

# *Green Bay Seminararians*

**2024-2025** | *Pray for our future priests!*



Diocese of  
Green Bay

*Office of Vocations*

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# A letter from the *Vocation Director*

*This past July,*

I had the privilege of being able to attend the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, IN. This gathering brought together over 60,000 Catholics from across the country and beyond. The Diocese of Green Bay had hundreds of representatives present including our Bishop, Fr. Kevin Ripley, and most of our seminarians. I struggle to find the words to describe how profound this event was, but needless to say, it was truly amazing.

It's been some time since we were all together for that gathering, but I still think back and meditate about what took place over those few short days. The grace that has remained with me is an ever simple, but profound belief that the Eucharist truly is Jesus. My belief in the True Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist has certainly grown over the years, especially during my time in seminary and my years as a priest. However, there was something about the Congress that removed any doubt whatsoever. When we were gathered in Lucas Oil Stadium every night for Eucharistic Adoration, we did so with the Living God truly in our midst.

The importance of the Eucharist continues to be a focal point despite the conclusion of the Congress. We are always called to not only know and profess who and what the Eucharist is, but also to fall deeply in love with who and what it is. I can't help but think that if this truth took root in the hearts of every Catholic, many would return to the practice of the Catholic faith including attending Holy Mass, receiving the sacraments on a regular basis, and bringing others with them to Jesus.

A special place that has helped me to deepen my love for Jesus in the Eucharist has been the Monastery of the Holy Name of Jesus outside Denmark, WI. It has been a refuge and place of revival for me for many years, and I am so grateful for it being so close, and in particular, the Carmelite Nuns present there continually offering their prayers. When thinking about what to feature for our promotional materials this year, I knew I wanted to continue to highlight the Eucharist, and I couldn't think of a more beautiful setting than the quiet of the Carmel. I have been blessed to be able to spend many hours adoring Our Lord there, and I know that our seminarians have done so as well. They and I recognize how much we need to be close to the Eucharist and how much we need the prayers of others to assist us.

Thank you for your prayers as they continue on in their formation so that one day they will be able to offer the Holy Eucharist for us in order to nurture, strengthen, and revive us.



*Rev. Mark C. Mleziva*

**Rev. Mark Mleziva**  
Vocation Director for  
the Diocese of Green Bay

**FOLLOW FR. MARK**



From ordinations and high school visits to holy moments in everyday life, follow [@fr.markmleziva](#) on Instagram and "[FrMark Mleziva](#)" on Facebook to check out all the adventures of the vocation director!



*Adoration of the Holy Eucharist at the Carmelite Monastery of the Holy Name of Jesus; Denmark, WI*



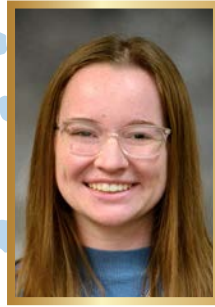
# Office of *Vocations*



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## Join the *Fiat Prayer Society!*

If there's one thing we've learned in the Office of Vocations, it's the importance of having prayer as the foundation of all that we do. If something isn't supported through the prayers of the faithful, it has little to no hope of bearing fruit. In our effort to continue to help young people hear and answer a call to a religious vocation, we know it takes the prayers of many people in order to do that. Though not all are called to this particular vocation, all are encouraged to pray so that the ones whom the Lord is calling hear and say "yes!"

The **Fiat Prayer Society** is meant to help with this. Our goal is to have more and more of the faithful assist in our vocation efforts through their prayers and sacrifices to help bring forth more "yeses." This is where the name of the society came from. "Fiat" is the Latin word for Mary's response to the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation. Fiat means "let it be done" and because of her "yes," Jesus came into the world. Who better to imitate in following God's will than the Blessed Mother?

By deciding to be a part of this society, there are no dues and no meetings, simply your promise to join our efforts in praying. This is meant to aid other groups in the Diocese of Green Bay that also faithfully pray for more vocations.

**To learn more, access additional resources, become a member, or promote in your parish, visit [www.gbvocations.org/fps](http://www.gbvocations.org/fps) or contact the Office of Vocations.**

We thank you for your willingness to help in this important task. Please know of our prayers for you as well, and God bless you!







# Dcn. Nicholas Stellpflug

## Seminary

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## Year

Configuration IV

## Parish

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## Birthday

June 6

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Augustine of Hippo.** His sermons and other writings have taught me many things, and I desire to learn from St. Augustine to love God and others more deeply with a burning, zealous heart.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee for sure. My friend went to get coffee before a theater production in high school, and I spontaneously asked for black coffee. I have been drinking it ever since.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

I do not think Jesus himself would have driven. He would have had one of the disciples driving the Popemobile. That way when Jesus gave the authority to Peter as his vicar on earth, he could have also given Peter the Popemobile.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

I love waking up when the sun is rising, having a cup of coffee, and praying with the daily readings and the Office of Readings before Mass. After Mass, I would have brunch and then a brief nap. I would spend the rest of the day reading, praying, and spending time with family or friends.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would love to celebrate Mass in a mountaintop chapel. Mountains are so majestic and awe-inspiring to me, and the experience of being on top of a mountain reminds me of the many people from the Old Testament who went up mountains to encounter the Lord God. Even Jesus went up to the mountaintop many times to pray, to be transfigured, to suffer and die, and to ascend to heaven. Standing on such an exalted place puts my smallness into perspective, while also reminding me of the intimate care that God has for me and all his creation.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

I remember reading "Mother Teresa's Secret Fire" at the end of my time in college. Her life was vaguely familiar to me, but as I began reading, I was captured by how strongly Mother Teresa's life radiated the love of God and a spirit of deep prayer. The account of her great trust in God moved me to pray and go to Confession more frequently. At the beginning of seminary,

I was given the book "I Thirst: 40 Days with Mother Teresa." I remember reading it over the 40 days leading up to her feast day on September 5. Mother Teresa's writings in this small book helped increase my love and devotion for the Eucharist and for the mystery of Christ's saving work on the Cross.

Most recently, I read "Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light," the personal writings of Mother Teresa. When I read her words, I am filled with encouragement, love for Jesus in the Eucharist and in my brothers and sisters, and sorrow for my sins.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

In his First Letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul says that the Body of Christ is one just as the Eucharistic bread we eat is one. Therefore, everyone who participates in the celebration of the Eucharist is made one in Christ. St. Paul assures us that through our faithful participation, we truly are united more closely with God and our fellow Christians.

There is a prayer from an ancient document of the teaching of the Lord Jesus from the Twelve Apostles, called the Didache, which says, "As grain once scattered on the hillside is in this broken bread made one, so from all lands thy Church be gathered into thy kingdom by thy Son." What a great expression of the way in which we, like the grains, are gathered from the world into the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit forms us in the furnace of Divine Love.

The Eucharist is not merely a symbol of unity; it truly affects the unity it proclaims. Through the power of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, we are incorporated into his body as he draws near to us, and we in turn draw near to him. As we come to the Eucharistic celebration, we hear the words of Jesus, and we receive his body, blood, soul, and divinity. We worship the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit, and we are healed of our anxieties, fears, selfishness, and pride, so that we may overflow with love for God and for our neighbor.



## Nathan Budde

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### Parish

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Thérèse of Lisieux.** I recently read "Story of a Soul" and found her words and experiences nourishing for my spiritual life.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee. I prefer its taste and enjoy the many different kinds of drinks that can be made with it.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

In his ministry, Jesus was poor and humble yet traveled with his disciples to society's margins. I think his car would reflect that: used, reliable, able to carry passengers, and handle rough terrain. While I am hesitant to name a specific car, this might describe a black 2012 Toyota Rav4.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

I would start my day by sleeping in a little later than usual followed by praying a Holy Hour and attending Mass. Then, I would take my time drinking coffee and preparing a large brunch for my friends or family. The rest of the day would be spent in solitude outside, such as fly fishing for trout or hiking.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would celebrate Mass in the Sistine Chapel. During my first year of theology studies, I was privileged to be able to travel to Rome with other theologians at St. Francis de Sales Seminary and visit the Sistine Chapel after hours. The beauty of the chapel's paintings and architectural design were amplified by the silence and our ability to slow down to pray with its artwork. If I could celebrate Mass anywhere, I would do so in that beautiful, historic chapel.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

I have read "Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul," on and off many times throughout my journey of discipleship from high school to this present moment. As I reflect back on my spiritual life, I can see how St. Faustina's description of her relationship with Jesus has shaped my understanding of prayer as being a conversation. In her diary, St. Faustina records many conversations she has with Jesus.

Many of these include regular visions of Jesus and audible words of his. Other times, she describes hearing Christ as a voice in her soul. For her, prayer was a conversation in which she shared all of her thoughts, feelings, and desires with her spouse, Jesus, and he spoke back. While I am in no way comparing my spiritual life to that of a saint, her writings did inform my own way of praying in a way that is more conversational and honest with Jesus.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

Have you ever heard the phrase, "You become what you eat?" Usually someone says this in reference to one's diet: if I eat food that is good for me, filled with vitamins, minerals, and proteins, my body will become strong and healthy; if I eat food filled with sugar, fats, and salt, my body will become unhealthy and weak. We are formed by what we eat. Just as our bodies are formed by the physical food we eat, so too, our souls are conformed to the spiritual food we eat. The Eucharist is the spiritual food by which each of us is united to Jesus Christ and conformed to his heart. Jesus offers himself as food so that we can become like him.

In each and every Mass, Catholics consume the same body and blood of Jesus Christ. We are not just unified by the fact that we partake in the same external ritual. Rather, we are united because each of us are becoming more closely conformed to Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through our reception of the Eucharist. The Eucharist unifies the Church because by partaking in the Lord's Supper, we become what we eat.



## Jacob Bovee

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### Year

Configuration II

### Birthday

September 16

### Parish

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Joan of Arc.** She has been an inspiration and powerful intercessor for me. She is a beautiful example of courage and humility whom I hope to emulate and follow like a commander.

### Coffee or tea?

Frankly, I don't really drink much of either, but I'll go with tea because a nice cup of chai hits the spot when it's cold outside.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

According to the historical evidence, I believe Jesus would have used a fishing boat.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

It starts with donuts after Mass. After that, I'd close out the morning with a long walk in the woods where I can pray and enjoy the beauty of nature. In the afternoon, it would be nice to visit family for dinner, lawn games, and a fire.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would really like to celebrate Mass in the grotto of Elijah, at the monastery of Mount Carmel. There is such a long history of holy men praying at that site, from the time of the prophets to the monks who still live there. I would like to join my prayers to theirs at that site where so many spiritual victories were won. Plus, I have a soft spot for Carmelite spirituality and put a lot of trust in the promises Our Lady made about the brown scapular, which she gave St. Simon Stock on that mountain.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

In college, I encountered the poetry of St. John of the Cross as part of a class on Spanish literature, and I was captivated by the imagery of the poem, "Living Flame of Love." Since then, I've read his other poetry and some of his commentaries, and these have been very inspiring. St. John made me realize that the path of discipleship is characterized by love. God is Love, but he is also the Lover who seeks us. Once he has captured our heart, he seems to run ahead of us and leave us behind, but this does not mean he has abandoned us. It only means that he expects us to chase after him. St. John has made sure I remember that the spiritual life is demanding, not in the way a job can be

demanding, but in the way loving someone is demanding — you will happily do whatever you need to be with the one you love.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

The Church is the Body of Christ, and Christ is who we receive in the Eucharist. If we do not receive Christ in the Eucharist, we will never receive him in our brothers and sisters, because the Eucharist is the very means by which unity is achieved.

Jesus said that those who do not eat his flesh and drink his blood do not have life within them. He also said that he is the Bread of Life. Since Jesus is Life and his Life is communicated through the Eucharist, then those who reject the Eucharist have in a sense rejected Christ himself.

This is why it is so important to evangelize. We have been given the greatest gift imaginable in the Eucharist, and we cannot keep this treasure to ourselves. Knowing him or not knowing him in the Eucharist can have eternal consequences, and we as Catholics are given the responsibility to make all aware that Jesus is waiting for all of us to encounter him and his deep love for us precisely there. We ought to strive with every possible effort to bring all into the Body of Christ in the Eucharist so that they can be refreshed, revived, and nourished. Finally, we should never cease to receive that Life ourselves.





# Nicholas Vande Hey

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. John Paul II.** He was not afraid to make a total gift of himself to Christ. Please pray through his intercession that I may have a priestly heart like his!

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee. Unlike many other people, I prefer my coffee when there is no rush. Sitting and enjoying the warmth, smell, and delicious taste is part of the morning experience.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

A passenger van or maybe even a minibus. How else is he going to fit all the disciples? He could stand on top of the van and preach. Plus, the sliding van doors would be great for getting in and out when there is a crowd.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

After a slow morning of prayer with coffee, the post-Mass family breakfast is a Lord's Day essential. If you don't believe me, listen to Jesus: "come and have breakfast" (John 21:12). My ideal Lord's Day also includes visiting my grandma and grandpa and having "pizza family movie night" which are both childhood traditions. Lastly, I might go for a bike ride or walk, but the restful time with family is always the best part.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

A small chapel on top of a tall mountain. It takes effort and intentionality to get there, and you cannot just roll out of bed. When you arrive, the view is breathtaking, and you witness the beauty of God's creation. Then it gets even better as God comes down to meet us on the altar. Just like mountains are a place of encounter with God in the Bible, they have always been a prayerful place for me. I find the beauty, silence, and fresh air lifts my heart to God, and I would love to celebrate Mass there.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

One of the most influential books I have read is "Into Your Hands Father: Abandoning Ourselves to the God Who Loves Us" by Fr. Wilfrid Stinissen. It's a short and simple book, but it shares deep spiritual truths. It introduced me to the idea of surrendering to God's providence, which means trusting that his will is being

carried out no matter what happens in our lives. It also means believing that God is a good Father and he cares for us. While this idea is simple, it is difficult to truly accept, especially when we are suffering. I believe that every time we sin, we question God's goodness. If we really trusted that God loves us and wants what is best for us, then we would never sin. Of course, I still need a lot of growth in this trust, but this book helped me on that journey. The more I have recognized his goodness in my own life and trusted his providence, the more I have grown in peace, freedom, and joy.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

Being able to attend Mass in Rome, I've met people from all over the world. While we all come from different cultures and speak different languages, we have at least one thing in common — we all need Jesus.

When we come to Mass, we are not brought together because of good music or a great preacher (although it is nice), but because we need a savior. We come together to worship the God who saves, and we receive the gift of Jesus in the Eucharist. We are united not only with members of the Church in the world, but also with the saints and angels in heaven around the one sacrifice of Jesus which transcends time and history.

Beginning at baptism and continuing through the Eucharist, we are united as part of Christ's mystical body. As we grow in holiness, we become more fully ourselves and more fully like Christ. Christ lives his life in us and in the people around us. As Galatians 2:20 says, "It is no longer I who live but it is Christ who lives in me." This is the key: the Eucharist is Jesus. When we receive him, we become more closely united to him. Because we are united to Jesus, we are also united to each other. Together, we receive this great gift from Christ through his Church which has guarded, protected, and handed down the gift of the Mass from Jesus, through the apostles, to our bishops today.



# Olivier Ndorimana

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## Year

Configuration I

## Birthday

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Teresa of Ávila.** In her writings, she describes friendship with Christ as a communion of wills, so please ask that I may grow in true friendship with Christ as I prepare to be his priest.

### Coffee or tea?

I prefer coffee because it helps me to wake up better than tea.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would have driven a Honda Accord given to him by the Father so that he can say, "I came not in my own Accord but in my Father's" (cf. John 8:42).

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

In addition to attending Mass and spending time with the Lord in personal prayer, my ideal way to spend the Lord's Day would include doing some reading, visiting with or calling my family and friends, and taking a walk when the weather permits it.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

Once during a retreat, the retreat master told us stories from visiting the Holy Land many times. We got to hear how he had the opportunity to celebrate Mass at important sites in the Holy Land. If I could, I would love to celebrate Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the church built on the site where Jesus was crucified, buried, and rose from the dead. Celebrating Mass at this site would be a great gift of being in the same place where the mystery that we celebrate happened in history.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

"Interior Freedom" by Fr. Jacques Philippe has greatly influenced my journey of discipleship. This book goes through various attitudes that can inhibit one from living the freedom of being a child of God. Through it, I learned how to allow the Lord to love me as I am while balancing that with the desire to grow in holiness. It touches upon fundamental themes of receiving God's love in the reality of one's life and responding generously to him through faith, hope, and love in all circumstances. Through this book, the Lord taught me that, with his grace, there is no circumstance in which I cannot find interior freedom; it comes from opening myself to relationship with the Lord no matter

what the outward circumstances are, especially when they are difficult. I have found focusing on the relationship the Lord has with me and is always inviting me into brings profound peace. It allows me to live in the freedom the Lord wants for me.

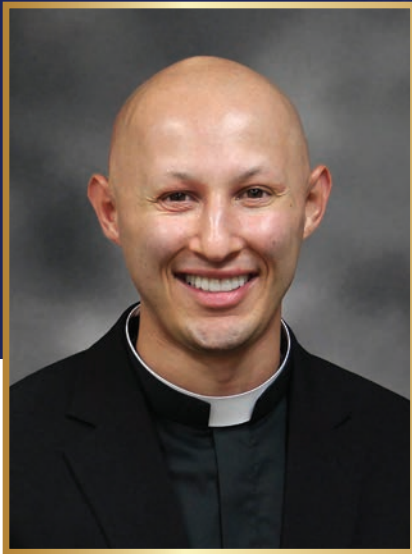
### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

The Eucharist by its very nature is meant to foster unity. The Eucharist fosters union between Jesus and the person who receives him worthily. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it, "Holy Communion augments our union with Christ. The principle fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus" (#1391). Holy Communion unites the communicant to Christ and to others who receive the same Christ.

St. Paul expresses this truth beautifully by saying, "Because there is one bread, we who are many, are one body for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17). Unfortunately, we do not always remember our profound union with one another through Jesus in the Eucharist, so we can experience divisions in the Church.

The invitation for all of us is to realize how deeply we are united in the Eucharist and foster that unity. The Church prays at Mass that the unifying effect of the Eucharist may be fully realized in us. For example, in Eucharistic Prayer III, the Church prays, "Grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit may become one body, one spirit in Christ." We should join this prayer of the Church at Mass and examine how we can foster unity in the Church personally.





# Michael Janczakowski

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## Year

Configuration I

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June 18

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Paul.** I am going to read his letters more intently and learn about his vision for authentic Christian discipleship. St. Paul, pray for us!

### Coffee or tea?

Depends on how I am feeling. Morning — coffee. Afternoon — cappuccino. Night — chamomile tea.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

A Subaru Outback. It is rugged, dependable, and it gets good gas mileage (so he could get around those desert roads).

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

The best Sunday I have experienced was in Creighton, Nebraska, this summer. After 9 a.m. Mass, some friends and I spent the afternoon walking around the sandbars of the Niobrara River, fishing, and throwing around a Frisbee. If you tack on to that some burgers on the grill and an ice-cold Arnold Palmer, you got yourself a beautiful Sunday.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

A couple places come to mind. St. John the Baptist in Howard is my home parish, so that's an easy one. Holy Name of Jesus Carmel and Catholic Youth Expeditions' (CYE) St. Joseph Formation Center are both awesome places to pray, so celebrating there would be great. I first heard the call to priesthood at the University of Arizona Newman Center in Tucson, so offering thanksgiving there will have to happen at some point. Most importantly, though, it would be a joy to celebrate with family and friends who have helped form me into the man I am today.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

An important book in my journey of discipleship was "The Seven Storey Mountain" by Thomas Merton. Bishop Barron once mentioned his affinity for the book in a YouTube video and after college, finding myself jobless with plenty of time, I picked it up from the public library and began reading. Merton was secular man who, after finishing his degree in English, discovered the Catholic faith, converted, and eventually became a Trappist Monk at Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky. "Seven

Storey Mountain," his autobiography, was an account of and a reflection on that journey of conversion. In addition to beautiful prose, Merton offered an introduction to monastic life and the prospect of handing oneself over totally to a life with God. I already perceived a call to the priesthood but now a subtler, deeper call flowered in my heart — to be holy, to be given, to be taken captive by grace. I found that I desired those things! It moved me to want to be with God, and I'm thankful for that.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

What fosters unity on a team? Care for one another and commitment to a common goal, I would say. When those criteria are met, a team will overcome even the most intense differences. The Eucharist sacramentally aids us in fulfilling both these criteria.

For one, Adoration and devoted reception of the Blessed Sacrament turn us into one body in Christ. We know from Scripture that encounters with God make us like God (see Exodus 34:29; Matthew 17:2; Acts 9:40). How much more is this the case when our God comes before us as the Bread from Heaven (John 6:51) and then enters the tabernacle of our very flesh? "God became man that man might become God," says St. Athanasius. Indeed, Jesus wants to deify us and form us into his body (1 Corinthians 10:17), and in his body we become a community of love (Acts 4:32-35).

Secondly, the Eucharist points us to the same goal: heaven. In Mass we already partake in the heavenly liturgy for which we are destined, but we do not yet share in it fully. It is an eternal reality in the midst of time, reminding us that we are pilgrims in this world (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1344). We are people journeying somewhere! As a result, we are a people facing the same direction — a people unified in vision and in our plea for mercy: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42).



# Robert Reynebeau

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## Year

Configuration I

## Birthday

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Elizabeth of the Trinity.** I stumbled upon her a bit this summer, and I want to develop a deep, rich Trinitarian prayer life like she did.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee, and not by a slim margin. You cannot beat sipping coffee early in the morning, ideally outside on a porch!

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus undoubtedly drove a 12-passenger mini bus. Think about it ...

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

An ideal Lord's Day begins with early morning coffee (no surprise there), followed by a Holy Hour and Mass. The afternoon would be spent outside, hiking, biking, or swimming at a lake, and then in the evening I would hang out with my family and maybe play a card game. Ideally, but also expectedly, I would win the game.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

It would be great to celebrate Mass at any of the approved Marian apparition sites around the world, especially at The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in our own diocese. Going there to pray and walk around the grounds never gets old, and my appreciation of the story of Adele Brise, Our Lady's apparition, and the Peshtigo Fire continues to deepen. The priests assigned to the Shrine love the Eucharist and are very intentional, so I associate my visits with beautiful liturgies.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

One author who quickly comes to mind is Bishop Fulton Sheen. I have not read many of his books, but every so often I pick up the book version of his "Life is Worth Living" recording series, which highlights the Christian philosophy of life. The way he communicates truths of the Catholic faith is quite inspiring and yet very relatable and simple. He was a highly intelligent priest and archbishop who mastered the art of explaining difficult topics in a way that people could understand. He also was very good at explaining truths by telling stories from real experiences in his life. In my own growth in discipleship and

walking with others, I am learning from Bishop Sheen that it is better to initially simplify the faith when sharing with others, but without compromising. People thirst for knowledge and truth, and sometimes the best way to share the Gospel is to make it concrete by using everyday examples and telling stories.

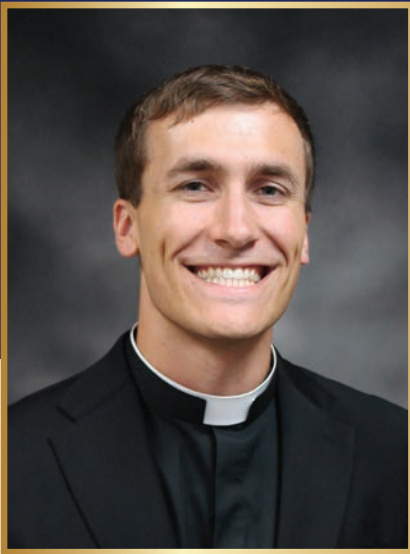
### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

Celebrating the Eucharist/Mass is what Jesus meant when he said, "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19). As baptized Catholics, there is nothing more unifying than celebrating this Holy Sacrifice and consuming Jesus' body and blood; it is an inherently communal act of worship on our part. Unity is fostered in the celebration and reception of the Eucharist because when one receives Jesus humbly and with a proper disposition (in a state of grace), one is then able to love with the Divine love of Jesus, who himself exchanges perfect love with the Father through the Holy Spirit.

If every baptized Catholic took the love of Christ into their body and soul upon reception of the Eucharist and, upon walking out of the church, extended that love to everyone they met, the Catholic Church would be united in mission as well as united more fully as members of the mystical Body of Christ.

Another way that the Eucharist fosters unity in the Church is the fact that regular reception of the sacrament simply helps one attain eternal life. Is that not the primary goal in life of every dedicated Christian? Imagine the impact in the Church and on the world if baptized Catholics ordered our lives around frequent reception of the Eucharist.





## Kyle Rohan

### Seminary

Pontifical North American College  
00120 Vatican City State, Europe

#### Mailing Address:

6534 Ridge Royale Drive  
Greenleaf, WI 54126

### Year

Configuration I

### Parish

St. Clare Parish; Wrightstown,  
Greenleaf, and Askeaton

### Birthday

July 25

### Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Teresa of Calcutta.** In January, I visited her order of sisters and tomb in India, and her great love for priests makes me confident in her powerful intercession.

### Coffee or tea?

Here is my honest, unfiltered opinion. I greatly appreciate both, but I cannot fully ex-presso how coffee wakes me up a latte better. This is grounds for choosing coffee.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

A Wisconsin Duck. It is not altogether fast, and it seems to me that Jesus appreciates taking his time. Also, being a boat-car, it can carry the apostles across the Sea of Galilee. Meanwhile, Our Lady and John the Baptist would escort him in a Fiat and a Forerunner, respectively.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

As I write this, I recently spent the Lord's Day on a small pilgrimage to the sanctuary of La Verna, the place where St. Francis of Assisi received the stigmata. For me, attending Mass, visiting holy places, and spending time in prayer is an ideally spent Lord's Day. It also includes plenty of family time and plenty of good food!

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I have heard that a newly ordained priest, within his first year of priesthood, can visit Ars, France, and have the opportunity to celebrate Mass in the place where St. John Vianney himself did, along with the sacred vessels that the saint used. That sounds incredibly beautiful since he is the patron saint of diocesan priests! I would also love to celebrate Mass at The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion because I love Our Lady and the Shrine is such an important place in our diocese.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

There are a few books that have been impactful for me, but I think perhaps the most influential have been the writings of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. What she has offered me is the opportunity to consider a spirituality that truly embraces my weaknesses and the need to be like a child to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Her incredible trust in the great love and mercy of our God who is with us in our various areas of poverty has brought me much freedom. Additionally, from her I have learned much about the spiritual knockout combination that is prayer and sacrifice.

Finally, I want to mention "The Practice of the Presence of God" by Brother Lawrence. In this small yet powerful book, Brother Lawrence explains how we all can, and indeed ought to, pay attention to the Lord's presence in each moment of our daily lives. For me, this is an ongoing journey, to truly be present to him at every moment.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

The Mass, true worship that it is, brings us into communion with God and with each other. Our Lord says, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (John 6:56). When we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, eating his body and drinking his blood, we are united to him, especially in his self-offering of love on the Cross. United to Christ crucified, we learn how we are meant to love one another and the other members of his body. We are united with our Head, and subsequently, with each other. That is why a phrase such as, "I will see you in the Eucharist," can truly be said.

The Eucharist gives us the fullness of life, joy, and peace because we become one with the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The Eucharist unites us because we look upon and taste he who is all, and we realize the solidarity that comes from our absolute need for him.

St. Elizabeth of the Trinity said, "It seems to me that nothing better expresses the love in God's heart than the Eucharist: it is union, consummation, he in us, we in him, and isn't that heaven on earth?" Unity with him is what brings unity in the Church, and he offers this unity readily and regularly in the Eucharist. The magnitude of this gift is inexpressible!



# Michael Wilms

## Seminary

St. Francis de Sales Seminary  
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St. Francis, WI 53235-3702

## Year

Configuration I

## Birthday

April 27

## Parish

St. Raphael Parish,  
Oshkosh

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Maximilian Kolbe.** For his devotion to Our Lady, zeal, sacrifice, and grace to remain close to God in suffering. He beautifully teaches, "a single act of love makes the soul return to life."

### Coffee or tea?

Tea, hands down. A cool glass of iced tea to start the day; then, in the non-summer months, a cup of hot tea to warm up and soothe the senses.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

As a licensed bus driver, I have to say a bus! With many followers, this would allow for many great lessons and memories. During my time with Catholic Youth Expeditions (CYE), the bus was one of the most fruitful times for building relationships and getting to spend quality time with others.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

Faith, family, friends, food, and football. These have been great staples in my family for many years. Starting with attending Mass together, then coming home for lunch with family and friends while watching football. Later in the afternoon, taking a break for a nap, then praying a Holy Hour after being well rested, and having the evening to wind down with the Lord for some introvert time and contemplation.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

It would be a special gift to return to places of great spiritual nourishment in my life. Two spiritual "wells" clearly stand out: the St. Joseph Chapel at CYE in Bailey's Harbor and a Steubenville Conference. I am who I am today because of these incredible ministries. It was through them that I heard the call to holiness and later to the priesthood — both my first time going to seminary in 2011 and now returning 10 years later. God abundantly blessed me by them, and it would be an honor to go back to celebrate Mass.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

Fr. Jacques Phillipe. I first read "Searching for and Maintaining Peace" as a summer staffer at CYE back in 2011. I remember each paragraph being so simple, yet profound, like God has

specifically put those words on the page just for me. This was the first true spiritual reading I recall doing and is one of the only books I have read numerous times.

I have continued my connection with Fr. Phillipe, choosing to read several of his other books. "Time for God" and "Thirsting for Prayer" have been recent treasure troves of grace for me. It was particularly while reading these books on a personal silent retreat at Holy Hill where the Lord revealed a great truth to me and illuminated the lies I had been believing. After this deep encounter, I was certain I desired to lay down my life in response to his call as a priest after having been out of the seminary for 10 years.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

In the Eucharist is found belonging and life. This has been made incredibly clear to me over the years in my own journey, as well as throughout the Church. In the Eucharist, we find Christ and our identities as his beloved children. As such, this revelation directly brings us under one roof as a family. This is not an abstract idea, rather it comes directly from the love that flows from the Eucharist.

In the Eucharist we are brought together for community through the Mass. His very presence in the Eucharist is meant to draw us closer to him and to one another. This was no accident, but an intentional act of love and unity. What God reveals to us personally in the Eucharist draws us to a greater love of neighbor and sends us out on mission to invite others to that same love. Thus, the Eucharist establishes us as ambassadors of love. Without love, there can be no unity. Love brings us together, particularly love from the Eucharist.

This was made wonderfully clear this past summer through the National Eucharistic Congress and pilgrimages throughout the United States. What a joy and gift it was to be part of this monumental act of love and restoration. God brought about this revival to center us all on his Eucharist and his love. The Lord invites each of us to this intimate love, and here we must together remain. Here lies the lifeblood, the heart of the Church.





# John Sparks

## Seminary

Assigned to a Parish

### Mailing Address:

St. Mary Parish  
4805 Sportsman Drive  
De Pere, WI 54115

## Year

Pastoral Year

## Parish

St. Agnes Parish,  
Green Bay

## Birthday

September 11

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Anthony of Padua.** He has been instrumental in my coming back to the faith and my discernment to the priesthood. Not to mention, he has interceded in helping me to find lost objects.

### Coffee or tea?

I really do not drink either. I am not usually one for hot drinks, but a nice, sweet iced tea can hit the spot.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

This is difficult to imagine, but I think it would be something big enough to carry the rest of the apostles as well, so maybe a bus.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

At this point in life, my ideal way of spending the Lord's Day is pretty basic. It would, of course, begin with attending Mass early in the morning. My mother and I have a tradition of going to breakfast afterward at a local restaurant. Enjoying some golf later in the day would be a lot of fun and, in the colder months, so would playing card or board games with friends or family.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

If it were possible, I would love to celebrate Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. At every Mass, we make present again the sacrifice that Jesus made for all of us — the sacrifice he made on the cross. When we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we are being deeply united to him and his resurrection. To have the privilege of re-presenting Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection in the same physical space where these events historically happened would be an unbelievable experience of a lifetime.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

During our Kairos Year, we were gifted a book called "Spiritual Warfare and the Discernment of Spirits" by Dan Burke. Burke gives a brief overview and introduction to the main principles of the rules of discernment as set forth by St. Ignatius of Loyola. At the time it was given to us, I was still having difficulty discerning what the next step in my formation was supposed to be. However, in reading this book, things became much clearer. I became more convinced that God was calling me to continue on into seminary. Another interesting connection I have is with

one of the people Burke gives credit to in the book's preface. He says that one of the priests he owes a great deal to in his studies is Fr. Timothy Gallagher, OMV. This past summer, I had the great privilege of attending the Institute for Priestly Formation (IPF) in Oklahoma. One of the priests that taught us over the course of our time there was Fr. Gallagher himself.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

As it is often quoted in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), "The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.'" There can be many reasons why people gather together and form groups and communities. Some of the more usual ways are through family relations, professional associations, and friendships of all sorts. One of the more profound reasons people come together is because of similar, deeply held beliefs and worldviews, and few things can pull people together like a common goal.

As Catholics, Jesus is the one who calls us into communion and to be one, as he and the Father are one. To that end, Jesus left his Church the seven sacraments. While all the sacraments are direct encounters with the divine life of God, the Eucharist is called the "Sacrament of Sacraments" since all of them "are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it" (CCC, #1324-1327). Since the Eucharist has this binding and unifying effect within the sacramental life of the Church, why should we expect it to have any less of an effect amongst us who are members of the Church?

God is the loving unity of the three divine persons of the Trinity. When we meditate on the real presence of Jesus at Adoration, when we jointly participate in the Mass with the Eucharist at its center, and when we receive that Eucharist at Communion, we enter into that same Trinitarian life of unity and love.



# Dino Piccinini

## Seminary

St. Francis de Sales Seminary  
3257 S. Lake Drive  
St. Francis, WI 53235-3702

## Year

Discipleship IV

## Birthday

February 24

## Parish

St. Bernard Parish,  
Green Bay

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Maria Faustina Kowalska.** I would be so grateful for her intercession — she allowed Jesus to work through her to reveal his infinite mercy, and I also want to be a trusting recipient and instrument of that mercy.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee! I find the greater amount of caffeine to be very helpful for focusing, and I prefer the flavor to any tea I have tried.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

A rugged four-wheeler would have been ideal for the difficult terrain encountered while tracking down and herding back lost sheep.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

A quiet Holy Hour (and coffee, of course) before sunrise would be the perfect way to start the day. Next, the day would center and revolve around Mass, the most fitting way to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection. This would be followed by spending time with my family, enjoying a home-cooked meal together, and quietly reading or simply enjoying each other's company.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would love to celebrate Mass one day at Sweetest Heart of Mary Parish in Detroit, a beautiful Polish church whose twin Gothic steeples reign over I-75 as a reminder of God's Kingdom. This is the church where my parents were married and where I was baptized as a baby. I would be very honored to return as a priest and offer the Holy Sacrifice in thanksgiving both for my parents' beautiful gift of the faith to my siblings and me, as well as the gift of being adopted as a beloved son of the Father through baptism.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

While there are so many beautiful titles out there to choose from, one that continues to bear fruit in my life almost daily is the book "Fire Within" by Fr. Thomas Dubay. It presents the teachings of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross on prayer, specifically showing how these holy Doctors of the Church connect prayer with the Gospel message to live out the virtue of charity daily. One of the most impactful things this book helped me to realize is that prayer is not something we do, but primarily something we receive from God. In other words,

prayer is not in the least bit us trying to get the Lord's attention or convince him of a need we have; it is us gradually entering deeper into the mystery that God could not be more attentive to us already and that, at every moment, he looks at us with unimaginable tenderness, love, and mercy.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

In St. John's account of the Last Supper, Jesus prays to the Father for those who believe in him. In one particularly moving petition, he prays that his followers "... may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (John 17:21).

I believe that the Eucharist establishes unity in the Church because through this sacrament we are drawn into Jesus, the source of all unity, and he into us. The more closely we are united to Jesus, the more closely we will be united to those around us. The deepest way to be united with Jesus is through the Holy Eucharist; therefore, the closer we become with Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, the more we will grow in unity with our brothers and sisters.

By allowing the Lord to live and work in us, through receiving him in the Eucharist, we allow his love, grace, and presence to shape the way in which we relate to others. I believe that when Jesus is the one defining how we relate to others, we will always be living out our unity with him by becoming more united with our brothers and sisters.





# Nicholas Huza

## Seminary

Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary  
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Winona, MN 55987-1320

## Year

Discipleship IV

## Parish

St. Mary of the Immaculate  
Conception Parish, Greenville

## Birthday

October 10

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Ignatius of Loyola.** He is my confirmation saint and had an unswerving drive to do the will of God and wise discernment. I will need both of these things.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee. It is a good analogy for the cross. What appears to be a dark and bitter drink instead brings life to my morning! (Hebrews 12:2)

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

I could see Our Lord and the apostles riding around on a fleet of the Lime electric scooters. As it says in the Gospel of John, "By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples" (John 15:8). Thus, a fruit-themed scooter seems most fitting.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

In an ideal world, it would begin with Lauds, Holy Hour, and Mass bright and early in the morning. The bulk of the day would be spent with brother seminarians either on a hike or another outdoor activity. Once we are sufficiently exhausted, we would end the day with evening prayer and dinner. A day permeated with prayer and fraternity is probably as restful a day as I can imagine.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would climb to the top of Mount Horeb in the heat of the desert sun and find the cave where the prophet Elijah encountered the Lord. There, I would celebrate the Holy Sacrifice. In the Book of Kings, after Elijah defeats the prophets of Baal, he is driven to a cave on Mount Horeb. There he meets the Lord who asks him, "Why are you here?" Elijah responds, "I have been most zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts" (1 Kings 19:14). Therefore, it would make that cave a very cool place to offer Mass.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

"Butler's Lives of the Saints." The lives and biographies of the saints have always been a touchstone of encouragement and spiritual growth. They inspire me to grow in holiness and also point out the areas of my life where I need conversion. I enjoy working with my hands and building things. However, I need to

have an image or example of what the finished product looks like. A purely abstract description of something might not always be the most clear. In the same way, living the Gospel sometimes looks like an abstract concept. The lives of the saints offer a concrete example of what loving the Lord and living the Gospel looks like.

From when I was coming into my faith before seminary to now, I've found inspiration from the lives of the saints. I'd recommend them for anyone who is looking for examples of holiness to imitate and to fall in love with our friends: the saints!

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

"And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself" (John 12:32). In the Mass, we stand at the foot of Calvary in a very real way. The Mass is not a social gathering. It is not, per se, about us. It is Christ offering himself to the Father. It is a sacrifice. From this sacrifice, the same sacrifice at Calvary, we receive the very body and blood that Jesus offered to save us.

Christ gives us himself and we give him ourselves. When we receive Holy Communion worthily, we become more and more like Christ. "He must increase; I must decrease" (John 3:30). I've heard pride can be defined as living in the head of anyone except God. That is to say, we are worried about what we or other people think, but not what God thinks. Pride is the source of division. When we put ourselves at the center instead of God, we are in trouble. When we put God at the center, everyone united to God becomes united to each other like the spokes on a wheel. "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters" (Matthew 12:30).

In the Mass, let's offer ourselves to Christ in the Eucharist, who gives himself to us so that his prayer may be answered: "That they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you" (John 17:21b).



# Nicholas Klika

## Seminary

Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary  
700 Terrace Heights  
Box #587  
Winona, MN 55987-1320

## Year

Discipleship III

## Parish

St. Bernard Parish,  
Green Bay

## Birthday

December 30

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Joseph.** In raising Jesus and being the husband of Mary, he gives us an example of authentic masculinity, purity, and humility when it comes to service and obedience, all things I desire to emulate.

### Coffee or tea?

I refuse to drink coffee, and tea is hardly any better ... but I do enjoy a nice Arnold Palmer on a warm summer day, so I think that means tea wins.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Imagine Jesus driving from city to city in a Sprinter van with the Sons of Thunder throwing oats at Peter from the second row because he was chosen to sit shotgun. Thomas is being a backseat driver, and the rest are sprawled out sleeping like it's the garden of Gethsemane.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

Leisure is the foundation in which I would build my ideal Sunday. The day would start with some extra rest, a light breakfast, and taking in the peaceful solitude of the morning. I would then get all gussied up and attend a late morning Mass followed by a home-cooked second breakfast. The rest of the day would be spent enjoying the fellowship of friends and family, grilling out, and ending the night with a movie.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

There is a great desire in my heart to celebrate Mass in the places where the seeds of my vocation were planted and harvested and for the people who supported and prayed so fervently for my vocation. This list includes the Carmelite nuns in Denmark, the Missionaries of the Word in Door County, the good people who frequent The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion, and my dear parish family back home at St. Bernard's in Green Bay. There are so many more individual people whom I hope to have the privilege of celebrating Mass for some day.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

Without a doubt, "Story of a Soul" has impacted the way that I relate to Our Lord in prayer and has hopefully led me to live out the "vocation of love." For those who may not know, "Story of a

Soul" is the autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux which she wrote out of obedience to her mother superior in the final years of her young life.

The reason this book had such an impact on me is because Thérèse unpacks the Gospel in the light of love. It is particularly in Manuscript B and C of the book where she discovers her vocation is to love and that, in the heart of the Church, she will be love. She knew that if we might only love our Blessed Lord with all our heart and trust in his infinite mercy, no matter how feeble we may still be, Jesus will reach down and carry us to himself in heaven.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

From the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry, his desire was to build up the Kingdom of Heaven. Look no further than those he chose to be his disciples: tax collectors, zealots, prostitutes, sinners, and the list goes on. Jesus spent much of his ministry curing the sick and giving sight to the blind. All of this he did, not for its own sake, but rather for the sake of their belief in him. Jesus desires that all men come to know him and give glory to his Father whom he wishes to reveal to them.

In John chapter 6, Jesus says whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup will have eternal life. He speaks here, of course, of those who dispose of themselves humbly to receive him. At the Last Supper on the night he was to be betrayed, Jesus called his disciples together to share one last meal. Here we see Jesus gathering his Church united as one, that they may witness and partake in the saving action of his death and resurrection.

The pinnacle of this unity takes place on every altar at every Mass when the consecrated host and chalice are lifted up and we hear the priest proclaim the words, "Through Him, with Him, and in Him, O God Almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, forever and ever." Our "Amen" is our yes to being united to the Body of Christ in that saving action right there on Calvary.





# Matthew Schumacher

## Seminary

St. John Vianney College Seminary  
2115 Summit Avenue  
Mail #5024  
St. Paul, MN 55105-1048

## Year

Discipleship III

## Parish

St. Matthew Parish,  
Allouez

## Birthday

February 11

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Thérèse of Lisieux.** I desire to imitate her simplicity and true love for the Lord. "My desire ... to love Jesus and to make him loved."

### Coffee or tea?

I will go with the classic Catholic "both-and," coffee in the morning and tea in the evening.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would have purchased a run-down car from the roadside, put a new engine in, fixed it up like new, and used it for ministry. This would be a sacramental car as it shows how Jesus purchased us in his blood and made us a new creation in himself.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

A good Sunday would start by waking up and praying the Office of Readings with a cup of coffee. Second, I would go to the church for a Holy Hour followed by Mass. After Mass, I would enjoy a celebratory brunch with friends and family which would precede a nice hike outside. The evening would include a simple barbecue and end with reading a novel and praying Night Prayer.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

It is difficult to pick a specific place because wherever you are, the altar becomes the table of the Lord (like the Last Supper) and the place of Jesus' sacrifice on Calvary. I can't think of a better place to be than that. However, I think it would be cool to draw on the inspiration of some saints and strive to celebrate Mass in a place where it has never been celebrated before. That way, the sacramental presence of Jesus can be in a place that has never experienced him before.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

"Story of a Soul" by St. Thérèse of Lisieux has strongly impacted my journey of discipleship. Since reading it, I have gained a deeper understanding of what it means for God to act in and through our weakness. In the spiritual life, it is easy to become discouraged when we see our struggle to love the Lord as we ought. St. Thérèse reminds us that our weaknesses are privileged areas where Jesus can enter into and transform us.

Now, when faced with weakness, I try not to ask, "How can I fix this?" but instead, "Do I have faith that the Lord will use this weakness for his glory?"

The more I accept this reality, the more joy I receive because whether I am "doing well" or not, I can rest assured knowing that the Lord is actively transforming my heart (weaknesses included) to be more like his. Simply put, he is the protagonist; whether we feel spiritually weak or strong, he is active. We have only to surrender and love him.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

When considering the Eucharist and unity in the Church, I am reminded of a warm Catholic farewell I heard a few years ago: "I'll see you in the Eucharist." I considered the meaning of this when I heard a priest say, "When you have communion with Christ, you have communion with the Church."

It is interesting to ponder how we are all so close to one another in the Eucharist. We learn that the Eucharist is the source and summit of our Catholic faith. If that is the case, then it also must be the source of all unity of our faith. I believe this is rooted in the fact that we not only receive the heart of Jesus in the Eucharist, but we are also received into the heart of Jesus in the Eucharist. Here, we get to abide in his heart in and through this sacrament.

If we, who receive the Eucharist, are received into the heart of Jesus, then the Eucharist must be our source of unity. What place is more conducive to unity and communion than inside the heart of Our Lord? Jesus tells us that a house divided against itself cannot stand. In his heart, there is no division. Hence, if the Church dwells within the heart of Jesus (especially through the Eucharist), she will stand.



## Benedict Wood

### Seminary

St. John Vianney College Seminary  
2115 Summit Avenue  
Mail #5024  
St. Paul, MN 55105-1048

### Year

Discipleship III

### Birthday

January 10

### Parish

St. Thomas More Parish,  
Appleton

### Contact

wood9936@stthomas.edu



### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Lawrence of Brindisi.** He was the patron of my high school. The Collect prayer for his feast day asks that God grant us the wisdom to know his will and the courage to carry it out.

### Coffee or tea?

There is something special about enjoying a morning cup of coffee with family.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Considering he was a carpenter by trade, I can see Jesus having a pickup truck to transport materials to job sites.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

Brunch after Mass and a good book are a recipe for a perfect Sunday afternoon. I like going to an early Mass to start the day off oriented towards the Lord, then devoting time to family and friends. When I'm home, my family has a favorite brunch spot. After that, I like to read something that I'm not studying for class.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I hope to one day celebrate Mass in the St. Lawrence Seminary High School Chapel. That space is where I fell in love with the Sacred Liturgy and came to know our Eucharistic Lord in a real way. There are more glamorous locations where I would love to celebrate Mass, but this one holds a special place in my heart. It is where the Lord taught me how to pray with and in his Church, and it is hard to think of any pilgrimage site or cathedral that would be more special for me.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

Both the fiction and nonfiction of C.S. Lewis have deeply influenced my faith journey. His writings have especially shaped my prayer life. In his novel, "The Screwtape Letters," Lewis helps teach what the enemy's voice sounds like in prayer: accusatory and fearmongering. While reading it, I began to notice when this voice was speaking to me and learned not to listen to it, but to run into the arms of my loving Father. Lewis' other writings, especially "The Great Divorce" and "The Chronicles of Narnia" series illustrate the movement of grace in our lives. The characters in these stories are constantly led into deeper

conversion. This is not only in the major "road to Damascus" moments, but by a constant challenge to draw closer to God by letting go of small attachments. These stories helped me see that sanctification is not about dramatic penances and ascetic practices, but in preferring Christ and his Kingdom to everything else.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

When I was at the National Eucharistic Congress in July, I was struck by the unity of the Church. Surrounded by 50,000+ people from across the country, the unity of our diversity was beautiful. Although we came from different states, cultural backgrounds, ethnic groups, and liturgical traditions, we were united by our love for the Eucharistic Lord. It is the same Jesus that we all came to worship and to receive, and by receiving him, we were brought even closer together.

When we receive Holy Communion, we are united to Christ in his body which is the Church. This is the peace and unity that only Christ can give. We do not obliterate all differences between the members of the body, nor do we simply "tolerate" each other. Instead, we all come together, knowing that we are sinners, knowing that we are "not worthy to receive" him, and receive him nonetheless because he longs to give himself to us.

On the altar, we give the Lord our hearts, hungry for transformation. What he gives us in return is himself, that we might feed on him and be transformed. This transformation empowers us to love one another authentically; we can see one another as other and will the other's good. With our eyes focused on the Eucharist, we see the mystery of the Body of Christ which is the Church.





# David Martens

## Seminary

Conception Seminary College  
37174 State Highway VV#607  
Conception, MO 64433-8102

## Year

Discipleship II

## Birthday

October 13

## Parish

St. Francis Xavier Cathedral,  
Green Bay

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Peter the Apostle.** He took a long time to learn what it truly means to follow Christ and shows us what it looked like along the way.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee. I am not English but American, and coffee simply tastes better while containing more caffeine.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

I have friends who own a Kia Soul from Mighty Auto Sales, and the dealer put their logo "Mighty," above the model logo — thus it reads "Mighty Soul." I think it is a pretty apt description, and Jesus would definitely use it.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

I would wake up about 7:30 a.m. to pray until Mass at 9 a.m. That way, I can still sleep in with moderation and start the day with prayer. I would then have a hearty brunch and read for a little bit. A group sport would follow for a while. The best part of the day would be a shower and a nice nap. Dinner with ice cream and some quiet reading would cap it off.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would love to celebrate Mass at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Green Bay. I grew up going there much of my childhood, and it feels like home every time I walk in. The Crucifixion mural is so beautiful and I have heard it referred to many times — it would be special to offer the sacrifice of the Mass under it. I have served many Masses there, so experiencing more fully what I have assisted in so often would be cool. An added bonus is that there is a good chance of many friends and family being able to attend.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

A great example of discipleship in a unique scenario is "He Leadeth Me" by Fr. Walter Cisiek. A disciple simply accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another. In this book about his experiences in the communist Soviet Union, Fr. Cisiek tells how he eventually came to knowing the Lord's will for him each day and carrying it out. Many times that took the form

of carrying out his quota of work in the labor camps. Through his work, he was a witness to his fellow prisoners in Siberia, simply by giving his all in his work, day in and day out. His work ethic slowly made people curious, and he was able to minister to them in small ways. It has given me an example of how to live day to day intentionally here in the seminary, because it is just as vital to building up the Kingdom as anyone else's God-given vocation.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

Paragraph 11 of "Lumen Gentium" says that the Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life." What that means is everything we believe, say, and do should be rooted in the Eucharist and directed toward the Eucharist. It is sometimes good to reevaluate and see where the particular view or action is coming from: Is it coming from my own ideas of what would look good? Is it simply what everyone around me is telling me? Is this truly coming from a Eucharistic mindset?

We can ask the same questions about where it is directed. When we operate through this Eucharistic mindset, which comes about by spending time with the Eucharist in Mass or Adoration, we can align ourselves more closely with Our Lord, the Church, and others. Once we are based in the Eucharist, we are able to communicate more freely and foster dialogue. This is because the Lord in the Eucharist provides us both the goal and the devotion and zeal for the Truth.

The Church and the Eucharist were both born from the side of Christ on the cross. Each of us, as baptized members of that Church, are united in the Eucharist by the very fact that we are members of that Church. This is good to recall as we receive Communion in a church community; because it is the most physical manifestation of that unity, and we should remember it throughout the day and the week as well.



# Benjamin Erickson

## Holy Name of Jesus House of Formation

2589 S. Webster Ave.  
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## Year

Kairos Year

## Parish

St. Francis Xavier Cathedral,  
Green Bay

## Birthday

July 19

## Contact

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gmail.com



### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**Bl. Carlo Acutis.** He is an inspirational "saint" for my generation, and he has helped me a ton with my discernment process and my faith life.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee, because I love the smell and taste of it. But, if I get coffee, it would have to be decaffeinated due to my allergy to caffeine.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

If Mary had any say in what he drove, he would have driven a Fiat, but most likely he would have driven a Ford Transit so he could drive all his apostles around.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

My ideal way to spend the Lord's Day would be to wake up early, go to Mass, and have a Holy Hour at 8 a.m. Then, I would spend the whole day with my family either at my parents' home or somewhere with beautiful scenery, like the beach. To top it off, I would grill brats and hamburgers with my dad for dinner.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would have to choose the place where Blessed Carlo Acutis is buried. I wouldn't choose a magnificent cathedral or basilica, because I like simple things and places. Bl. Carlo has been a huge inspiration to me in the way that he let God work in his life to do amazing things. He didn't try to control his life, but instead he just took a step back and let God work through him. I feel very close to Bl. Carlo Acutis and to be able to celebrate Mass in this spot would be so cool.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

The author that has most influenced my journey of discipleship is Jason Evert. I have read many of his books, and they have all helped my journey in some way. The one that has helped me the most is his book about St. John Paul II called "His Five Loves." In this book, he explained how difficult it was for John Paul II to live out his faith in the country that he was living in. It made me ask myself why I, someone living in a free country, did not take my faith seriously. I have also really liked some of his other

works on the topic of sexuality. Reading these books has made a big impact on me, and they showed me that it is possible to live a chaste and holy life in such a crazy day and age as the one we are living in right now.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

The way the Eucharist is meant to foster unity in the Church is in the way of spiritual unity. The Eucharist is the spiritual unity that keeps the Church on the right path. Jesus is truly in the Eucharist and, by offering himself to the Father at every single Mass, he is keeping the Church on a path that leads us straight to the Father.

St. John Paul II states, "Every priest who offers the holy Sacrifice should recall that during this Sacrifice it is not only he with his community that is praying but the whole Church, which is thus expressing in this sacrament her spiritual unity, among other ways by the use of the approved liturgical text." As one can see, John Paul II is stating that not only is someone becoming united to Christ through the Eucharist, but the whole Church becomes united through the Eucharist.

As the Eucharist should be the "source and summit" of one's being, it is truly the "source and summit" of the Church. It is the one thing that is the glue that holds the Church together, and it is the answer to all the divisions and disagreements of the Church. The spiritual unity that the Eucharist brings to the Church is vital for the unity and well-being of the Church.





## Samuel Kurth

### Holy Name of Jesus House of Formation

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### Year

Kairos Year

### Birthday

September 28

### Parish

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish,  
De Pere

### Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Joseph.** A saint that has been present during discerning priesthood. He has shown himself as the protector of the Church and an example of living as a holy man.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee, primarily because of accessibility. Living with people who prefer it means that it is around most mornings.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would drive a bus. It fits into the way he ministers — he meets people where they are and brings them along with him. Also, he would want to fit as many people as possible.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

The morning would start by sleeping in, waking up, and making my way to a late-morning Mass. I would arrive back home to have brunch with my family. After the meal, I'd allow for some afternoon recreation time (maybe a nap) and then the evening would finish off with a movie night.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would celebrate Mass at the St. Francis of Assisi Chapel at Camp Tekakwitha. One of the main reasons is because it is the perfect size for having a good amount of people, but not too many. The other reason is because Camp Tek has become a home for me the last couple years. Being able to return to camp and celebrate Mass would be very special. It would bring the special gift of the Eucharist to the counselors who in turn serve the kids of the community in a profound way.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

The spiritual book that has had a lot of impact on my faith, especially this past year, is "Consecration to St. Joseph" by Fr. Donald Calloway. St. Joseph has always been such a mystery but is also known to be a powerful intercessor. The insight of who St. Joseph was is very evident in the book, but it also provides other aspects of his life to ponder. With so little known, there is no way of fully understanding the reasons behind his actions. The book gives some different perspectives about why St. Joseph did what he did. The most impactful part of the book,

in my opinion, is the dynamic of the Holy Family. As much as the book is about St. Joseph, it shows what kind of man he was in the framework of the family. The book is technically about St. Joseph but, for the most part, is a reflection of God's work in the parents of Jesus.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

There are two main ways that the Eucharist fosters unity in the Church. The first is in a physical sense in which people come together. Every Sunday, we gather together as a community as Christ asked us to celebrate the Eucharist. There is such an importance of Jesus being fully present in the Eucharist, and how good it is that we do it with others. Jesus did not die on the cross for a few, but for all.

The second way that it fosters unity is in more of a spiritual sense. When we are baptized into the church, we are welcomed into the Body of Christ. As a baptized people, we have been given a mission to finish what Christ's ministry started — to spread the Gospel and bring Jesus to everyone around us. We are unable to fulfill this goal on our own because we are too weak; we need to rely on the help of others. In addition, there must be a true sense of purpose, of why we do what we do. That is at the "heart" of the Eucharist. Jesus is giving us his heart in the Eucharist and only through this gift and blessing do we have a true sense of what the purpose is.



# Charles Maternoski

## Holy Name of Jesus House of Formation

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## Year

Kairos Year

## Parish

SS. Edward & Isidore  
Parish, Flintville

## Birthday

December 20

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. John Paul II.** His beautiful example of how to be a disciple and embrace trials and tribulations is inspiring to me! Additionally, his love for Mary motivates me to love her more.

### Coffee or tea?

If I was forced to choose, I would drink decaffeinated tea, but coffee and tea are not very tasty. So, you will find me drinking lots of water!

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would totally be driving a Ford Transit pulling a camper. His whole mission crew could drive and sleep on the road comfortably. Unfortunately, Ford and campers did not exist 2,000 years ago, so they had to stick with the old heel-to-toe express.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

It would start with Mass and a Holy Hour, then a big brunch with my family. Following brunch, I would play a game of ultimate Frisbee with my friends. In this ideal scenario, I would be flown to my cottage up north and spend the evening on the water. That is not realistic, however. Rather, I would play games and have a big dinner with my family and friends at home.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

This is by no means extravagant, but my heart kept coming back to this. I would love to celebrate Mass in a two-stall garage chapel at the University of Minnesota-Duluth Newman Center. There is something so special about it! I first encountered the Lord here, and it's where most of the following growth occurred. The way the Lord worked in my heart in that simple chapel is why I am a seminarian today and why it would mean so much to celebrate Mass there. Unfortunately, it will be taken down soon, so it will not be possible.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

"He Leadeth Me" by Fr. Walter Cizek is a very influential book to me. I began reading it right around the time I began discerning the priesthood. It was a very fitting book to read at that time, as it provided me with a deeper awareness of suffering and recognizing that God can work through anything. Fr. Walter

endured hell on earth, and the Lord purified him through that. The witness of his story showed me in a profound way how the Lord can work in our lowest moments. I found myself reflecting on the low moments in my life and saw the Lord present in them. In that recognition of the importance of suffering, I feel better equipped to aid others through trials. I know that formation will bear its fair share of crosses, and Fr. Walter has provided me with greater insight as to how these crosses can prove to be fruitful.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

As we approach Mass, the offering of the Mass for a particular person fosters great unity in the Church. At the beginning of Mass, I often say "Lord, I am offering this Mass for my mom" (as an example). This way, the moment the Eucharist is raised up, so is that person you offered the Mass for. If we continually offer the Eucharist up in this way, the Church will become stronger through the sanctification of the world that takes place at each Mass. Through our baptism, we are called to be "Little Christs," and the fastest way to do so is by receiving Jesus each day. As we allow Jesus to work within us, we become more like him. The more the body of believers is united to the head of the Church in Jesus, the more united we are as a body of believers on earth. If possible, receive Jesus daily!

Along with receiving Jesus, adoring him in the Eucharist is a splendid idea. Just as you spend time with a friend on earth, spending time with Jesus draws you closer to him. If everyone on earth spent time adoring Jesus daily, imagine how different the world would be! "Little Christs" would be everywhere, sharing the Good News! Unfortunately, that is not the reality we live in, so we must grow closer to Jesus. This way, we can share his love with those who do not know him, bringing about greater unity in the Church.





# Jacob Mongan

## Holy Name of Jesus House of Formation

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### Year

Kairos Year

### Parish

St. Joseph Parish,  
Wautoma

### Birthday

September 20

### Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Anthony of Padua.** He has been a faithful companion in my spiritual journey, and he is also my confirmation saint. I have relied on his intercession countless times and have never been left unanswered.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee. It tastes much better and, even if you don't like the taste, everyone can appreciate the smell.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Most likely a school bus; Jesus could fit all his apostles with him wherever he went.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

Starting the Lord's Day with Mass is most fitting, followed by praying the rosary. Continuing the day, I would then conquer my family at afternoon board games and Kahoot. The evening would include a canoe fishing adventure, followed by a bonfire afterwards with s'mores to wrap up the day.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

If given the opportunity, I would like to celebrate Mass at Our Lady of the Pines Catholic Church located west of Yellowstone National Park. My first visit to this small, cabin-like church was in August of 2021 while on a family vacation. I very much enjoy the picturesque view the church offers, accompanied by the number of tourists that visit the parish. Being able to celebrate Mass for people from all around the world in this small church in such a beautiful location would be a privilege.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

A biography of St. John Bosco from the Salesians deeply influenced my discipleship journey; his work as a missionary among young people really struck me, because he was a dedicated father-figure to the boys on the streets who had no one else. From altar serving, I have a heart and understanding for other young men like me and see the tremendous value of having someone to guide you in your faith. Vivid dreams influenced the actions and direction of St. John Bosco's life, and he was known for the miracles that he worked in the lives of the boys he served. At every opportunity, he found ways to bring

them toward the Kingdom of Heaven. St. John Bosco's example of faithfulness, simplicity, and tirelessness encourages me to live out my faith in works without any fear and to have absolute confidence in God's love for us. His trust and faith in God inspire me to ask, "How can we do the same thing for others?"

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

"Come to me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (Matthew 11:28). In these words, Christ invites all who experience burdens to receive refreshment through him. All people are united in dealing with the burdens of life. This is a reality whether the burdens are great or small. We can experience them through the labor of our work, duties, and relationships.

The Eucharist is an invitation from Jesus to humanity to be united to him. This unity is something that can be received by all people throughout the world. The Eucharist is a way for us to foster hope and find refreshment from the burdens we all deal with. Imagining the whole of humanity partaking in the sacrament of the Eucharist seems a daunting task, but it is an exciting prospect as Catholics to bring this unity with Christ to all his children. Just spending time before the Blessed Sacrament in adoration sets the soul on fire to share this experience of unity.

The Eucharist is something we ought not want to keep to ourselves, for it is the love that Christ wishes to lavish upon us through receiving him. The Eucharist is meant to bring unity between us and the Lord and to unite the Church under one belief in the True Presence of Christ that dwells within.



## Connor Quick

### Holy Name of Jesus House of Formation

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### Year

Kairos Year

### Parish

St. Patrick Parish,  
Menasha

### Birthday

June 6

### Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori.** His devotion to our Blessed Mother and to the Most Holy Eucharist is something I hope to emulate.

### Coffee or tea?

Comparing the two, I am reminded of a ballad from poet Malcom Guite: "Now, I cherish my morning coffee, too / But tea is humbler ... In summer it refreshes, in winter warms ..."

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would not have owned a vehicle and would rather hitchhike everywhere. In this way, he would abandon himself to the will of his Father, trusting that he would be provided for. It might be hard to get a hitch for 13 people, though.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

My ideal Lord's Day happened monthly last year. I'd visit Catholic Youth Expeditions (CYE) for their Winter Institute, enjoying Holy Hour, Mass, Morning Prayer, and brunch with the Missionaries of the Word. Afterward, I'd visit The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion, making a visit to the Blessed Mother. Lately, I would close out the night by meeting friends in Oshkosh at the restaurant Fletches where a live jazz band plays every Sunday night.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

Of all the potential places in the world, I would really like to celebrate Mass at The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion. The Shrine has been a tremendous gift to me — a place for rest, thanksgiving, reflection, and pilgrimage. The humility of the Shrine, coupled with its palpable sense of peace, makes it a refuge for any and all who visit. It would be a privilege beyond compare to be able to celebrate Mass in a place that feels so much like home.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

The spiritual work that has greatly influenced me is "The Way of the Pilgrim." This 19th-century Russian text follows an anonymous pilgrim as he wanders across Russia seeking to fulfill St. Paul's command to "pray without ceasing." Early on he learns the Jesus Prayer, which becomes his constant companion throughout the journey.

Two themes from this work have been particularly influential for me: abandonment and encounter. The Russian word for "pilgrim" can also mean "wanderer." In this way, the character's wandering is not aimless but rather a surrendering to God's will, a disposition I have sought to adopt. Also, like the pilgrim, I have grown in devotion to the Jesus Prayer, asking God to "have mercy on me." This is a prayer which essentially asks God to "do what you do."

The book's focus on encounter moves me; the pilgrim's interactions, from sinners to spiritual masters, are never insignificant, spiritually speaking. This has deeply influenced how I view my own interactions, helping me to recognize Christ's presence in those I meet along the way.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

St. Alphonsus Liguori, quoting St. Dionysius, says, "The principle effect of love is to tend toward union." St. Alphonsus goes on to say that it is for this very purpose that Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, instituted the Most Holy Sacrament of his body and blood. He did so that in our partaking of this sacrament we might become one in him, "for it belongs to those who love greatly" that they be united, so says St. John Chrysostom.

It is true that Christ desires to be united to each of us intimately, but not so that we might be united to him in isolation. The Eucharist is, in its institution, a meal shared in common. It is this meal which brings together Catholics of every nation, tongue, and trade and makes them one in worship. The Eucharist, and in turn the Church, is not a place where "we who come together might be divided, but so that they who are divided might come together" (St. John Chrysostom).

This Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. The unity garnered by our partaking together of this sacrament should not end at our existing the church doors but be the ideal from which we model our unity in the world.





# Logan Shallow

## Holy Name of Jesus House of Formation

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## Year

Kairos Year

## Birthday

June 5

## Parish

St. Anne Parish;  
Lena, Coleman

## Contact

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### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Joseph.** I admire his humility, understanding, and obedience to God's plan. I believe that St. Joseph can help me mature in my faith and vocation.

### Coffee or tea?

Tea, because I enjoy fruit-flavored beverages more than other types of beverages.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would have driven a Volkswagen bus because it would fit all 12 apostles, as well as luggage for their journeys. Volkswagen buses also give off a sense of peace that Jesus would have liked.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

My ideal way to spend the Lord's Day would be to wake up, pray, and relax before Mass. After a morning of Mass and prayer, I would go to lunch with a group of good friends. After lunch, I would go to my woods where I can sit in nature for the rest of the day and then eat supper with my whole family at home.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

I would celebrate Mass at the Church of the Transfiguration because the Transfiguration is one of my favorite moments in the entire Bible — when Jesus showed his true self to St. Peter, St. John, and St. James. From the peak of Mt. Tabor, there is a view over all of the Holy Land. Celebrating a Mass in the Holy Land would be a dream come true, especially from a place as holy as Mt. Tabor. I have heard stories from people who visited the Holy Land, and it sounds as amazing as I could ever believe.

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

The spiritual book that has influenced my journey the most is "The Boy Who Met Jesus: Segatashya Emmanuel of Kebeho" by Immaculee Ilibagiza. It was given to me by a friend who was deeply touched by the book. Segatashya was an uneducated boy who did not know who Jesus was. Jesus appeared to the young boy in apparitions, where he taught the young boy about his teachings. The transformation that Segatashya went through inspired my own transformation. Jesus tasked Segatashya to spend weeks fasting. Segatashya went through an immense

struggle to understand what Jesus himself went through in the desert. The lessons that were taught to Segatashya by Jesus helped me to learn more about my relationship with him. It was the first religious book, outside of the Bible, that I read. It brought a new appreciation for prayer to my life. I began to appreciate the little things in life so much more than I did before reading the book.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

The Eucharist is the most beautiful part of the Catholic religion. The Eucharist is Jesus: body, blood, soul, and divinity. The Eucharist is one of the biggest things that brings us together as a religion. Jesus came to us and told us about the Bread of Life — that he is the Bread of Life.

God sent Jesus to bring us together. Jesus came to Earth intending to unite all people under his heavenly Father. He did this by introducing all the people to himself and his Father. No one was excluded from his teachings. No one was excluded from his miracles. He would go out specifically to people other than the Israelites because he desired to bring them to the love of the one true God. All people were created equally by God, and he made sure everyone knew that.

Whenever anyone enters a church any day of the week, we come together to serve God. When everyone processes up to the front of the church to receive the Eucharist, Jesus looks at us with love and happiness. Today, we carry on Jesus' teachings by receiving the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ, every day if possible. This brings us together in ways that are only attainable through Jesus Christ, Our Savior, the Bread of Life, and the Eucharist.



# Noah Vanden Wymelenberg

**Holy Name of Jesus  
House of Formation**

2589 S. Webster Ave.  
Green Bay, WI 54301-2951

**Year**  
Kairos Year

**Parish**  
St. Clare Parish; Wrightstown,  
Greenleaf, and Askeaton

**Birthday**  
August 18

**Contact**  
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@gmail.com



## Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**St. Thérèse of Lisieux.** She has proven herself to be a patroness of mine throughout my discernment. I admire her “little way” and pray for the same humility she displayed throughout her life.

## Coffee or tea?

Tea is refreshing after a long round of golf or a day of working outside. Coffee only tastes good after an exorbitant amount of creamer and sugar is added.

## If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would have driven a Jaguar convertible, not only because they look incredible, but because his hair would look fantastic blowing in the wind. I would also imagine that Jesus was environmentally friendly, so the car would have to at least be a hybrid, if not an EV.

## What is your ideal way to spend the Lord’s Day?

Ideally, it would be a cool fall day, sunny and somewhere in the low 70s, high 60s. I would start the day off with a round of golf, ending with a score of 78 with zero golf balls lost, then head to Mass, and spend the rest of the day watching football with my friends and family.

## If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

Celebrating Mass in the catacombs under Rome would be a dream come true. The Roman catacombs would have been where the earliest Christians celebrated Mass in secret during times of persecution. It is also the burial site of many early Christian martyrs, making the site sacred and solemn. Celebrating Mass with those martyrs that fought for me to be able to celebrate the Mass without fear of persecution would be both powerful and fruitful. It would be a beautiful way to display our triumph over the adversity many early Christians had to endure.

## What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

The book “Maurice & Thérèse: The Story of a Love” by Patrick Ahern has altered the way I look at relationships and the bond we all share through our spiritual tribulations. Maurice was a seminarian in France who aspired to become a missionary but realized he would require assistance from someone much holier

than himself. He needed strength and holiness, two things he didn’t have, so naturally he turned to the local Carmelite convent for a boost in strength. The mother superior assigned Thérèse to Maurice. Her only job was to pray for him and for God’s will to be done through him. They exchanged 15 letters total before Thérèse passed away. This book catalogs every letter they sent.

The reader is thrown into the lives of these two individuals, which allows you to experience the brotherly and sisterly love that was shared. The struggles these two endured was very apparent, which consoles me in my times of defeat — knowing that even great saints had bad days as well.

## How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

Catholics around the world unite every Sunday to partake in the Holy Mass as people from all walks of life come together to praise God. The Eucharist is at the core of the Mass, the main event so to speak. Jesus is the focal point of the Mass and should be the reason you want to attend weekly. He nourishes us through the Eucharist, which can ultimately only be found in the Mass.

We are united through the Mass because of the Eucharist. Going up for Communion symbolizes our oneness in Christ: that we are all children of God and are equally loved by him. Hatred towards a neighbor is hatred towards a child of God, which is especially prevalent when we go up to receive him. All division should fade away at that moment because we are all one with Christ while receiving him.

The Eucharist is also unique to the Catholic faith; it is something that sets us apart from other religions and Christian denominations. You should know if someone is Catholic by the way they talk about Jesus, because we are able to receive him every day.





## Gabriel Walker

### Holy Name of Jesus House of Formation

2589 S. Webster Ave.  
Green Bay, WI 54301-2951

### Year

Kairos Year

### Parish

SS. Edward & Isidore  
Parish, Flintville

### Birthday

January 1

### Contact

gtwalker55.gw@gmail.com



### Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

**Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati.** He knew how to meet people where they were on their journey and bring them closer to Our Lord. Please pray I may allow Christ to work through me to others as Frassati did.

### Coffee or tea?

Coffee over tea any day as of now! The smell of coffee connects me with many memories and experiences with friends. We will see how and if the Kairos Year changes me.

### If Jesus drove a vehicle during his public ministry, what would it be?

Jesus would have driven an Overlanding Astro van because it can drive on pavement, gravel, and grass to spread the Gospel. An Overlanding Astro van has all the amenities to camp and is capable of going off the grid in nature.

### What is your ideal way to spend the Lord's Day?

Growing up, my family always went to 8 a.m. Mass on Sundays, so naturally I prefer to get up early and attend Mass. At St. Mary Parish in Appleton, we gathered with coffee and donuts after Mass. I enjoyed the social time spent with family and with other parishioners. After spending time with the community, I like spending time with family and friends outdoors in God's beautiful nature.

### If you could celebrate Mass anywhere in the world, where would you and why?

In 2018, I had the opportunity to be a team leader with a Colorado Leadership Retreat (CLR). During the retreat, we grew in holiness and our Catholic faith while being in the mountains of Colorado. One day during the week, we climbed a mountain and celebrated Mass on Twin Sisters mountain peak. If the opportunity to celebrate Mass on a mountain peak were presented again, I certainly would! When Fr. Matt Settle elevated the Eucharist, all you could see was Jesus and God's beautiful creation. I want to be able to take Jesus to the heights!

### What spiritual book or author has most influenced your journey of discipleship?

"Is Jesus Calling You To Be a Catholic Priest?" by Msgr. Thomas Richter is a book that contains a variety of questions a man discerning the priesthood may be thinking or feeling. I read this book many years ago and thought it was beneficial, but the last

time I read the book I discovered my "why." When discerning, it is important to know why I believe God is calling me to be a priest and to enter formation. In reading the book and discovering my "why," I was able to see the Lord's will for my life and that God was asking me to take one step closer to becoming a priest.

The book made it simpler to reflect on the basics of his call. The Lord is calling all of us to grow closer to him and to trust his will, as difficult as that may be at times. Trusting God's will has given me the grace to be able to help others follow and trust in the Lord's will as well.

### How is the Eucharist meant to foster unity in the Church?

The Eucharist fosters unity in the Church through being one Bread and one Body. Jesus is the Bread of Life and the Church is the Body of Christ. Each and every one of us is invited to have an intimate relationship with Jesus through the Eucharist every day, whether during Adoration or receiving Jesus at Mass.

Jesus is not just for one person or a select group of people; he sacrificed himself for everyone. As sinners, we are all in need of the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. We need to confess our sins and long for Jesus in the Eucharist so that we can be saved and spend eternity with Our Lord in heaven.

As Catholics, our sin and the Eucharist unite us with each other and with Christ, and the Eucharist brings us peace. The culture may be divided and filled with sin, but the Eucharist is the rock that brings peace to us all. Unity and peace are gifts that have been given to us through the Eucharist. We need to share the unity that is given through the Eucharist with the world. Jesus gives us the opportunity to be walking tabernacles as we go forth with the Eucharist within us.



# Discipleship Formation for *Vocations*

## **Duc in Altum – Young Adult Discernment Retreat** December 20-22, 2024

[www.thinkpriest.org/duc-in-altum-retreat.htm](http://www.thinkpriest.org/duc-in-altum-retreat.htm)

*A silent Ignatian discernment retreat held at St. Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee for young adult men open to the priesthood.*

## **St. Andrew Dinner – Winter Edition** Thursday, December 26, 2024, 5:30 PM

[www.gbvocations.org/st-andrew-dinner](http://www.gbvocations.org/st-andrew-dinner)

*Mass and supper with Bishop Ricken at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, including formation on the priesthood.*

## **Esto Vir Men's Conference**

Saturday, March 1, 2025 | [www.estovir.com](http://www.estovir.com)

*Annual men's conference and a great event for fathers and sons to be together.*

## **Magdalene Dinner**

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 | [www.gbvocations.org/magdalenedinner](http://www.gbvocations.org/magdalenedinner)

*Annual Mass and meal in Green Bay for women open to discerning religious life.*

## **Duc in Altum – High School Discernment Retreat**

April 11-13, 2025 | [www.gbvocations.org](http://www.gbvocations.org)

*A silent Ignatian discernment retreat held at the Mt. Tabor Center for high school men open to the priesthood.*

## **Walk to Mary**

Saturday, May 3, 2025 | [www.walktomary.com](http://www.walktomary.com)

*A 23-mile walk from the National Shrine of St. Joseph to The National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion. Walk with the Vocation Director!*

## **Transitional Diaconate Ordination**

Sunday, May 18, 2025, 3:00 PM

*Visit St. Francis Xavier Cathedral and pray at this beautiful liturgy as our next class of seminarian disciples is ordained to the diaconate.*

## **Priesthood Ordination**

Saturday, June 28, 2025, 10:00 AM

*Be inspired as another group of seminarians lay down their lives (literally) at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral as they are ordained to the priesthood.*

## **Catholic Youth Expeditions – For Youth & Young Adults**

All year round! - [www.cyexpeditions.org](http://www.cyexpeditions.org)

*There are many adventures in prayer and life that await at Kangaroo Lake in Door County with the Missionaries of the Word.*

- High School: Oct. 11-13, Dec. 13-15, Mar. 7-9
- Young Adult: Sept. 20-22, Nov. 8-10, Jan. 10-12
- Young Adult Silent Retreat: Sept. 13-15, Oct. 25-27, Nov. 22-24, Dec. 27-31, Jan. 24-26, Feb. 14-16, Mar. 20-23, Apr. 25-27
- Young Adult Triduum: Apr. 17-20



## **VOCATIONS WEBSITE**

Whether you're actively discerning, want to connect with the Vocations Team, are looking for guidance about what your next step might be, or want to support vocations through prayer, please visit:

**[gbvocations.org](http://gbvocations.org)**

- Access discernment resources
- View upcoming vocation events
- Meet the Vocations Team
- Join the Fiat Prayer Society
- Learn about the Kairos Year
- See videos, photos, and more!

## **FOR MORE INFO ABOUT DISCERNMENT**

*Please contact:*

**Fr. Mark Mleziva**

(920) 272-8293

[mmleziva@gbdioc.org](mailto:mmleziva@gbdioc.org)

**Fr. Kevin Ripley**

(920) 272-8296

[kripley@gbdioc.org](mailto:kripley@gbdioc.org)

**For more information about any of these events, please contact a member of our vocations team!**