



Diocese of Gary

Vocation Office Newsletter

JANUARY - MARCH 2009

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Ted Mauch Receives Ministry of Acolyte

Ted Mauch has spent the last six years preparing for the priesthood. In August 2007, Bishop Melczek received Ted as a Candidate for Holy Orders at St. Joseph Church in La Porte. In October 2007, Ted received the Ministry of Lector. The Church requires that a man receive these ministries before he is ordained to the ministerial priesthood. On Friday, November 14, 2008, Bishop Earl Boyea, Bishop of the Diocese of Lansing, instituted Ted and thirteen other men from various dioceses as Acolytes. He is now ready for ordination as a transitional deacon, which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, June 6, 2009 at Holy Angels Cathedral.



Ted Mauch (first row on the far right) is pictured with Bishop Earl Boyea of Lansing and Bishop John Quinn, Co-adjutor bishop of Winona, Minnesota and his classmates at the Institution of the Ministry of Acolytes.

According to *Rites of the Catholic Church (Vol. 2, pp. 15-16)*, "Acolytes have the responsibility of assisting priests and deacons in carrying out their ministry, and as special ministers, to give holy communion to the faithful at the liturgy and to the sick. The Church also instructs acolytes to live more fully by the Lord's sacrifice so as to be molded more perfectly in his likeness. Acolytes should also seek to understand the deep meaning of what they do, so they may offer themselves daily to God as a spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."†

January 11-17, 2009: A Week to Remember

Every year, from the Baptism of the Lord to the First Sunday in Ordinal Time, the Church focuses on the necessity and importance of the Christian vocations of married life, single life, priesthood, consecrated religious life, and the vocation of all the baptized laity. Vocation Awareness Week begins this year on the Monday after the Baptism of the Lord on January 11, 2009 and continues through Saturday, January 17, 2009.

Raising awareness of vocations is the responsibility of every Catholic. To remember this important occasion in the life of the Church, the Vocation Director, Fr. Kevin Huber, encourages Catholics in the Diocese of Gary to offer the prayer at the right during the week of January 11-17, 2009. Pope Benedict XVI composed this prayer on the occasion of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2006.†

Grant, O Father, that the Church may welcome with joy the numerous inspirations of the Spirit of your Son and, docile to His teachings, may she care for vocations to the ministerial priesthood and to the consecrated life. Amen.

Sustain, O Lord, bishops, priests, and deacons, consecrated men and women, and all the baptized in Christ, so that they may faithfully fulfill their mission at the service of the Gospel. Amen.

Prayer of Pope Benedict XVI on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2006



View from the Vineyard By Fr. Kevin Huber, Vocation Director

Dear Friends,

I want to wish all of the friends of the Vocation Office a blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with joy and good health. I also pray that our Lord will continue to summon men and women from our parishes to ordained, consecrated, and commissioned service in our Church and give them courage and strength to answer.

After more than five years in the Vocation Office, I remain mystified by the many facets of this ministry. For example, months can pass without a single inquiry about the priesthood. All of a sudden, I am deluged with phone calls and e-mails from men who express interest in the priesthood. In initial conversation, many of these men confidently declare that they have decided to be priests and they want to begin priestly formation as soon as possible.

I have learned over the years that answering the call to ordained priestly ministry or religious life is not a decision that a man or woman makes. Responding to a call to ordained or consecrated life is a process that spans years. This process is called discernment and, for a culture in which people are prone to reach quick decisions and find immediate results, the length and pace of the process is difficult, if not discouraging.

For men who discern a vocation to the priesthood, the process of discernment can last four, six, or even eight years. Similarly, men and women who enter religious communities are faced with a rigorous process of discernment and formation that allows them to make the choice to embrace the call to consecrated life in the Church or that empowers them to see their vocation as a single person, a husband or wife, or an lay ecclesial minister. As the Church teaches us, each vocation comes from God and is God's gift. We need to remember that fulfilling our vocation is a process that happens throughout our life but the decision comes in the commitment to stay invested.

As we begin a new year of grace, we have the opportunity to enter more deeply into our particular vocations, which is God's gift to us. I pray with you that God blesses you abundantly with good health, hope, and the courage to embrace the opportunities God places in our path.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

Rev. Kevin Huber

Vocation Director

A New's Years Resolution: Adore for Vocations

Resolutions are an American tradition. Every new year, people around the United States resolve to make their lives better and healthier by cultivating good habits or virtues. Many people choose exercise, dieting, or saving money. Consider another alternative: Adoring the Eucharist one hour per week for the intention of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. This is a simple and effective way to deepen your spiritual life, grow in deeper relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist, and fulfill your responsibility to promote priestly and religious vocations. Dioceses around the country continue to report increased numbers of men and women that enter priestly and religious life as an effect of Eucharistic adoration.



To learn which parishes offer weekly adoration, please contact your parish bulletin or the Diocese of Gary Vocation Office. †

Seminarians on a Mission: New Orleans Bound



Seminarians Tom Oram (left) and Mark Cregger (right) pose during a mission trip to New Orleans on June 10, 2007. They will return to New Orleans to assist with clean efforts following hurricane Katrina in 2006.

Five of the seminarians from the Diocese of Gary will use their Christmas vacation for more than rest and celebration. These seminarians are on a mission. From December 29, 2008-January 2, 2009, these men will spend one week of their Christmas break in New Orleans, Louisiana assisting with the ongoing recovery efforts following hurricane Katrina.

Through generous financial assistance from their pastors and parish communities, Tom Oram (St. Paul Parish in Valparaiso), Christopher Stanish (St. Bridget Parish in Hobart), Jordan Fetcko (St. Mary Parish in Crown Point), Roque Meraz (St. Mary Parish in East Chicago), and Stephen Kolodziej (St. John the Evangelist Parish in St. John), traveled to sites with parishioners from St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Schererville. They will spend their time gutting homes, touring sections of the city of New Orleans that remain uninhabitable, and entering into moments of prayer and conversation about their experiences. †

Vocation Office Distributes Calling Cards

One of the responsibilities of the Vocation Director of the Diocese of Gary is to promote priestly and religious vocations. Since September, 2008, the Vocation Director, Fr. Kevin Huber, has adopted a direct approach for identifying the name of specific people whom God may be calling to the priesthood and consecrated life. Fr. Kevin's decision to use this approach has come from a need to be more direct about identifying candidates for the priesthood in the Diocese of Gary. "People often tell me they are praying for vocations. Now they have a chance to actually identify the people who possess qualities necessary for priestly and religious life."

Fr. Kevin has been traveling to parishes in the Northlake Deanery to encourage parishioners to promote priestly vocations and to awaken the call in young Catholic men and women. After preaching, Fr. Kevin invites parishioners to pray with him. He asks the Holy Spirit to inspire the people in the parish with names of men in the parish whom they would like to see as their priests. Likewise, Fr. Kevin asks the Holy Spirit to inspire the faithful with names of women they would like to see ministering in their parish as consecrated religious. He distributes the calling cards to the people who are present for the Eucharistic Liturgy. Fr. Kevin then invites them to be courageous and write down the names of the men and women who come to their mind. After a period of reflection, the people write a name on the card and place the card in the collection basket during the Preparation of the Gifts.

Fr. Kevin takes the cards and sends a letter to each person whose name is on a card. In the letter, he lets them know that someone from a parish in this diocese has identified them as a man or woman who may have the gifts necessary for priestly ministry or consecrated life. He encourages them to prayerfully consider the call to priesthood or consecrated life.

People have been very open to the process and generous in their response. More than twenty new names have been added to the list of possible candidates for priestly formation. As Fr. Kevin continues to travel to parishes throughout the diocese, the number of candidates will increase. †

NAME	_____
AGE	_____
ADDRESS	_____
(CITY, STATE, ZIP)	_____
PHONE	_____
E-MAIL	_____
PARISH	_____

St. John Vianney House of Discernment Marks Four Years

On February 27, 2004, Bishop Melczek dedicated St. John Vianney House of Discernment for the promotion and discernment of vocations to the priesthood. Under the guidance of the Vocation Director, Fr. Kevin Huber, and through the example of the parish priests who live at the House of Discernment, men who engage in this lived experience of discernment develop a more intense prayer life, gain knowledge of parish ministry, and gain awareness of the rhythm of rectory living and the priests' daily life.

Since the dedication, eight men have lived in the house. One man, Fr. Rick Holy, was ordained the priesthood for the Diocese of Gary on June 7, 2008. Three men, Mark Cregger, Roque Meraz, and Ben Ross have entered seminaries and are preparing for ordained ministry for the Diocese of Gary. They describe an easy transition from the House of Discernment into the seminary life and a more realistic impression of priestly life and ministry because of the prayer life they developed and the experiences they had while living in the house. Other men have discerned that God is not calling them to the priesthood and they have moved into other careers and vocations. The average length of stay in the house of discernment is about six months.

St. John Vianney House of Discernment is located at St. Casimir Church in Hammond, Indiana. The program receives financial support from the Diocese of Gary and donations offered by people who want to encourage men in their discernment of a priestly vocation. Any man, age 18 or older, who experiences a call to the priesthood and wants to explore more intensely the priestly vocation, should contact the Vocation Director for more information about St. John Vianney House of Discernment. †



Bishop Melczek gathers with the faithful for the Blessing of the House of Discernment on February 27, 2005.

New Look for Diocesan Website and Vocation Office Webpage

During the last six months, the coordinators of the pastoral offices have invested many hours to update the diocesan website. The goals of their efforts were to make the website more attractive, provide more information for the user about the Diocese of Gary, and design a website that is easy to navigate. Working with Catalyst Marketing in Michigan City, Indiana, each of the coordinators submitted information that they wanted posted on the website and Catalyst created the new design. A host of new information is now provided, including important dates, rotating photographs of the Diocese of Gary, an easy-to-use navigation bar, and policies from the Finance Office.

After several revisions, the Vocation Office webpage is also ready for access. The webpage allows viewers to read a message from Bishop Melczek, meet the Vocation Director, meet the seminarians, review frequently asked questions, explore the current edition of the Vocation Office Newsletter, view the Calendar of Prayer for Priests, visit the websites of the seminaries attended by seminarians from the Diocese of Gary. Useful links to women's religious communities, men's religious communities, and other websites are also included.

In the near future, the webpage will also include streaming video that highlights ministry in the Diocese of Gary, information about the St. John Vianney House of Discernment, and more graphics on the homepage.

You can visit the webpage at www.dcgary.org. Click on vocations and enjoy the show. If you want to have questions about priestly and religious vocations or if you have comments or suggestions for the website, please contact Fr. Kevin Huber, the Vocation Director at khuber@dcgary.org. †