(To learn more about the Indianapolis Serra Club, visit <https://serraindy.org>.) †

ARCHDIOCESE of INDIANAPOLIS

2019-2020 Seminararians

RELIGIOUS in FORMATION

2019-2020

Saint Meinrad Seminary



Deacon Michael Prakasam
IV Theology
Christ the King
Indianapolis

Matthew Perronio
II Theology
St. Malachy
Brownsburg

Michael Clawson
II Theology
Annunciation
Brazil

John Geis
II Theology
St. John the Evangelist
Indianapolis



Tyler Huber
I Theology
St. Mary-of-the-Knobs
Floyds Knobs

José Neri
I Theology
St. Monica
Indianapolis

Charlie Wessel
I Theology
St. Simon
Indianapolis

Jack Wright
I Theology
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Richmond



Anthony Armbruster
II Philosophy
St. Malachy
Brownsburg

James "JJ" Huber III
II Philosophy
St. Gabriel
Connersville

Bobby Vogel
II Philosophy
St. Joseph
Jennings County



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Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary



Andrew Alig
IV College
All Saints
Dearborn County

Liam Hosty
IV College
St. Barnabas
Indianapolis

Benjamin Popson
IV College
Our Lady of Perpetual Help
New Albany

Nick Rivelli
IV College
St. Joan of Arc
Indianapolis

Samuel Rosko
IV College
Holy Rosary
Indianapolis



Justin J. Horner
III College
St. Anthony of Padua
Morris

Aaron Noll
III College
St. Bartholomew
Columbus

Khui Shing
III College
St. Mark the Evangelist
Indianapolis

Isaac Siefker
III College
St. John the Apostle
Bloomington

Matthew Ohlhaut
III College
St. Lawrence
Lawrenceburg

Kristofer Garlitch
II College
St. Mary
North Vernon

Khaling Thu
II College
St. Mark the Evangelist
Indianapolis

James Hentz
I College
St. Michael
Greenfield



Sr. Maria Nguyen
of the Holy Family, OCD
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Terre Haute
Temporary Professed

Sr. Marie Therese Miciano
of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, OCD
Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Terre Haute
Temporary Professed

Sr. Corbin Hannah, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis
Temporary Professed

Sr. Arianne Whittaker, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
Temporary Professed

Sr. Joni Luna, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
Temporary Professed



Sr. Anna Fan, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
Temporary Professed

Sr. Tracey Horan, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
St. Jude, Indianapolis
Temporary Professed

Sr. Emily Marie Tekolste, SP
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
St. Anthony, Indianapolis
Temporary Professed

Jessica Virente
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
Novice



Sr. Teresa Kang
Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
Mission Novice

Ashley Barnett
Society of Our Lady of
the Most Holy Trinity
St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
Postulant

Sr. Mary Lily Among Thorns McCann
Servants of the Lord and
the Virgin of Matará
All Saints, Dearborn Co.
Novice

Sr. Maria Kolbe Zapfe, OP
Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne
St. John the Apostle, Bloomington
Junior Professed



Sr. M. Mary Xavier Winterrowd, OP
Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia
St. Christopher, Indianapolis
Temporary Professed

Sr. Evelyn Lobo
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters
St. Monica, Indianapolis
Temporary Professed

Sr. Lucia Christi Zetzl, SV
Sisters of Life
St. Gabriel, Indianapolis
Temporary Professed

Sr. Agnes Mary Graves, RSM
Religious Sisters of Mercy
Alma, Michigan
St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis
Novice



Sr. M. Evangeline Rutherford, OSF
Sisters of St. Francis of
Perpetual Adoration
St. John the Evangelist, Indianapolis
Temporary Professed

Sr. Mary Peter Ruschke, OSF
Sisters of St. Francis of
Perpetual Adoration
Batesville
Novice

Sr. Mary Amata Naville, OSF
Sisters of St. Francis of
Perpetual Adoration
St. Mary, Navilleton
Novice

Sr. Gabriel Marie Trimble
Slaves of the Immaculate
Heart of Mary, MA
Oratory of Sts. Philomena
and Cecilia, Brookville
Temporary Professed



Br. Stanley Wagner, OSB
Saint Meinrad Archabbey
St. Meinrad
Temporary Professed

Fr. Mateo Zamora, OSB
Saint Meinrad Archabbey
St. Meinrad
Temporary Professed

Br. Basil Lumsden, OSB
Saint Meinrad Archabbey
St. Meinrad
Temporary Professed

Novice Dennis Reyes
Saint Meinrad Archabbey
St. Meinrad
Novice



Br. Dominick Jean, OP
Order of Preachers
Province of St. Albert the Great
St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
Novice

Br. Geoffrey Mooney, CSC
Congregation of Holy Cross,
U.S. Province of Priests
and Brothers
Our Lady of
Perpetual Help, New Albany
Temporary Professed

Br. James Henke, CSC
Congregation of Holy Cross,
U.S. Province of Priests
and Brothers
Our Lady of the
Greenwood, Greenwood
Temporary Professed

Br. Joseph Kraemer, SJ
Jesuits West
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond
Theology

Br. Taylor Fulkerson, SJ
Midwest Province of the
Society of Jesus
St. Mary, Lanesville
First Studies

Br. Jeffrey Sullivan, SJ
Midwest Province of the
Society of Jesus
Holy Name, Beech Grove
Regency

Ben Jansen
Midwest Province of the
Society of Jesus
St. Francis and Clare, Greenwood
Novice

Br. Marcius
Order of Preachers
Province of St. Joseph
Annunciation, Brazil
Novice

Br. Philip Weisbrod, nLC
Legion of Christ
College & Novitiate
St. Nicholas, Sunman
Novice



Religious Communities

- Sisters of St. Benedict
Beech Grove
benedictine.com
- Sisters of Providence
Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods
spsmw.org
- Sisters of St. Benedict
Ferdinand
thedome.org
- Order of St. Benedict
Saint Meinrad Archabbey
saintmeinrad.org
- Dominican Friars Central Province
domcentral.org
- Missionaries of Charity
mothersusa.org
- Congregation of the Sisters of the
Third Order of St. Francis, Oldenburg
oldenburgfranciscans.org
- Sisters of St. Francis of
Perpetual Adoration, Mishawaka
sfsfa.org
- Discalced Carmelite Nuns
Terre Haute
heartawake.org
- Marian Friary
Franciscans of the Immaculate
maryschildren.com
- Little Sisters of the Poor
littlesistersofthepoor.org
- Society of Jesus Midwest Province
jesuitsmidwest.org
- Order of Friars Minor
St. Louis Province
thefriars.org

*Co-sponsored with the Diocese of Palayamkottai, India

‘Adopt-a-sis’ program instills values of Franciscan sisters in high school students

By Katie Rutter

Special to *The Criterion*

OLDENBURG—One of the unique, and perhaps providential, features of the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception in Oldenburg is its close connection to the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg, the religious community that founded the school.

The high school and Franciscan motherhouse share a campus. Students daily eat lunch in the same building that the sisters call home.

Seeing an opportunity in the proximity, the sisters have built close relationships with many of the high schoolers. Most of these relationships are thanks to a program that the sisters call “Adopt-a-Sis,” in which students eat lunch with a sister twice a month for an entire school year.

For half an hour, the generations mingle over pizza and peanut butter sandwiches. Each sister sits, laughing and asking questions, with a group of four or five young people.

“I see her as a friend. I think of it as going to see a friend that I don’t normally get to see during the week,” said sophomore Emerald Simmonds, speaking with *The Criterion* during lunchtime on Oct. 9.

“It’s just a great experience to be able to learn from someone who has so much knowledge,” said Ben Kraus, a senior at the academy.

The Sisters of St. Francis founded what would become Oldenburg Academy in 1852. The proactive group taught in the school and staffed other parish schools in Kentucky, Ohio, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois and Kansas while, later, conducting mission work in foreign countries such as Papua New Guinea and China.

Like many other religious orders, however, the number of new vocations declined as the 20th century drew to a close. In 1994, the sisters turned over Oldenburg Academy to a



Franciscan Sister Kathleen Branham, center, smiles with her “adopted” students in the lunchroom at the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg in Oldenburg on Oct. 9. The sisters invite students from the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception to eat lunch together twice a month. The students are, from left, Kate Walke, Emerald Simmonds, Lleyton Knecht and Kate Voegelé. (Photos by Katie Rutter)

board of lay members.

Today, none of the sisters teach at the school. Of the about 125 sisters living at the motherhouse, many are in nursing care, and the vast majority are retired.

Yet the Franciscans were determined to continue being present to the younger generations. When they first invited the students to lunch 19 years ago, about 40 students took advantage of the opportunity.

“Our sisters are so rich in experience, education and spirituality, they’ve got a lot to share with the students,” said Franciscan Sister André Burkhart, who organizes Adopt-a-Sis.

This year, 189 of the 230 high schoolers at the academy signed up to have lunch with the sisters.

On Oct. 9, the buzz of pleasant conversation was heard throughout the room. Topics ranged from daily activities like sports or fishing to cross-generational differences.

“I think you get to learn about someone that’s not part of your generation. It’s very interesting to hear their stories and where they came from and what they think,” said sophomore Kate Voegelé.

“The age difference is so big that she grew up without most of the stuff that we’re living with now,” said senior Owen Hudepohl, sitting at the table with Sister André.

“We think without phones or TV we wouldn’t be able to live, and back then they thrived,” he concluded.

“They wouldn’t live five minutes with outdoor toilets,”



Franciscan Sister Cleopha Werner, left, shares a conversation with Luke Roesener, a junior at Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, in the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg on Oct. 9. The students have the opportunity to eat lunch twice a month with the sisters in a program called “Adopt-a-Sis.”

inserted Sister André with a laugh.

Sister André herself was taught by the Sisters of Oldenburg during her school years.

Franciscan Sister Kathleen Branham, the order’s vocations director, was also taught by the Oldenburg Franciscans. She believes that their influence gave her a passion for social justice that led her to work in the foster care system and, eventually, to join the order.

“There was just something about the joyfulness, the caring and the compassion that I remembered growing up,” Sister Kathleen recalled.

Some of the connections and lessons made over the shared lunches last a lifetime. Brian Knueven, now a German and music teacher at Oldenburg, began his high school career eating lunch with Franciscan Sister Jean Michael Sauntry.

“She did mission work in Papua New Guinea, so she told me about that and being in her village and what things were like there,” Knueven recalled.

Their correspondence continued even after his graduation until, eventually, Sister Jean Michael celebrated with him when he was hired at Oldenburg. Knueven says that his regular interactions with the sisters helped build a Franciscan foundation for his spirituality.

“It’s a lifestyle, it’s not this thing that I believe and this thing I hear about. It’s a lifestyle and you kind of choose to really live it,” he explained.

When the bell rang for the lunch period to end, the students and sisters exchanged smiles and hugs. As her “adopted” students headed to their next class, Sister André expressed big hopes for their future.

“I hope they remember when they’re in leadership, because we hope that they’re leaders of tomorrow,” said Sister André, “that there is a God, and that there’s someone who cares and that we’re always here for them.”

(To learn more about the Oldenburg Franciscans, visit oldenburgfranciscans.org.) †



Brian Knueven and Franciscan Sister Jean Michael Sauntry pose in the lunchroom at the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg on Oct. 9. Knueven, now a teacher at the Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, got to know Sister Jean Michael during his high school years in a program that allows the students to eat lunch with the Franciscan sisters.

Chatard graduate finds 'life in balance' as a professed Dominican



Dominican Brother James Pierce Cavanaugh, left, processes in to St. Vincent Ferrer Church in Chicago on June 2 to profess solemn vows as a member of the Order of Preachers, also known as the Dominicans. (Submitted photo)

By Natalie Hoefler

Ever since he was in the fifth grade at St. Pius X School in Indianapolis, James Pierce Cavanaugh knew he wanted to be a sports broadcaster. He knew it throughout his time at nearby Bishop Chatard High School.

Cavanaugh carried that goal through college at Indiana University (IU), graduating in December of 2013 with a degree in sports broadcasting.

But just two weeks prior to graduating, he made a decision. He would be a broadcaster, yes. But he would dedicate his life to broadcasting the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ as a Dominican priest.

'In pursuit of the whole college thing'

It was a decision a long time in coming.

"My freshman year at IU, I didn't really go to Mass, maybe three times," Dominican Brother James Pierce admits, despite telling his parents he was going to Mass at St. Paul Catholic Center in Bloomington. Rather, he says, "I was in pursuit of the whole college thing."

Midway through the first semester of his sophomore year, his parents came to visit, and the family went to Mass at St. Paul.

"There's a unique way they do the collection," Brother James Pierce, 27, explains. "It became clear that I hadn't been going to Mass. I was busted."

The situation forced him to consider whether or not he truly believed the faith he'd been raised in.

As he considered the question, he realized there had been a disconnect for him—there was faith, and there was life, and for him they had always been separate. So, he decided he not only believed the faith, but that he also needed to live according to the faith.

He became involved in campus ministry at St. Paul, which is administered by Dominican priests of the Chicago-based St. Albert the Great Province. He started going to Mass and confession regularly.

It was during confession in January of his sophomore

year that a life-shift moment occurred.

"My penance was to ask Jesus what he wanted me to do," he recalls. "I went to the chapel and asked that question, and I felt this sudden attraction to the priesthood."

A call to the 'Cadillac of habits'

For a year and a half, Brother James Pierce wrestled with the question of his vocation mostly internally. His senior year at IU, he started talking more openly with friends and priests about the vocation he was discerning.

Among those he spoke with was Dominican Brother Raphael Christianson, who was assigned to St. Paul Catholic Center for his pastoral year, part of his formation for the priesthood.

"Even my senior year, I was still set on getting a broadcast job," says Brother James Pierce. Brother Raphael encouraged him to get a job, "but also to set up a time to visit the [St. Albert the Great Province's formation] house in St. Louis to get an idea of what the Dominican life looks like."

So he did. And from the first moment, he says, "I was blown away by their joy."

For the first time in his life, he says, he encountered men who were capable of "heart-to-heart talks and deep conversation about their faith—real conversation, real relationships," the Dominican brother recalls.

He liked their schedule—joining for morning and evening prayer, going to Mass together and gathering for recreation time. He even liked what they wore.

"Wearing the habit all the time struck me as different in a good, attention-getting way, that it was clear to these people what their life was about," says Brother James Pierce of the long, white tunic—and occasional black hood and cape—worn by the order. He recalls one priest sharing that he was told, "Come join [the Dominicans], and we'll give you the Cadillac of habits!"

By the time Brother James Pierce left the house, the wrestling with

discernment was over: "I felt convicted to pursue this path" of priesthood with the Dominicans.

That visit to St. Louis occurred in December of 2013, just two weeks before he graduated.

"I had to completely change course," he says. "It was exciting, it was scary, but it felt like what I was supposed to do."

'Such impossibly good news'

Brother James Pierce became a novice at St. Dominic Piory in Denver, Colo., in November of 2014. He made his first profession of vows about a year later.

One of the many things he has been studying during the last five years is the charism—or way of serving—of the Dominicans, also known as the Order of Preachers.

"We're about preaching the full Gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world," he explains. "We preach the catholic—universal—understanding of Jesus Christ inviting the whole world into full relationship with him. It's such impossibly good news."

While there are Dominican parishes in the United States, the order is moving more toward college campus ministry, he notes.

"To study is an integral part of our charism," he explains. "It was for St. Dominic and [St. Thomas] Aquinas, and that's been passed down."

"So we're about college campus ministry, the intellectual life, evangelizing and encouraging young adults—all of these in intimate connection with ... interaction with Jesus Christ to make him the Lord of their life."

His degree in sports broadcasting grounded Brother James Pierce in an understanding of communications—an important component of relaying the Gospel message.

But communicating that message involves challenges, he says.

"The content [of the message] is true, but people are inoculated to it," he admits. "They think they've heard the

message, understand it, and that they don't need it."

So, the challenge now, he says, is determining how to "talk about that content that is true and world-changing, and communicate it in a way so they hear it as if for the first time, a way they never have before."

'I know my life is in balance'

A trait that makes this message more appealing is the joy of the one delivering it. Brother James Pierce exudes this trait as he talks about what happened on June 2 this year.

"I professed my final vows," he says, joy flowing in his voice. "The biggest moment for a Dominican is entering into solemn vows—I'm in it for life."

He finds fulfillment in this knowledge.

"I've kind of gotten married," Brother James Pierce explains. "So, I know in what way I'm ordering my life to God—I'm a vowed religious."

"That vow commits me to preaching the Gospel for the salvation of souls. That's what my life is about, and I have the freedom to make my life all about that. I have the surety of that path."

He notes, too, that he is "not under the illusion that I'll sail through life with the same fervor now, the fourth month after my solemn profession. Like married couples in year 25 understand better the ups and downs and difficulties and confusion of married life, I'll expect that, too."

Yet Brother James Pierce finds comfort in his understanding that there will be an ebb and flow to his life as a vowed religious.

"It's a lifelong [journey of] growing into this understanding of what it means to invite Jesus Christ into others' lives," he says. "I know my life is in balance. I know what my life is about and what it will be for the rest of my life. This is my consolation."

(For more information on the Dominicans or seeking a vocation with the Dominicans, go to Opvocations.org.) †

Saint Meinrad Archabbey: A Path to God's Kingdom

By Br. Zachary Wilberding, O.S.B.

Special to *The Criterion*

ST. MEINRAD—In chilly predawn darkness, bells ring out over the forested hills of Spencer County in southern Indiana.

It's 5:15 in the morning. The bells are calling the Benedictine monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey to their first prayer service of the day, which is known as the Office of Vigils.

Monks silently make their way to their church for this service that symbolizes their keeping close watch for the return of Christ. It will be closely followed by the Office of Lauds (also known as Morning Prayer), which is sung praise for the dawning of a new day.

The purpose of a monk's life is to seek God. Prayer together in common and alone in private is essential. The monks pray together as a community six times a day. They celebrate Mass daily as the source and summit of the Christian life. There are five services which make up what are called the Liturgy of the Hours: Vigils, Lauds, Midday Prayer, Vespers and Compline (also known as Night Prayer).

These are composed largely of Scripture, primarily the psalms, some of which are sung to Gregorian chant. Taking this time for formal prayer helps the monks to make their entire life a prayer.

The private prayer of the monks is called *Lectio Divina*. There are two periods in the daily schedule for this. *Lectio Divina* is Latin for sacred reading and is an ancient Christian practice of reading and meditating on Scripture as a way of listening for what God has to say to the monk. For monks, Scripture is an inexhaustible source of spiritual nourishment, a well that never runs dry.

To better foster a life of prayer, silence is kept most of the time in the monastery. But there are also times of recreation and relaxation when the monks gather to share news and anecdotes and play games.

Chess and sequence are two popular games, and a few monks play catch



Benedictine Brother John Mark Falkenhain leads a discussion during a session of One Bread One Cup, a summer youth liturgical leadership conference held by Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology. (Photos courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

in the monastery's front yard. A sister visiting the monastery recently observed the evening game of catch and commented that the abbot "still has his arm."

Life at Saint Meinrad is guided by the *Rule* of St. Benedict. He was a sixth-century Italian monk who tried to make a holy life accessible to ordinary people.

Benedict believed that the monastery should be so organized that, in words found in his *Rule*, "the strong have something to yearn for and the weak nothing to run from."

In accord with the *Rule*, the prayer of the monks bears fruit in various types of work. Several monks are involved in teaching and administration in Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology. Some monks serve local parishes as pastors. Other work includes designing and building stained-glass windows, maintenance, tailoring, prison ministry, leading retreats and providing hospitality to guests.

St. Benedict valued hospitality, and the tradition continues at Saint Meinrad. The monastery maintains a guest house which accommodates 60 people in private rooms. Many structured retreats are offered there to visitors throughout the year by the monks. People are also welcome to arrange their own retreats as well, perhaps just taking a couple of days to be quiet in a beautiful place and remember God.

While Benedict



Benedictine monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad pray during a liturgy in the monastery's Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln. Common prayer several times a day is an essential part of the Benedictine vocation.

thought that work should be part of the monk's lives, he was not specific about any particular type of work. So, monks may find themselves doing any number of things depending on their abilities, interests and the community's needs.

The monks commit themselves by making three vows. They promise obedience, which means to listen to how God's will is expressed through their superior, other monks and through Scripture.

The vow of stability means that the monk commits to live and die in the community which he enters. Even if ministry necessitates his absence from the monastery for a time, he will always return, this will always be his home, and the monastery cemetery will be his final resting place.

Stability is seen as a cure for the kind of restless moving and seeking motivated by the belief that everything will be fine if you go someplace else.

It means that you stay in one place and face yourself in the light of God's mercy. The monks know that the grass is not always greener elsewhere.

The third vow taken by the monks is conversion according to a monastic manner of life. This is a comprehensive commitment to live without personal property, sharing goods with the community, praying routinely throughout the day and year, learning to be patient with the faults and failings of others as well as of oneself, forgiving and being forgiven.

What gain is there from living this way? The monks believe that the result will be eternal life in God's Kingdom.

(Benedictine Brother Zachary Wilberding is vocation director of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad. To learn more about Saint Meinrad, visit saintmeinrad.org.) †



Benedictine Brother Dominic Warnecke, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, cuts wood for the monastery's "Abbey Caskets" line of caskets. In following the Rule of St. Benedict, the monks of Saint Meinrad undertake many works, from operating their seminary to parish work to a variety of forms of manual labor.

Diverse priests, deacons and religious add vibrancy to the archdiocese



Left, Franciscan Sister Judy Crooker teaches a kindergarten class.



Above, Conventual Franciscan Brother Joseph Martin Huang takes a photo of a National Catholic Youth Conference participant.



Above, Benedictine Sister Jennifer Mechtild Horner, prioress of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, prays in its chapel.

Right, Deacon Oliver Jackson proclaims the Gospel during an Aug. 3 Mass at St. Rita Church in Indianapolis.

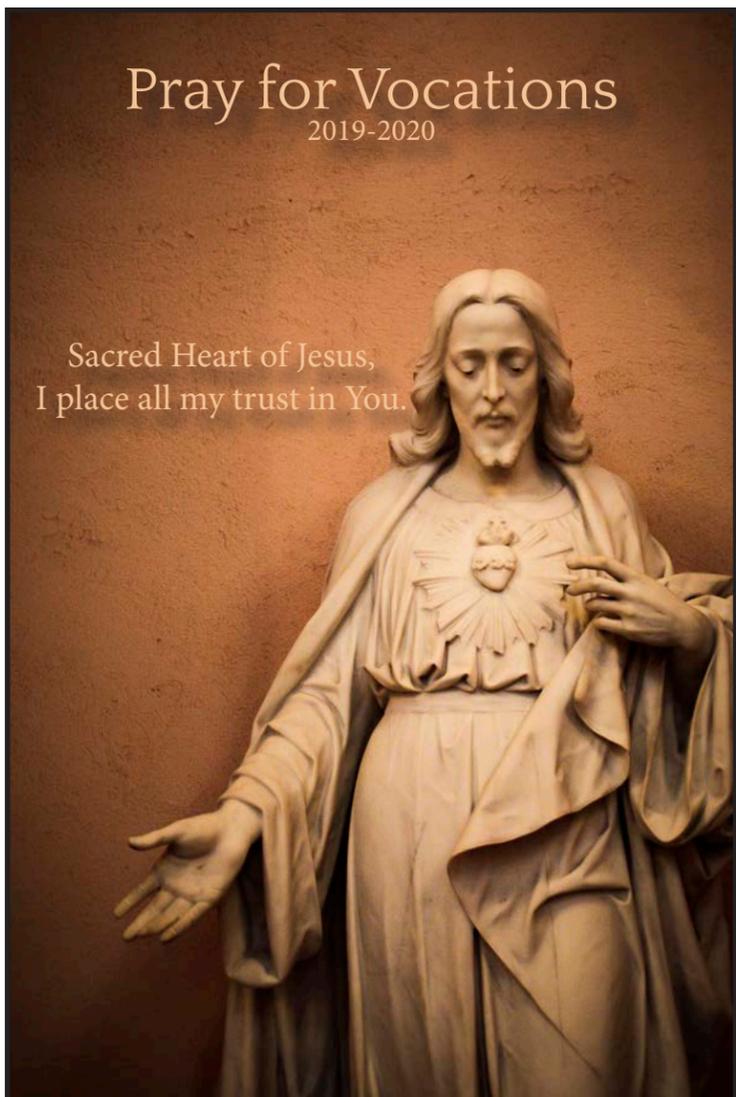


Below, Fathers Douglas Hunter, left, Vincent Lampert, Minh Duong and Juan Valdés join in the eucharistic prayer during the 2019 archdiocesan chrism Mass.



Left, members of the Discalced Carmelite Monastery of St. Joseph in Terre Haute kneel in prayer during a Mass.

Pray for those in priestly or religious formation each day of the week



SUNDAY
Pope Francis
Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

MONDAY
Sem. Anthony Armbruster
Sem. Kristofer Garlitch
Sem. Matthew Perronie
Sem. Benjamin Popson
Br. Marcarius
Br. Taylor Fulkerson, SJ
Sr. Maria Kolbe Zapfe, OP
Ben Jansen

TUESDAY
Dcn. Michael Prakasam
Sem. Michael Clawson
Sem. James Hentz
Sem. Nick Rivelli
Sr. Corbin Hannah, SP
Br. Dominick Jean, OP
Sr. Mary, Lily among Thorns McCann
Sr. Mary Amata Naville, OSF

WEDNESDAY
Sem. John Geis
Sem. Justin J. Horner
Sem. Samuel Rosko
Sem. Bobby Vogel
Sr. Tracey Horan, SP
Br. Philip Weisbrod, LC
Sr. Evelyn Lobo
Sr. Magdalene Marie

THURSDAY
Sem. Liam Hosty
Sem. James "JJ" Huber III
Sem. Khui Shing
Sem. Charlie Wessel
Sr. Emily Marie Tekolste, SP
Br. Joseph Kraemer, SJ
Sr. Mary Xavier Winterrowd, OP
Sr. Lucia Christi Zetzel, SV

FRIDAY
Sem. Tyler Huber
Sem. Aaron Noll
Sem. Isaac Siefker
Sem. Jack Wright
Br. Geoffrey Mooney, CSC
Br. Jeffrey Sullivan, SJ
Sr. Mary Evangeline Rutherford, OSF
Ashley Barnett

SATURDAY
Sem. Andrew Alig
Sem. José Neri
Sem. Matt Ohlhaut
Sem. Khaing Thu
Br. James Henke, CSC
Sr. Agnes Mary Graves, RSM
Sr. Mary Peter Ruschke, OSF
Sr. Gabriel Marie Trimble



out,” recalls Huber, who grew up in St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd County. “After being there a while, we’d go back to campus refreshed. It was in the silence of that adoration chapel that the idea of the priesthood first came up.”

Huber wasn’t exactly thrilled by that idea at the time.

“When the thought first came up, I was enjoying my engineering classes and succeeding in my studies. It was right when God gave me peace about making my decision to major in construction engineering. When the thought of the priesthood came into my mind, it was frustrating.”

It was also growing consistently stronger.

In his sophomore year, he led a Catholic men’s group on campus, immersed in the pursuit of “learning what it meant to be a good man of faith.” In his junior year, he was asked to be a youth minister at a parish near Purdue, and “fell in love with it.”

Then came another defining moment just before his senior year.

Huber is someone who loves all sports, especially baseball and basketball. In the summer before his senior year, he was coming to the end of an internship with a company in Detroit that was his dream job—building huge sports complexes. On the last day of his internship, the chief executive officer took him to lunch, and she made him a generous job offer to join the company after his graduation from Purdue.

“I told her I needed time to think about it. I told her the seminary was on my mind.”

She told him she would wait as long as he needed for his decision.

“The next day, I flew to Alaska with my childhood best friend,” says Huber, an outdoorsman who enjoys hiking, hunting and fishing. “We’re hiking in the mountains and seeing all God’s creation. I said, ‘Grant, I think I need to go to seminary.’”

Being the presence of Christ to others

After graduating from Purdue in May of 2017, Huber entered Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad that August, continuing his discernment to determine if the priesthood was God’s call for him.

Similar to many beginnings in

life, this one had its low points and challenges.

“The first year was pretty tough. It took a while to adjust, going from a school of 40,000 to a community of 120. It took me a while to adapt to how to live in community life. There was frustration, but I still knew God was present in all of that.”

Huber also felt God’s presence during the summer after his first year of formation when he was assigned to Holy Spirit. He “fell in love” with parish life, savoring his involvement with the youths, the nursing home residents and the parish families.

“I loved being the presence of Christ to them—to let them know they’re loved and cared for by him.”

That good feeling continued when he returned to the seminary in the fall of 2018.

“I started developing some great friendships. There was a lot of self-

growth and knowledge that I really had a desire for the priesthood. I realized I have a desire on my heart to bring the sacraments to people.”

‘It would drastically change their faith’

That desire led him to Mexico for nine weeks this past summer, part of his priestly formation. During that time, he studied Spanish, hoping to learn the language well enough to communicate with Hispanic families, a group he grew to love during his assignment at Holy Spirit.

The summer also led him to an emotional moment at the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

“I remember walking toward it, and my heart was overwhelmed with the image of Our Lady. After Mass, we walked to the hill where she actually appeared. There was another church there. I prayed for

people there. To pray for all the people where Mary had appeared was overwhelming.”

Huber believes that a Catholic man considering a vocation to the priesthood would get a similar defining experience by pursuing that call.

“If they’re thinking about it, I would tell them, ‘Just jump in.’ I know what it’s like to be scared. If every young man could get a taste of seminary formation—even if they only stayed for a year—it would change everything. It would drastically change their faith, their priorities in life, and the way they see the world.”

“You’re going to learn a lot about yourself and a lot about God.”

Huber expects to learn even more about both as his journey of faith continues.

(For more information about a vocation to the priesthood in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, visit HearGodsCall.com.) †



Archdiocesan seminarian Tyler Huber, right, sings with seminarian Corey Bruns of the Owensboro, Ky., Diocese on Oct. 23 during a Mass in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel at Saint Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in St. Meinrad. (Photo courtesy of Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

SISTERS

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in 2011. She is now the community’s vocation director, seeking to lead other women to the life she loves.

“I feel like I can be me in this community,” Sister Jill says. “They love me because of who I am and not what I do.”

It was the life she wanted—a life that Susan “wanted nothing to do with it.”

‘Something is missing in my life’

“When Jill was discerning in college, she was right that I didn’t want anything to do with it,” says Sister Susan, a 2003 graduate of Franklin College in Franklin. “I wanted my own car, my own house and my own paycheck. But deep down, I didn’t want to do what Jill was doing. In college, for the first time, we really had our own identity.”

After graduation, she began a career in education, joining Roncalli High School in Indianapolis as an English teacher in her second year.

“It was my dream job—teaching in a Catholic school, sharing my faith with my students.

“Fast forward eight years to 2011. I’m starting to think something is missing in my life. I’m at school

way too much.”

Right then, she gets a message from Benedictine Sister Michelle Sinkhorn—the vocation director for the Ferdinand community at the time—inviting her to take part in a “Come and See” weekend among the sisters.

“I didn’t know if I wanted to open that door,” Sister Susan recalls. “I talked to Jill, and she convinced me to come, that we could hang out for the weekend. In my mind, I was just going to see Jill.”

Then a series of lightning bolts hit, starting on that weekend.

‘I have to find something I hate’

“God opened my heart and said, ‘Why aren’t you pursuing this?’” Sister Susan recalls. “I saw how happy Jill is, and how happy the sisters are. At the end of the weekend, I sat down with Sister Michelle. I owned a house in Beech Grove, and sister said, ‘Why don’t you visit the sisters at Our Lady of Grace Monastery there?’

“The drive home was the longest 2 1/2-hour drive I had ever made in my life. I’m going to have to quit my job and sell my house. Then at Roncalli, [Benedictine] Sister Anne Frederick handed me a brochure for their ‘Come and See’ weekend at Our Lady of Grace. She didn’t even know I had gone to

Ferdinand. I saw that as a sign from the Holy Spirit that I should come here.”

She came for the weekend, arriving with this thought, “I have to find something I hate about the place so I could be done with it.”

She had a different feeling by the end of the weekend.

“On Sunday afternoon, it was time to leave. I didn’t find anything I didn’t like. I fell in love with the sisters. What I was missing in my life was community.”

She entered into the Benedictine community in September of 2012, choosing Beech Grove over Ferdinand because she thought it would allow her and Sister Jill to keep their own identities.

Sister Jill was there when her sister professed her final vows this past June.

“It was neat to think she just professed the same vows I’ve taken and lived,” Sister Jill says.

‘There’s something different about you’

Sharing those vows has added another dimension to their closeness. Living their vows has also brought them to a deeper relationship with God.

“When I entered the community, God was more father-like to me,” Sister Jill says. “Now, he’s become more a friend

and companion. I spend each morning 30 minutes in prayer. It’s more of a conversation between me and Jesus. Now my faith is my whole life—seeing Christ in every person I meet and talk with.”

Sister Susan also talks of having a friendship with God, and how her time in prayer with him lets her “dig deeper to see what he’s calling me to do.”

She also thanks him for calling her to her Benedictine community.

“The biggest thing for me is the support,” says Sister Susan, who has returned to Roncalli as a teacher. “A teacher at Roncalli came up to me a year after I had come back there. She said, ‘There’s something different about you. You’re much more joy-filled.’

“It’s because I’m going back at the end of the day to a community that supports me and loves me and accepts me. They’ve found gifts in me that I never would have found in myself. It’s having the other women here who believe in me.”

It’s also having the bond with Sister Jill—a sister who has always believed in her.

(For more information on the Benedictine sisters of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, visit www.benedictine.com.) †

