



# Diocese of Gary

## Vocation Office Newsletter

### JULY - SEPTEMBER 2009

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## Nine Deacons Ordained to Serve the Diocese of Gary

On June 6, 2009, Catholics throughout the Diocese of Gary gathered at the Cathedral of the Holy Angels to praise God for nine men who answered the call to ordained service in the Catholic Church in northwest Indiana.



*Deacon Ted Mauch  
on the day of his  
diaconal ordination.*

Ted Mauch was ordained to the transitional diaconate, an office in which he will minister to the faithful and continue to prepare for ordination to the priesthood. He is scheduled to be ordained to the Priesthood on June 5, 2010.

After more than six years of preparation, Martin Brown, Dennis Guernsey, Chris Hawkins, Paul Krilich, Jamie Lewis, Ed Schultz, Robert Viviano, and Daniel Zurawski were ordained as permanent deacons. With the support and participation of their wives, these men will collaborate with Bishop Melczek and his successor to meet the needs of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Gary in parishes and in a variety of ministry outside the parish, including hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, and immigrant communities.

More than a rite of passage, ordination to the diaconate is a sacrament that empowers men to offer their lives to the pastoral, spiritual, and physical needs of men and women in northwest Indiana. The Church clearly describes the charism of diaconal ministry in the Rite of Ordination of Deacons. "He [the deacon] will draw new strength from the gift of the Holy Spirit. He will help the bishop and his body of priests as a minister of the word, of the altar, and of charity. He will make himself a servant of all." †

## Seminarians Continue Discernment and Formation Throughout the Summer

Formation continues for the Diocese of Gary seminarians long after they have completed the school year. This summer, our seminarians are living and working in parishes throughout the Diocese of Gary. They are engaged in a wide variety of ministerial and spiritual activities, including ministry to the sick and homebound, caring for the poor and marginalized with the St. Vincent DePaul Society, neighborhood evangelization, proclaiming scripture at Mass, serving at Mass, observing parish pastoral councils and parish finance councils, and working with the Hispanic community. Summer parish experiences are designed to provide seminarians with opportunity for practical experience, spiritual growth, and ongoing discernment.

Below is a list of the seminarians and their summer assignments, which began in May 2009 and will conclude in August 2009.

- **Mark Cregger:** Institute for Priestly Formation, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska
- **Jordan Fetcko:** St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Schererville
- **Stephen Kolodziej:** St. John the Evangelist Parish, St. John
- **Roque Meraz:** St. Matthias Parish, Crown Point
- **Jaime Perea:** Institute for Priestly Formation, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska
- **Ben Ross:** Parish ministry, Guadalajara, Spain
- **Christopher Stanish:** St. Casimir Parish, Hammond and St. Patrick Parish, East Chicago †



## View from the Vineyard

By Fr. Kevin Huber,  
Vocation Director

Dear Friends,

It may seem like a stretch, but we can compare solutions to the declining number of active priests and consecrated religious in the United States to the price of gasoline. Let me explain.

This time last year, the cost of gasoline in the United States was at a national average of nearly \$4.00 per gallon. Americans were outraged by these prices. As an effect, we heard a loud cry for alternative energy sources like ethanol, hydrogen, and hybrid energy. The impact of high gas prices motivated creativity and imagination. However, when fuel prices receded to \$2.00 per gallon last winter, the interest in alternative energy sources diminished; creativity and motivation necessary to invent alternative energy sources all but disappeared.

Declines in the number of ordained priests and consecrated religious available for ministry has produced an increased awareness of the need for alternatives to meet ministerial, pastoral and spiritual needs in parishes around the country. Responses to the needs include men and women who have embraced lay ministry formation programs, an increase in the number of priests who minister in multiple parishes, an increase in the number of pastoral associates and permanent deacons, and the suppression of parishes.

Dioceses around the United States have also found another solution to this problem. They have actively recruited priests and seminarians from foreign countries. While this tactic may address the need for priests to celebrate the sacraments, many other issues emerge including language barriers, cultural barriers, homesickness, and isolation. This strategy has resulted in a number of challenges for bishops, priests, and laity, including de-motivation.

Recruiting men from foreign countries to serve in Catholic parishes throughout America de-motivates American Catholics from encouraging vocations in their homes, schools, parishes, and religious education programs because priests are available for Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Like Americans who are comfortable with lower gas prices, we become complacent in our effort to promote priestly and religious vocation in our parishes and we lack the imagination and impetus to encourage men and women to consider the priesthood and religious life when we have do not see a need for ordained or consecrated leaders.

Please be sure this is not a statement opposing priests or seminarians from foreign countries immigrating to the United States to minister to American Catholics. Just the opposite; I applaud them for their courage. They have sacrificed family and friends to assume the responsibility to minister to souls in a unfamiliar country. I am grateful to them and to their bishops for their generosity and sacrifice. At the same time, we can interpret their presence and ministry as an opportunity to get us off the hook. We don't have to worry about having priests in our parishes because other countries have a surplus of seminarians and priests who will come to minister to our needs.

Presuming on their kindness does not help us in our responsibility to encourage our young people to follow God's will, which undoubtedly includes the vocation of priest and consecrated religious. Please be do not be lulled into apathy! Continue to stretch yourself and join me in the rewarding ministry of promoting priestly and religious vocations in our parishes. You will find that God will bless richly your effort and your sacrifices.

Faithfully yours in the Lord,

*Fr. Kevin Huber*

## Vocation Office Welcomes Jo Anne Rosenow



*The newest associate to the Diocese of Gary Vocation Office, Jo Anne Rosenow.*

The Diocese of Gary welcomes Jo Anne Rosenow as the newest associate to the ministry of the Vocation Office. Jo Anne recently completed her formation in the Diocese of Gary Lay Ecclesial Formation Program and received her certificate at the graduation celebration on May 15, 2009. For the last year, she has worked with the Vocation Director, Fr. Kevin Huber, to create a Parish Vocation Ministry program, which is currently being piloted at St. Paul Church in Valparaiso.

Jo Anne has a passion for promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life. In a recent letter, she echoed the magisterial voice of the Church, "...I believe the whole Church receives the gift of vocations from God and is responsible for the discerning and promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life."

As an associate in the Vocation Office, Jo Anne will continue her work with the Parish Vocation Ministry program. She will also assist the Vocation Director as he participates in career fairs and other outreach opportunities available in northwest Indiana. †

## Seminarians Experiences Struggles of the Poor in a Far Away Land

Mark Cregger, a I Theology student and a Gary Seminarian at Mundelein Seminary, traveled to Ghana and Birkinna Faso, West Africa with other classmates to experience the Catholic Church in mission territory. Below, Mark shares his experiences:

"My classmates and I had the opportunity to travel with Catholic Relief Services to Africa on our Pre-Theology II mission trip last February. The purpose of the trip was to witness the struggles of our brothers and sisters in Burkina Faso and Ghana and to cultivate solidarity despite our cultural differences. Upon arriving back in the States, we plan to spread the cry of the poor we heard and touch the hearts of those at home to realize that we are one in Christ.

"We visited many villages and CRS sites during our travel in West Africa. From Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso to Tamale, Ghana and everywhere in between, we witnessed the joy and hope of people who have been voiceless for so long. The compassionate workers of CRS have devoted themselves to making sure the dignity of every person is recognized, having its source in God.

Catholic Relief Services have started irrigation projects that provide water to quench the thirsting fields of small family farms. CRS workers have also taken in young women escaping arranged marriages and abusive situations and educated them. They have made it possible through microfinance for groups of women to initiate small businesses that will earn enough income that will feed their families. They have built communities where women ostracized and suffering from HIV/AIDS can come to find medication, food, and a place to share their pain.

CRS continues to be the hands and feet of Christ ministering to the poor and neglected. Through the Gospel, we are called to do the same. Let us answer this call with a loving heart on fire with the Holy Spirit." †



*During a recent mission trip to West Africa, seminarian Mark Cregger made many new friends. He is surrounded by his new companions in this photograph.*

## First Parish Vocation Team Continues Formation at St. Paul Parish

Twelve members of St. Paul Church have demonstrated their commitment to priestly and religious vocations through their commitment to form a Parish Vocation Team at their parish. The team includes women and men who range in ages 16 to 83 who understand the importance of the presence of priests and religious and in the Church and want to develop skills necessary to encourage members of their parish to discern a priestly or religious vocation.

Since May 2009, they have gathered every two weeks for a 75 minute discussion about Church documents that address the theology of vocations to the consecrated and ordained life. The documents include the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation by John Paul II, *I Will Give You Shepherds*, the Apostolic Exhortation by John Paul II, *On the Consecrated Life*, the *The Program of Priestly Formation*, and excerpts from Msgr. Stephen Rossetti's book, *The Joy of the Priesthood*.



In addition to learning the theology that underpins ordained and consecrated life, the team will also learn practical skills that will empower them to invite men and women to consider God's call to the priesthood or religious life. They will plan and execute a broad scope of vocation awareness programs in the parish and also offer a companion and mentoring program for men and women who are serious about discernment.

The mission of the parish vocation ministry is to empower men and women to discern God's call to ordained ministry and consecrated life through activities that raise awareness of Church vocations and relationships that offer support in discernment. This mission is born from our participation in the life of Christ, which we receive through our baptism. The vision of the parish vocation ministry is to create a culture of vocations in the parish community that invites men and women of every age to discern priestly and religious vocations with intentionality and intensity.

Since September 2008, the Vocation Director, Fr. Kevin Huber, and Jo Anne Rosenow have been researching models of parish vocation ministry used in dioceses throughout the country. After making significant adaptations and including a period of learning to the formation process, they believe that Parish Vocation Ministry is unique and comprehensive in approach and depth. †

## Vocations Emerge at Source and Summit Retreat

From April 24-26, 2009, 300 teens from parishes through the Diocese of Gary gathered at Andrean High School for the Source and Summit Retreat sponsored by St. John the Evangelist Parish. They traveled to the school for a retreat that helps teens and adults enhance their relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist.

The retreat uses different forms of prayer to help teens encounter more deeply the Eucharistic Lord, including praise and worship music, the Rosary, silence, guided meditation, Sacred Scripture, teachings about the Eucharist, and preached reflections. Mass is also celebrated every day and numerous priests from the Diocese of Gary offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the weekend.



*Teens adore the Eucharistic Lord during the Source and Summit Retreat at Andrean High School, April 24-26, 2009*

The teens experienced the Lord Jesus in powerful ways. Some young men and women even experienced the Lord's prompting to remain open to the priesthood and religious life. At the closing Mass on Sunday, Fr. Bob Lombardo, C.F.R., invited teens who felt our Lord nudging them to consider a vocation to stand up in the midst of their peers and to join him at the altar. Their family and friends supported them with a thunderous applause. So they could be contacted, the names of the young men and women were collected and given to the Vocation Director and to the religious women who were present at the retreat. †