

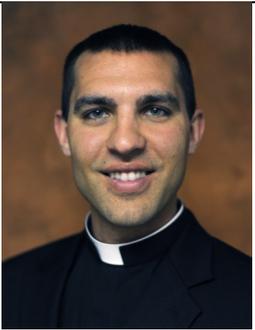


Diocese of Gary Vocation Office Newsletter

July-September 2013

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God Blesses Diocese of Gary with New Deacons



Deacon Chris Stanish

On Saturday 1 June, eight men of the Diocese of Gary were ordained to the order of deacon for service to God and the people of this diocese. Those who received the sacrament of Holy Orders by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands, included seven men from our parishes who will serve as permanent deacons. Also ordained was one man who is in seminary preparing himself to serve God and the Church as a priest. This man was Deacon Christopher Stanish.

Deacon Chris has been in formation at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit since 2010. This summer Deacon Chris will minister with and learn from Fr. Kevin Huber and the people of Queen of All Saints Parish in Michigan City.

During the ordination rite, Bishop Melczek received the new deacons' promises to exercise ministry in humble charity, to teach the faith according to the Gospel and the Church's Tradition, to pray daily for and with the Church, and to be respectful and obedient to the Bishop of Gary. Deacon Chris also promised celibacy, to forego marriage for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. The bishop encouraged all the deacons to remain faithful to the hope promised by the Gospel they proclaim as they said, "Believe what you read; teach what you believe; and practice what you teach."

As deacons, these eight men are called to put themselves at the service of our bishop, our priests, and the lay faithful in the Diocese of Gary. In fact, the word 'deacon' comes from the Greek word 'diakonia' meaning service. They follow in the tradition of Saints Stephen and Lawrence and the many holy deacons whose stories are known throughout the Church's history, offering themselves in love wherever the Church had need of their ministry. By special association with the bishop, deacons administer Baptism, distribute Holy Communion as ordinary ministers, officially witness marriages, bring Viaticum to the dying, proclaim the Gospel and instruct the faithful, preside over worship, give blessings, and officiate at the rites of Christian funerals. In our diocese, many faithful deacons have served for decades in parishes, jails and prisons, hospitals and nursing homes, and wherever God has called them to support the ministry of the bishop.

Please keep our new deacons in your prayers as they seek to serve God and His Church.

Summer Formation for Seminarians

Formation for the diocesan priesthood involves academic, spiritual, pastoral, and human formation. Since priests are called and gifted for service in a particular diocese, a good priestly formation must also help future priests know about their diocese and its people. It takes many people — priests, deacons, religious, teachers, parish staff, parishioners — to help them learn that.

Seminarians participate in various types of formation programs during the summer months. This year, he priests and people of Queen of All Saints, Our Lady of Consolation, St. Thomas More, Holy Spirit, Notre Dame, and St. Michael are all giving of themselves to help form future priests.

In addition to parish ministry, two seminarians are spending time as camp counselors at Camp Sharing Meadows, a camp for other-abled persons. This internship helps them to appreciate the contributions and the spirituality of those who come to church with different life experiences and abilities. Two seminarians will also travel beyond the diocese to experience hospital ministry in big-city hospitals. In their clinical pastoral education, they will minister and spend much of their time reflecting on the experience and learning from others how to care for the sick and injured.

May God bless our seminarians as they continue in discernment and formation.

Vocations Seminar and Andrew Dinner

Once in a while a group of people gather together to learn, to pray and to encourage each other in their ministry. On 18 May, people from across the diocese did just that as they gathered at St. Michael Church in Schererville for a vocations event.

In the afternoon, people from seven parishes who have worked to promote vocations in their parishes gathered for a seminar on vocations promotions. Members of the Serra Club, an international organization that promotes vocations to the priesthood and religious life, also joined in the seminar. During the seminar, they learned about the process of discernment and application in which the candidates participate, the program of priestly formation engaging our seminarians, and the various ways in which vocations can be promoted in the parish and in the family. Participants also had the opportunity to share with each other some of the various activities and efforts at promoting vocations that have been undertaken in the parishes represented.

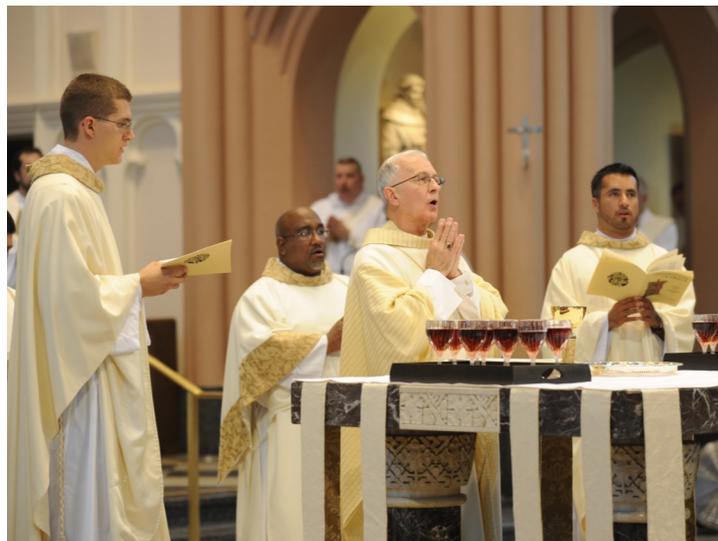
Following the seminar, those gathered participated in the Vigil Mass for Pentecost with the people of St. Michael Parish. During the Mass, the assembly asked for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, while prayers were offered for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life.

In the evening, the seminar participants joined with Gary Diocese seminarians, and seven priests who attended the dinner with twenty-eight prospective seminarians for an Andrew Dinner co-sponsored by the Vocations Office and the Serra Club. Andrew Dinners are so-named because it was the Apostle Saint Andrew who first brought his brother, the Apostle Saint Peter, to Christ that they might follow Him. In a similar way, it is most often priests who bring men to Christ that they might discern whether He is calling them to follow Him in the priesthood. During the dinner, priests, seminarians, and prospects were able to share stories of priesthood, discernment and following Christ.

A presentation on discernment and priestly vocations followed the dinner. Finally, Bishop Melczek concluded the evening offer remarks of encouragement to those who attended the event and could be discerning God's call to the priesthood. He also recognized the love and service of the priests who attended the dinner, and the courage and generosity of the seminarians present.

Vocations Office Calendar

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| 1 July | 300th Birthday of Blessed Junipero Serra |
| 4 August | Memorial of St. Jean Marie Vianney, Patron Saint of Parish Priests |
| 18 August | Admission to Candidacy for Holy Orders for Four Gary Seminarians;
St.Mary, Crown Point |



“Ask the Master of the Harvest to Send Out Laborers for the Harvest.”

In the last few weeks, seminarian-candidates have been invited to participate in different events in the diocese. Very often, these candidates eagerly and enthusiastically embrace the process of discernment and application for seminary. Occasionally, fear impedes their ability to joyfully move ahead. Sometimes it's the fear of their parents who imagine they are “losing” their child to the priesthood or religious life. Sometimes it's the fear of going to seminary and the potential of learning they're not called to priesthood.

Our Lord Jesus tells us in the Scriptures, “Be not afraid.” If God is calling a person to a vocation in the Church, then God is also calling them to find their joy and their purpose in God's order. How can we be afraid of what God wants for us, for God only desires what is good?

Please pray for courage of heart for and a joyful “yes” from those whom God is calling to serve in the priesthood and the religious life.