



# Diocese of Gary

## Vocation Office Newsletter

### APRIL - JUNE 2009

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## God Blesses the Diocese of Gary with One Transitional Deacon and Eight Permanent Deacons



On June 6, 2009, the people of the Diocese of Gary will gather at Holy Angels Cathedral to thank God for the gift of 9 men who will offer their lives unconditionally to the service of the Church in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Ted Mauch will be ordained a transitional deacon. In this office, Deacon Mauch will engage in diaconal ministry, which includes proclaiming the Gospel and preaching, assisting at the altar, giving the Lord's Body and Blood to the faithful, presiding over public prayer, baptizing, assisting at marriages, giving viaticum to the dying, and leading the rites of Christian burial. As a transitional deacon, he will make a commitment to celibacy and promise obedience to Bishop Melczek and his successors. The transitional diaconate is the sacrament received in preparation for the ordained priesthood.

Ted Mauch affiliated with the Diocese of Gary in 2003. He is the son of Ted and Fonda Mauch of La Porte, Indiana and the parish son of St. Joseph Church in La Porte, Indiana and has engaged in priestly formation at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Michigan.

Eight men will be ordained to the permanent diaconate including Martin Brown, Dennis Guernsey, Chris Hawkins, Paul Krilich, Jamie Lewis, Ed Schultz, Robert Viviano, and Dan Zurawski. Promising obedience to Bishop Melczek and his successors, they will also share in the ministerial responsibilities for deacons. These men have matriculated through the Ecclesial Lay Ministry Formation Program and the Deacon Formation Program sponsored by the Diocese of Gary. †

## Seminarians Instituted into Ministerial Roles

Two seminarians from the Diocese of Gary assumed new roles of ministry as they continued in their program of priestly formation. Benjamin Ross was instituted in the Ministry of Lector and Jaime Perea was instituted in the Ministry of Acolyte at their respective seminaries. These ministries are required as a man progresses toward the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Benjamin Ross, a member of St. Stephen the Martyr Parish in Merrillville and I Theology student at the Pontifical North American College in Rome was instituted in the Ministry of Lector on Sunday, January 11, 2009. As a lector, Benjamin has the responsibility of proclaiming the Sacred Scriptures at Eucharistic liturgies, presenting the intentions for the General Intercessions, and instructing the faithful for the worthy reception of the sacraments. He must also commit himself to meditating on the Scriptures.

Seminarian Jaime Perea, I Theology student at Mundelein Seminary and a member of St. Mary Church in East Chicago, received the Ministry of Acolyte on Wednesday, January 14, 2009. The responsibility of the acolyte, according to the Rite for the Institution of Acolytes (#4), is to "assist priests and deacons in their ministry as special ministers to give holy Communion to the faithful at the liturgy and to the sick." †



Seminarian Jaime Perea with  
Bishop Jerome ListECKI of  
LaCrosse, Wisconsin



## View from the Vineyard

By Fr. Kevin Huber,  
Vocation Director

Dear Friends,

On January 19, 2009, I made a presentation to the Knights of Columbus Abraham Lincoln Assembly. They wanted to know about the present number of priests active in the Diocese of Gary, the number of parishes, and the forecast for candidates to the priesthood. The news I shared with them was not desperate but the future will be challenging. To abbreviate my presentation, I reported that there are at the moment 62 parishes and 5 missions. There are currently 61 diocesan priests who are providing sacramental and pastoral care to the people in these parishes and missions. I excluded religious priests and priests in senior status from these figures because they present the greatest possibility for removal due to retirement or other needs in the religious community. Currently, nine men are in priestly formation, but we anticipate that in the next four years the average number of men ordained to the priesthood each year will be only be one. The number of ordinations will not meet the number of priests retiring combined with the number of priests who may be disabled due to illness or death. I experienced their nervousness about these facts.

As a time of renewal, joy, and hope, Easter provides a powerful framework for us to confront these ministerial needs. When the world experienced the deepest darkness, Jesus rose from the dead and brought the light of joy to those who believe. Our Easter faith will pay dividends in light of the needs and challenges that await the laity, the religious, and the priests. God will not disappoint us. He has demonstrated his faithfulness in the everlasting covenant. In this, we have the opportunity to develop a hermeneutic of hope.

We press on, continue to talk about vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, and trust Jesus in the words he spoke to the apostles in the Gospel of Matthew (28:20). "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." I am convinced that Jesus remains true to his promise.

Peace in the Lord Jesus,

Fr. Kevin Huber

## Gary Seminarians Elected as Community Leaders

In December 2008, two seminarians from the Diocese of Gary were chosen by their peers to positions of leadership in their respective seminary communities.

Mark Cregger (right) was elected to serve as a **Peer Leader** for the seminarians at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois. As a Peer Leader, Mark will participate in meetings with the Rector of the seminary, Fr. Dennis Lyle, to discuss the needs of the seminary community and to identify areas that need to be addressed. Mark will retain the role as Peer Leader through the first quarter of the 2009-2010 academic year.



Christopher Stanish (left) was chosen to be the **House Prefect** at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Winona, Minnesota. As House Prefect, Chris will collaborate with the Rector of the Seminary, Fr. Andrew Beerman, and the other class prefects to identify and discuss the needs of the seminarians and any other issues that need to be addressed. Chris will retain his role through the end of the first semester of the 2009-2010 academic year.

The Vocation Director, Fr. Kevin Huber, wants to acknowledge the leadership ability of these two men and to congratulate them on their willingness to serve the members of their respective seminaries. †

## Lay Ecclesial Minister Develops Parish Vocation Committee Plan for Diocese

In Spring 2008, Fr. Kevin Huber received an unusual request from Jo Anne Rosenow (pictured right), a fourth year student in the diocesan Lay Ecclesial Formation Program. She wanted to fulfill her requirement for supervised ministry in the Vocation Office. With her faith, learning, creativity, and energy, she has created a tool that parish pastoral councils and commissions can use to promote vocations to the religious life, priesthood, marriage, single life, and ecclesial ministry in parishes throughout the diocese.

The Parish Vocation Committee Plan uses the principles of evangelization and education to create relationships with men and women who are discerning the direction to which God is calling them. The committee is comprised of men and women from the Spirituality and Worship Commission who receive formation about vocations, including readings from a variety of Church documents. The committee then begins to raise awareness about the various Church vocations among children, teens, young adults, adults, and parents. Through opportunities for personal contact, the members of the committee begin to engage interested men and women in a mentoring program, walking with individuals through their vocational discernment until they reach a decision.

Fr. Joseph Pawlowski has agreed to pilot the Parish Vocation Committee program at St. Paul Church in Valparaiso. As the process unfolds, Jo Anne will review with the members of the committee the different parts of the plan to determine their usefulness and effectiveness. She will request from the committee changes that need to be made, identifying areas that need augmentation, or gaps in the process. When initial revisions to the process are complete, other parish pastoral councils will in the Diocese of Gary will be invited to participate in the effort to promote Church vocations in the respective parish communities. †



## Seminarians on a Mission: A Story in Pictures

During their Christmas break, five seminarians from the Diocese of Gary traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana with parishioners from St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Schererville to assist with the ongoing clean-up efforts following hurricane Katrina. Jordan Fetcko, Stephen Kolodziej, Roque Meraz, Tom Oram, and Christopher Stanish and the members of St. Michael Church arrived at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans on Sunday, December 28, 2008 and returned to Schererville on Friday, January 2, 2009. The pictures below tell the story of the people they met, the memories they made, and their effort to serve. †



## Seminarians Host at Discernment Weekends

Experience is knowledge and experiencing the environment and lifestyle of seminaries can be invaluable for a man who is discerning a vocation to the priesthood. In March 2009, three men traveled with the Vocation Director to Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Winona, Minnesota and four men visited Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Michigan to meet seminarians and explore the daily life of men who feel called to a life of service and sacrifice as ordained priests.

Seminarians are always gracious hosts and they continued their tradition of hospitality. During their two-day visits, the men had opportunity to participate in the seminarians' daily prayer life, which includes the celebration of the Eucharist, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Night Prayer. The guests joined the seminarians in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament during periods of Eucharistic adoration, as well. The seminarians also treated their guests to tours of the campuses and visits to classes. Recreation time included games of racquetball, basketball, pool, and board games and the chance to watch a movie or two. The guests also joined the seminarians for delightful meals filled with conversation a lot of laughter.

The success of a discernment weekend is often measured by the number of men who make the decision to apply to the seminary. In our case, five men have made that choice. But success can also be measured by the amount of time the men sleep on the return trip. Let's just say that the ride home from these two seminaries was very quiet. †



**Seminarians and Guests at IHM Seminary**  
(Pictured left to right) 1st row: Jordan Fetcko, Darrell Gray, Robert Sarwacinski, Fr. Kevin Huber. 2nd row: Ron Pyle, Matthew Pysh, Christopher Stanish, Stephen Kolodziej, and Roque Meraz

## Discernment Evenings Provide Place and Time to Consider Priestly Vocation

Times and places to consider a vocation to ordained ministry are hard to find. The seminarians of the Diocese of Gary want to change that. On December 21, 2008 and February 21, 2009, the seminarians organized evenings of discernment for young men ages 14-18 to give serious consideration to the ordained priestly vocation. The evenings began with a period of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and a brief meditation. After dinner, the seminarians presented a video on the priesthood and shared their vocation stories. Afterward, the seminarians and participants enjoyed games of ultimate Frisbee, dodgeball, and basketball.



Guests, seminarians, and priests at the discernment evening take a break during a game of dodgeball.

To prepare for the evening, the seminarians phoned eight men each, explaining the purpose of the evening and inviting them to come for the program. The seminarians also created colorful posters, which were sent to all the men on the Vocation Office mailing list and the students at Andrean High School. They developed the format for the evening and prepared the vocation stories. Their efforts paid off! Eight men participated in the first discernment evening and eleven men participated in the second event.

During the summer, the seminarians will plan more discernment evenings with the hope that men throughout the diocese will take advantage of the opportunity available to discern a priestly call. †