



## Reviving Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

**As Our Nation's Bishops Prepare to Consecrate the U.S., Bishop Rhoades Explains Why Turning to the Heart of Christ Is Vital for the World Today**

BY BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

This past November at the 2025 plenary assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore, I presented a proposal on behalf of the USCCB Committee on Religious Liberty that we consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during our June assembly in 2026, the 250th anniversary of our nation's Declaration of Independence. My brother bishops enthusiastically endorsed this proposal.

In consecrating our nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during the semiquincentennial anniversary, we will be entrusting our nation to the love and care of Jesus, the Redeemer of the World. At the same time, the consecration will be a reminder to Catholics of our task to serve our nation by "perfecting the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel," as taught by the Second Vatican Council.

### **A Tradition of Consecration**

In his fourth and last encyclical, *Dilexit Nos*, Pope Francis brought devotion to the Sacred Heart to the forefront of Catholic life as the ultimate symbol of "the human and divine love" of the Heart of Jesus. And in his first apostolic exhortation, *Dilexi Te*, Pope Leo XIV invites us to contemplate Christ's love, which moves us to mission in our suffering world today. Pope Leo's predecessor and namesake, Pope Leo XIII, had taught



Wikimedia Commons

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Supporting  
'Our Shepherds,  
Our Future'**

PAGE 2

**Agenda Set for  
U.S. Bishops'  
Spring Assembly**

PAGE 3

**Totus Tuus  
Missionaries  
Ready to  
'Light a Fire'**

PAGE 20

**SACRED HEART, page 4**

## 5 Deacons to Be Ordained Priests on June 6 in Fort Wayne

BY TODAY'S CATHOLIC

Five men who have spent years in preparation for the Catholic priesthood will be ordained for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend on Saturday, June 6, at 11 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. Bishop Rhoades will preside at the Mass of Ordination.

The men to be ordained are

### **Livestream the Ordination Mass**

With praise and thanksgiving to God, the Most Rev. Kevin C. Rhoades will ordain five Deacons — Patrick Ernst, Johnathon Hickey, Noah Isch, Samuel Martinez and Greenan Sullivan — as priests at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne on Saturday, June 6, at 11 a.m. All are invited to watch via livestream on the Facebook pages of the cathedral or the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

Deacon Patrick Ernst, Deacon Johnathon Hickey, Deacon Noah Isch, Deacon Samuel Martinez and

Deacon Greenan Sullivan. Despite their different paths, each man expressed a readiness — and an eager-

ness — to begin serving the people of the diocese.

Deacon Hickey said he can already feel the joy of ordination day. "Whatever you're called to," he said, "there's happiness there."

Profiles of each of the five men appear in this issue. Pray for them as they begin their priestly ministries to serve Christ and His Church in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

TODAY'S  
CATHOLIC

(ISSN 0891-1533)  
(USPS 403630)

Official newspaper of the  
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend  
P.O. Box 11169  
Fort Wayne, IN 46856

**Publisher**

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

**Secretary for Communications**

Emily Mentock

**Editorial Department**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Scott Warden

PAGE DESIGNER: Chelsea Alt

**Business Department**

BOOKKEEPING/CIRCULATION:

circulation@diocesefwsb.org

ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE:

Erika Barron: ebarron@diocesefwsb.org

Website: [todayscatholic.org](http://todayscatholic.org)

260-456-2824

Published weekly, except for the last Sunday in December and every other week from the fourth Sunday in May through the last Sunday in August by the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 915 S. Clinton St., P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Periodicals postage paid at Fort Wayne, IN, and additional mailing office.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN 46856-1169 or email: [circulation@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:circulation@diocesefwsb.org)

**MAIN OFFICE:** 915 S. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax: 260-744-1473.

**BUREAU OFFICE:** 1328 Dagoon Trail, Mishawaka, IN 46544. Telephone 260-456-2824. Fax 260-744-1473.

News deadline is 10 days prior to publication date. Advertising deadline is nine days before publication date.

**Today's Catholic may be reached at:**

Today's Catholic,  
P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN  
46856-1169; or email:  
[editor@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:editor@diocesefwsb.org)



The  
Diocese of  
Fort Wayne-South Bend

All Christians are earnest to speak the truth in charity and join with all peace-loving people in pleading for peace and trying to bring it about.  
— *Gaudium et Spes*, 78

**f Find us on Facebook**  
[facebook.com/todayscatholicFWSB](https://facebook.com/todayscatholicFWSB)

**x Follow us on X**  
[@diocesefwsb](https://twitter.com/diocesefwsb)

**o Follow us on Instagram**  
[@diocesefwsb](https://www.instagram.com/diocesefwsb)



Photos by Scott Warden

Seminarian D'Angelo Marazita, left, and Father Daniel Niezer laugh during a Q&A session during Our Shepherds, Our Future on Tuesday, May 19, in North Webster.

## Stepping Up to Support 'Our Shepherds, Our Future'

Catholic Community Foundation Event Helps Raise Awareness of the Cost of Seminary Education

BY TODAY'S CATHOLIC

**"I**n the course of his life, a single priest will impact tens of thousands of souls." With those words, Monsignor Michael Heintz set the tone for Our Shepherds, Our Future, an evening hosted by the Catholic Community Foundation of Northeast Indiana on Tuesday, May 19, at The Owl's Nest in North Webster.

In his keynote address, Monsignor Heintz, pastor of St. Pius X Catholic Church in Granger, invited guests to consider the quiet, far-reaching influence of a priest — through homilies and sacraments, through funerals and weddings, through a kind word in a confessional that a penitent may carry for the rest of their life. Imagine a funeral, he said, where the priest's words reach not only the grieving family but the co-workers, neighbors and friends in the pews — many of whom may have little or no connection to the Church. "The priest has an impact on all of them."

Seeds sown in one moment, he reflected, may be reaped by another long afterward.

To help support the men who will take on such a vital role in the Church and the world, the Catholic Community Foundation invited faith-filled supporters from throughout the diocese to meet and talk with

priests, deacons nearing their priestly ordination, and seminarians who shared the testimonies of their vocational journeys and their seminary experiences.

Though unable to attend in person, Bishop Rhoades expressed his gratitude in a video message, thanking the faithful for investing in "the priests our Church will need for generations to come" and asking attendees to keep the seminarians in their prayers.

The evening's program included a witness talk by

seminarian Michael Florin and questions and answers from seminarians hosted by Father Jonathan Norton, the diocese's director of seminarians, and Father Daniel Niezer, its promoter of vocations.

Catholic Community Foundation CEO Mackenzie Ritchie closed the event by inviting attendees to consider giving to the organization's St. John Paul II Fund for Seminarian Education, established as a permanent endowment to help offset the cost of priestly formation,

which now exceeds \$60,000 per seminarian each year.

"A planned gift of any size, added to the gifts of others, becomes part of something much larger than any one of us," Ritchie said. "It becomes part of an endowment, or a forever fund, that quietly says year after year, 'Yes Lord, we will care for your priests. We will look to the next generation.'"

To learn more or to donate to the St. John Paul II Fund for Seminarian Education, visit [ccfnei.org](http://ccfnei.org).



Monsignor Michael Heintz delivers the keynote speech during the event hosted by the Catholic Community Foundation.

# Safe Environment, Sainthood Causes, Sacred Heart on Agenda for USCCB Meeting

BY GINA CHRISTIAN

(OSV News) — The nation's Catholic bishops have a full agenda for their annual spring meeting, with topics including safe environment protocols, sainthood causes, the Synod of Bishops on synodality and the consecration of the U.S. to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops will gather June 10-12 for a spring plenary assembly in Orlando, Florida.

The public sessions of the meeting, which will take place June 10 and 11, will be livestreamed through the USCCB's website at [usccb.org](http://usccb.org), according to a May 18 news release issued by the conference.

Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City will open the public sessions with his first address as USCCB president, having been elected during the conference's annual fall meeting in November of 2025.

Also addressing the bishops will be Archbishop Gabriele G. Caccia, who was appointed as papal nuncio to the United States in March, having previously served as the Holy See's permanent observer to the United Nations. Archbishop Caccia succeeded Cardinal Christophe Pierre, who turned 80 in January and had served in the post since 2016.

The USCCB noted in its release that the agenda for the June assembly "has not yet been finalized and is subject to change," but stated that votes are expected on several action items.

Among those items are a revision to the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, adopted in 2002 as a number of clerical abuse scandals emerged. Commonly called the Dallas Charter, the document lays out a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy and includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of abuse.

Without specifying the proposed revision, the USCCB said in its release that the agenda item regards "elements of the charter that the bishops have determined are in need of improvement or further development."

The revision would "align with the charter's original intention of safeguarding minors," while affirming the USCCB's "continued commitment" to preventing



OSV News photo/Bob Roller

**Bishop Rhoades smiles after being elected secretary of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops during a November 12, 2025, session of the fall general assembly of the USCCB in Baltimore. At left is retired Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Joseph N. Perry.**

abuse and providing mechanisms to respond to allegations, said the release.

The USCCB said its Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People, which is chaired by Bishop Barry C. Knestout of Richmond, Virginia, seeks "to balance its care of and sensitivity to victim-survivors, with an awareness of due-process, the rights of the accused" and "pertinent aspects" of canon law and other key documents on handling clergy abuse allegations.

The news release cited in particular *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* ("You are the light of the world"), Pope Francis' *motu proprio* outlining global legal procedures for how the Church should deal with clergy sexual abuse, including incidents involving vulnerable adults and procedures for investigating bishops.

The bishops will also consider the potential charter revisions in light of the Vatican Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith's June 2022 *vademecum*, or guidebook for bishops, on procedures for handling clergy abuse cases.

Also on the agenda are episcopal consultations for two canonization causes: that of Monsignor Joseph Francis Buh, a 19th-century Slovenian missionary priest who ministered to the Ojibwe people of northern Minnesota, and John Rick Miller, a 20th-century American businessman who founded For the Love of God Worldwide, a private association of the faithful promoting consecration to God through the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The consultations are part of the Church's established process for sainthood evaluations. If approval of the Holy See is obtained following the consultations, the diocesan bishop can convene a di-

ocesan tribunal to examine more fully the life of the candidate.

On June 11, the bishops will gather for Mass at Mary, Queen of the Universe Basilica in Orlando to consecrate the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The consecration will be livestreamed via the USCCB homepage ([usccb.org](http://usccb.org)).

The USCCB Committee on Divine Worship will round out the agenda's action items, presenting portions from two texts for consideration: a new edition of the Lectionary for Mass, which provides the Scripture readings and psalm for each day's liturgy; and the 2025 Roman Missal-Liturgy of the Hours Supplement.

At the USCCB's November meeting, Bishop Steven J. Lopes, chair of the Committee on Divine Worship, announced that the Vatican had approved a new edition of the Liturgy of the Hours, the Church's ancient daily liturgical prayer that blends Scripture, sacred texts and hymns for worship at various hours.

The bishops will discuss the implementation and evaluation of the synod on synodality, as well as feedback from their November dialogues on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.

In addition, they will explore the 25th anniversary of the implementation of *Ex Corde Ecclesia*, St. John Paul II's apostolic constitution on Catholic universities.

Discussions will also examine Catholic prison ministry, the conference's involvement with the Intercontinental Guadalupan Novena honoring the 500th anniversary of the Marian apparitions in what is now Mexico City, and World Youth Day 2027, which will take place in Seoul, South Korea, next summer.



PUBLIC SCHEDULE OF  
BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

*Veritatem In Caritate*  
(Truth in Charity)

- ◆ **Monday, June 1, at 6 p.m.** – Talk with "That Man is You" Group, St. Thérèse, Little Flower Church, South Bend
- ◆ **Tuesday, June 2, at 9:30 a.m.** – Presentation to Congregation of Holy Cross Priests ordained five years or less, Holy Cross Retreat Center, LaPorte
- ◆ **Tuesday, June 2, at 5:15 p.m.** – Presentation at Congregation of Holy Cross Leadership Formation Program, University of Notre Dame
- ◆ **Wednesday, June 3, at 10:30 a.m.** – Presbyteral Council Meeting, Sacred Heart Rectory, Warsaw
- ◆ **Wednesday, June 3, at 5 p.m.** – Blessing, Notre Dame Federal Credit Union Branch, Elkhart
- ◆ **Thursday, June 4, at 1 p.m.** – Blessing, St. Joseph Hospice Suites at St. Anne Home & Retirement Community, Fort Wayne
- ◆ **Saturday, June 6, at 11 a.m.** – Mass with Ordination of Priests, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
- ◆ **Saturday, June 6, at 6 p.m.** – Confirmation Mass, St. Patrick Church, Fort Wayne

**Give Today to the Pentecost Collection for the Education of Seminarians**

This weekend, we take up the Pentecost Collection for the Education of Seminarians. As the Holy Spirit continues to raise up future priests in our diocese, we are invited to support them with our prayers and our generosity. If you are able, please consider making a gift today to support their spiritual, pastoral, intellectual, and human formation.

DIocese OF FORT WAYNE SOUTH BEND [diocesefwsb.org/give](http://diocesefwsb.org/give)

tailored gift planning | endowments | donor advised funds

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  
**FOUNDATION**  
OF NORTHEAST INDIANA

*Grow the legacy your faith inspires.*

260-399-1436 | [www.ccfnei.org](http://www.ccfnei.org)

**SACRED HEART, from page 1**

that “there is in the Sacred Heart a symbol and a sensible image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ which moves us to love one another.” He encouraged individuals to make an act of consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus when he consecrated the whole world to the Sacred Heart in 1899. Leo XIII reminded all that “whatever honor, veneration and love is given to this divine Heart is really and truly given to Christ Himself.” Drawing on the teaching of Pope Leo XIII, Pope Pius XI referred to the “pious custom” of consecrating the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as a way to recognize the kingship of Christ.

The consecration of our nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 2026 is an opportunity to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart in our families, parishes, schools and other institutions. This devotion has profound spiritual and theological depth. The Heart of Jesus expresses the very core of Christianity, the Good News of God’s passionate

love for humanity revealed in the Incarnation of His Son and in His redemption of humanity by loving us “to the end” (Jn 13:1). The Heart of Jesus, pierced by the soldier’s spear, became the

fountain of life and holiness communicated to us in baptism and the Eucharist, “the two fundamental sacraments by which the Church lives.” In *Dilexit Nos*, Pope Francis proposed to the whole Church

“renewed reflection on the love of Christ represented in His Sacred Heart. For there we find the whole Gospel, a synthesis of the truths of our faith, all that we adore and seek in faith, all that responds to our deepest needs” (No. 89).

specifically my maternal grandmother, Sarah, who was of Irish ancestry. In fact, I was given a Sacred Heart badge that her father, Bernard (my great-grand-

**A Heritage of Faith**

Catechesis for people of all ages is important in our efforts to renew devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus at this time. I would like to share the place of the Sa-

cred Heart in my personal spiritual journey as a way to illustrate the benefits and fruits of this devotion.

My earliest memories of the Sacred Heart are from my childhood, both at home and in my Catholic grade school. Sacred Heart devotion was a natural part of the spiritual life of the Catholic side of my family, my mother’s side,

specifically my maternal grandmother, Sarah, who was of Irish ancestry. In fact, I was given a Sacred Heart badge that her father, Bernard (my great-grand-

father), always carried in his pocket and which I now carry in my pocket. This is not a superstitious amulet; it is a sacramental reminder of the Lord’s love in the daily affairs of life. Bernard had a hard life as a coal miner in the mountains of Pennsylvania, where I was born. He and his wife, Anna, raised Sarah and her siblings in a loving home in which the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was enthroned. In their poor and humble circumstances, they were rich in what matters most: the gifts of faith, hope, and love, the foundational virtues of the Christian life.

Sarah married an immigrant from Greece named Kiriakos (“Carl” in English), who was of the Greek Orthodox faith. They, too, enthroned the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in their home, raising my mother and her siblings in the Catholic faith. Though the Orthodox do not have an explicit, formalized devotion to the Sacred Heart as a spiritual or liturgical focus, they have a rich tradition of

liturgy and prayer that honors the love and mercy of God that the Sacred Heart symbolizes. Our Orthodox brothers and sisters, like our Eastern Catholic brothers and sisters, venerate the pierced side of Jesus in icons and also view the blood and water flowing from it as profound symbols of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, the outpouring of God’s grace upon the Church.

My heart is filled with gratitude when I reflect on the faith of my ancestors. My mother, along with her brothers and sisters, received and beautifully passed on this faith as well. I am grateful to all of them for teaching their children, by word and example, to trust in the goodness and love of the Heart of Jesus. I pray that, like our ancestors in the faith, we, too, will pass on such firm faith and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, “afire with love for us, source of justice and love, and fountain of life and salvation” (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus).

The Heart of Jesus expresses the very core of Christianity, the Good News of God’s passionate love for humanity revealed in the Incarnation of His Son and in His redemption of humanity by loving us “to the end”

**NOVENA TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

JUNE 3-11

Promoted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, this Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus draws its daily devotions from the Litany of the Sacred Heart. Each day reflects on the wisdom of saints and pontiffs on the Sacred Heart and offers opportunities for prayer and action, framed by Pope Francis’ encyclical *Dilexit Nos* (“He Loved Us”) and Pope Leo XIV’s apostolic exhortation *Dilexi Te* (“I Have Loved You”). Join the U.S. Church from June 3-11 in praying this Novena to the Sacred Heart, which will conclude with the consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. For the complete novena, visit [usccb.org/novena-sacred-heart-jesus](http://usccb.org/novena-sacred-heart-jesus).

**Day 1 — Heart of Jesus, Aflame with Love for Us**

In his prayer intention for June, the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pope Leo XIV encourages us, “Let us pray together that each one of us might find consolation in a personal relationship with Jesus, and from His Heart, learn to have compassion on the world.” As we begin this Novena to the Sacred Heart, we join the Holy Father in that prayer.

*Lord, I come to Your tender Heart today, to You who have words that set my heart ablaze, to You who pour out compassion on the little ones and the poor, on those who suffer, and on all human miseries.*

*I desire to know You more, to contemplate You in the Gospel, to be with You and learn from You and from the charity with which You allowed Yourself to be touched by all forms of poverty.*

*You showed us the Father’s love by loving us without measure with Your divine and human Heart.*

*Grant all Your children the grace of encountering You.*

*Change, shape, and transform our plans, so that we seek only You in every circumstance: in prayer, in work, in encounters, and in our daily routine.*

*From this encounter, send us out on mission, a mission of compassion for the world in which You are the source from which all consolation flows.*

*Amen.*

**Day 2 — Heart of Jesus, Source of Justice and Love**

When contemplating the Sacred Heart as the source of justice and love, we connect

Christ’s love for us with our love for others. As Pope Francis said in *Dilexit Nos*, “Our best response to the love of Christ’s heart is to love our brothers and sisters. There is no greater way for us to return love for love” (no. 167). As we meditate on the love Christ has for us, let us pray this Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for Love and Mercy.

*Lord Jesus, You gave your life for us. Your Sacred Heart is ablaze with love.*

*Your hand extends toward me, and toward all, offering love, mercy and healing.*

*Sacred Heart of Jesus, may your love transform me.*

*Burn away my hesitation that I may become your love and radiate your mercy.*

*Amen.*

**Day 3 — Heart of Jesus, Worthy of All Praise**

St. John Henry Newman took the episcopal motto *Cor ad cor loquitur* (“Heart speaks unto heart”), understanding that the Lord saves us by speaking to our hearts from His Sacred Heart. It was in the holy Eucharist, the greatest form of praise

to God, that St. John Henry Newman cultivated his deepest encounter with the living heart of Jesus. Let us pray with St. John Henry Newman so that we might hear the Sacred Heart speak to us when we praise and adore Jesus in the Eucharist.

*O most Sacred, most loving Heart of Jesus, Thou art concealed in the Holy Eucharist, and Thou beatest for us still. ... I worship Thee then with all my best love and awe, with my fervent affection, with my most subdued, most resolved will. O my God, when Thou dost condescend to suffer me to receive Thee, to eat and drink Thee, and Thou for a while takest up Thy abode within me, O make my heart beat with Thy Heart. (Meditations and Devotions).*

**Day 4 — Heart of Jesus, Patient and Full of Mercy**

Perhaps the most well-known reflection on the merciful heart of Jesus can be found in the Divine Mercy devotion. St. Faustina Kowalska, a 20th-century Polish sister, revealed that Jesus appeared to her with rays emanating from his heart and instructed her to paint

his image with the signature “Jesus, I trust in you,” and that all who venerate the image of Divine Mercy will not perish. Trusting in the endless mercy of Jesus, let us pray with Saint Faustina from the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

*Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Amen.*

**Day 5 — Heart of Jesus, Fountain of Life and Holiness**

The love poured out from the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a constant source of renewal for the missionary spirit of the Church and our call to universal holiness. Servant of God Father Jules Chevalier, who founded the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1854, recited this daily prayer to remain close to the Sacred Heart.

*Lord Jesus, Saviour of the world and source of holiness, look with kindness*

## A Deepening Devotion

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was also a prominent part of the spiritual life of the Catholic elementary school I attended in the 1960s, St. Mary's School in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. The Sisters of St. Joseph instilled in us this devotion. Every day began with the recitation of the Morning Offering, a prayer that has remained with me since first grade. We would look at the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in our classrooms as we offered our "prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of the day for all the intentions of His Sacred Heart," and we did so "through the Immaculate Heart of Mary." I learned from that early age to understand the Immaculate Heart of Mary as intimately linked to her Son's Sacred Heart.

I remember with much gratitude also the strong Catholic education I received at Lebanon Catholic High School in the early 1970s. Though it was a confusing time for the Church, especially liturgically, we were already firmly grounded in our faith. And while

it became less common to pray to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the devotion remained, and we still had Sacred Heart statues and images to remind us of the Lord's love. At my 50th high school class reunion last summer, while reminiscing about our grade school and high school years, I initiated a conversation with some classmates about the spiritual formation we received. Many shared that they still pray the Morning Offering at the beginning of the day.

In college, while I was discerning the vocation to the priesthood, I began to pray the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which remains to this day my favorite litany, especially to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Each invocation and its biblical root can be an object for spiritual reflection.

In the seminary, I was introduced to theological works and papal encyclicals on the Sacred Heart of Jesus by my Jesuit professors at the Gregorian University in Rome. The Society of Jesus is renowned for promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart, beginning

Given the confusion and the hopelessness of an increasing number of people today — including young people who are searching for meaning and purpose in life — devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a true remedy.

with St. Claude de la Colombiere, the Jesuit spiritual director of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, the humble Visitation nun who received apparitions of Jesus and His Sacred Heart in the 17th century. St. Claude defended the authenticity of these apparitions and explained and spread the messages St. Margaret Mary received about the overwhelming mystery of Christ's divine and human love.

Through the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Claude was already steeped in the tradition of contemplation of Christ's love through meditation on the Gospel accounts of Our Lord's words and actions, culminating in meditation on the Crucifixion and the wounded side of Jesus crucified. Pope Francis wrote: "St. Ignatius brings his contemplation to a crescendo at the foot of the cross and invites the retreatant to ask the crucified Lord with great affection, 'as one friend to another, as a servant to his master, what he or she must do for Him'" (Dilexit Nos, No. 145).

## Invitation and Reparation

One of my favorite places to pray as a seminarian and young student priest in Rome was before a famous image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in a side chapel of the Jesuit Church of the Gesu. It is an 18th-century painting by Pompeo Batoni that depicts Jesus holding out His pierced right hand toward His enflamed heart, which He holds in His left hand

as it emits a luminous glow. His heart has a little cross on top and is surrounded with a crown of thorns. I find it consoling to pray before this image and to listen in my heart to Jesus' words: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Mt 11:28-30). These words of Jesus are a call to friendship with Him and to discipleship. Devotion to the Sacred Heart deepens this friendship.

Reparation is an essential part of the Sacred Heart devotion. We must remember that Christ's Heart "was pierced for our sins," as the prophet Isaiah foretold about the Suffering Servant (Is 53:5). And St. John quotes the messianic prophecy of Zechariah in his account of the Crucifixion: "They will look on Him whom they have

SACRED HEART, page 6

on all whom you have chosen to be missionaries of your loving Heart. Ask your heavenly Father to keep us in your love, and sanctify us in the truth so that you may be glorified in us and we may reflect your goodness. Ask your Father to keep us from evil that we may always be united in bonds of love. As you are one with your Father, so may we be one with each other in your divine Heart, whose sentiments shall forever be ours and to which we consecrate ourselves in time and for eternity. Amen.

### Day 6 — Heart of Jesus, Atonement for Our Sins

As we consider the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Christ's great love for humanity, we reflect on how we have fallen short of his love and the need to atone for our sins. We also take this moment to repent as a nation for the sins of our country's past. Let us pray for forgiveness and healing from the harms caused by our nation's original sins of slavery and racism. A central element of devotion to the Sacred Heart is reparation — the practice of making amends for the wrongs we have done, asking Christ to forgive our sins and convert our hearts to love as he loves. Let us pray with St. Alphonsus Liguori, founder of the Redemptorists, as we

atone for our sins and consecrate ourselves to the Heart of Jesus:

*My Jesus, I love You with my whole heart. I am sorry for having so many times offended Your infinite goodness. With the help of Your grace, I purpose never to offend You again. And now, unworthy though I am, I consecrate myself to You without reserve. I renounce and give entirely to You my will, my affection, my desires and all that I possess.*

### Day 7 — Heart of Jesus, Source of All Consolation

In Dilexit Nos, Pope Francis describes the consoling nature of devotion to the Sacred Heart as "flesh and blood in the Church's pilgrimage through history" — a mutual sharing of suffering between Christ and us (No. 157). Because Christ bore our sin in the wounds of His passion and death on the cross, we console Him for our affronts. Because we also raise up our suffering to Christ, we ask him to console us. Let us ask the Sacred Heart of Jesus for strength and increased faith with this prayer by Blessed Miguel Pro, S.J.

*I believe, O Lord, but strengthen my faith ... Heart of Jesus, I love Thee; but*

*increase my love.*

*Heart of Jesus, I trust in Thee; but give greater vigor to my confidence.*

*Heart of Jesus, I give my heart to Thee; but so enclose it in Thee that it may never be separated from Thee.*

*Heart of Jesus, I am all Thine; but take care of my promise so that I may be able to put it in practice even unto the complete sacrifice of my life. Amen.*

### Day 8 — Jesus, Gentle and Humble of Heart

St. Thérèse of Lisieux, "the Little Flower," profoundly understood the gentle and humble heart of Jesus. In contemplating how to be transformed by Christ's love, she reflected that "What pleases [Jesus] is that he sees me loving my littleness and my poverty, the blind hope that I have in his mercy. ... The weaker one is, without desires or virtues, the more suited one is for the workings of this consuming and transforming Love" (Letter 197 to Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart, September 17, 1896). Let us join with St. Thérèse in praying for our hearts to be humble like Jesus.

*O Jesus! When You were a Pilgrim on earth, You said: "Learn of Me for I am gentle*

*and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls." O Mighty Monarch of Heaven, my soul finds rest in seeing You, clothed in the form and nature of a slave, humbling Yourself to wash the feet of Your apostles. ... I beg You, my Divine Jesus, to send me a humiliation whenever I try to set myself above others. I know that You humble the proud soul, but to the one who humbles one's self, you give an eternity of glory. ... To obtain this grace of Your infinite mercy, I will very often repeat: "O Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, make my heart like Yours!"*

### Day 9 — Consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Today, we [the bishops of the United States] consecrate the United States of America to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Parishes and individuals around the country are encouraged to join the U.S. Catholic bishops in this historic occasion, beginning with this Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus written for the consecration.

*O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus: You know the longings of our hearts, and you desire that we enjoy friendship with you. From your pierced side, you have poured out the well-spring of life, for which we*

*thirst.*

*Your heart burns with a love for all people to return to a right relationship with you.*

*We celebrate the abundant gifts you have given this nation, founded on the self-evident truths that our Creator has endowed all people with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

*We make reparation for the offenses against you and against human dignity that have taken place in this nation.*

*May our hearts be united to yours, so that our families and communities enjoy peace and happiness; may broken relationships be reconciled, injustices repaired, and the wounds of our land be healed.*

*May your holy Catholic Church serve as a sign, pointing all people to your infinite love.*

*O Desire of Nations and Center of History, we ask you to bless these United States of America.*

*Who live and reign with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.*

*Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us! Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!*

Source: usccb.org

**SACRED HEART, from page 5**

pierced” (Jn 19:37; cf. Zec 12:10). Devotion to the Sacred Heart encourages contemplation of the wounded, loving Heart of Jesus and fosters a desire to make reparation for sins. Our Savior’s pierced Heart invites us to return to Our Father’s love with repentance.

Through His death on the Cross, Jesus, the new Adam, “[makes] amends superabundantly for the disobedience of Adam” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 411). As members of His Body, the Church, we join with Him in making amends for sin — our own sins and those of others. We make amends to His Sacred Heart by uniting our sufferings, prayers, and penitential acts with His perfect atonement on the cross. I remember when growing up how this was emphasized in our observance of Fridays, the day of Our Lord’s death. It is a practice I hope we can revive today. Pope Francis wrote: “In union with Christ, amid the ruins we have left in this world by our sins, we are called to build a new civilization of love. That is what it means to make reparation as the heart of Christ would have us do. Amid the devastation wrought by evil, the heart of Christ desires that we cooperate with Him in restoring goodness and beauty to our world” (Dilexit Nos, No. 182). In this semiquincentennial of the United States of America, with our consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, may we cooperate with Jesus in restoring goodness and beauty to our nation, which has been harmed by sins of violence, racism, greed, and disregard for the dignity of the unborn and immigrants. May our prayers and acts of reparation also help heal the harmful divisions in our political and media culture.

**The Miracle Man of Notre Dame**

One of the many blessings of my ministry as bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend is serving the University of Notre Dame. It is well-known both that the Blessed Virgin Mary is the patroness of the university (its French name, “Notre Dame du Lac,” means “Our Lady of the Lake”) and that there is a strong tradition of Marian devotion there. What is perhaps less known is the deep devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus throughout the history of the university. The beautiful church adjacent to the campus’s Main Building was named in honor of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by Notre Dame’s founder, Father Edward Sorin, in 1875, and was consecrated by Fort Wayne Bishop Joseph Dwenger in 1888. Pope St. John Paul II designated the

**Local Celebration of the Consecration to the Sacred Heart**

Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw invites the faithful throughout the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend to join its celebration as the U.S. bishops consecrate the United States to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during their annual spring plenary assembly in Orlando on Thursday, June 11 to mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Sacred Heart in Warsaw will hold celebrations from Wednesday, June 10, through Saturday, June 13, “as we come together in prayer, fellowship, and joy.” The celebration will include 40 Hours of Adoration on June 10-12, offering a special opportunity to spend time with Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. A consecration Mass will be celebrated on Friday, June 12, at 5:30 p.m., with a family parish picnic potluck afterwards. (Pulled pork sandwiches will be provided; bring a dish to share). On June 13, the parish will host a Fun Walk/Run at 9:30 a.m. That evening, adults are invited to join a Pachanga dinner/dance at 6:30 p.m.

Visit [sacredheartwarsaw.org](http://sacredheartwarsaw.org) to learn more.

church a minor basilica in 1992.

Father Sorin considered the Lady Chapel (also called the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus), located in the apse of the church, to be the heart of the university, “the center of all campus devotions and the source of all blessings” at Notre Dame. The stained glass windows of the chapel depict biblical scenes associated with the Sacred Heart of Jesus as well as scenes of the apparitions to St. Margaret Mary. One window depicts the consecration of the city of Marseilles to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1720 during a terrible outbreak of the bubonic plague. During this time, the bishop of Marseilles distributed Sacred Heart badges, and new cases of the illness reportedly stopped. These badges became popular in France and around the world as reminders of our Lord’s love and protection.

The Sacred Heart badges became very popular at Notre Dame due to their distribution by a humble Holy Cross religious, Brother Columba O’Neill. Born John O’Neill, he was raised by his Irish immigrant parents in a very small town in the coal regions of Pennsylvania, near to my own birthplace. His father was a coal miner like my ancestors. Undoubtedly, John also imbibed the Sacred Heart devotion from his parents. He was not able to work in the mines due to his being born with deformities of his feet, so he became a cobbler instead. Called to the religious life, he entered the Congregation of Holy Cross at Notre Dame in 1874. After his final vows, Brother Columba

worked at an orphanage in Lafayette, Indiana, for nine years, then returned to Notre Dame, where he worked repairing shoes until his death in 1923.

When students and others in the community would come to Brother Columba for new shoes or to get their shoes repaired, he would give them badges he had made of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and he would encourage them to pray certain prayers. Cures and favors began to be reported by those who had prayed with the Sacred Heart badges he had given them. Word spread beyond South Bend. People from near and far in need of healing or other graces would visit or write to Brother Columba asking for Sacred Heart badges and prayers.

The archives of the Brothers of Holy Cross at Notre Dame contain some 8,000 letters written to Brother Columba, many testifying to physical, spiritual, and psychological healings following his instruction to pray to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Just as St. André Bessette, another Holy Cross brother, was known as the “Miracle Man of Montreal” through his prayers and devotion to St. Joseph, Brother Columba O’Neill became known as the “Miracle Man of Notre Dame” through his devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Brother Columba’s confreres in Holy Cross and others who knew him witnessed his exemplary religious life of poverty, chastity, and obedience, his humility, his boundless trust in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, his devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and his love and compassion for

all who came to him with their needs. I accepted the petition of the Congregation of Holy Cross to pursue the cause for his canonization and opened the diocesan inquiry into his cause in April of 2025. We have already seen much interest in his cause, including among many Notre Dame students who not only wish to learn more about Brother Columba but are also eager to learn more about the Church’s doctrine and Catholic theology regarding the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Several are now carrying Sacred Heart badges and praying that Brother Columba will become Notre Dame’s first canonized saint.

**The Sacred Heart for a Living Mission**

I cannot help but see all that is happening at this time as providential: Pope Francis’ encyclical on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the opening of Brother Columba’s cause for canonization, and the upcoming consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart. And all this is happening immediately after the Eucharistic Revival here in our country. This is significant since devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is intrinsically Eucharistic. As Pope St. Paul VI taught, the Eucharist is “the outstanding gift of the Heart of Jesus” (Investigabiles Divitias Christi). The Holy Eucharist is the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross made present for us on the altar, the sacrament of His love “unto the end.” Pope Leo XIII, commenting on the image of the Sacred Heart, said that the love of Christ “moves us to return love for love” (see Dilexit Nos, No. 166). When we receive Jesus’ body and blood in holy Communion, He gives us the grace to do so.

Given the confusion and the hopelessness of an increasing number of people today — including young people who are searching for meaning and purpose in life — devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a true remedy. Forty years ago, Pope St. John Paul II sent a message to the Society of Jesus that is perhaps even more needed today: “From the Heart of Christ, man’s heart learns to know the genuine and

unique meaning of his life and of his destiny, to understand the value of an authentically Christian life, to keep himself from certain perversions of the human heart, and to unite the filial love of God with love of neighbor.”

In evangelization and catechesis, it is important that we guide students to contemplate the mystery of God’s love revealed in Christ. Teaching, fostering, and promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus helps them to arrive at the conviction of St. John: “We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us” (1 Jn 4:16). We come to this knowledge and faith not primarily through study but through an encounter in our hearts with the Heart of our Redeemer. It is through friendship and prayer that we come to know and believe in Christ’s love. It is a gift we receive when we open ourselves to Him who pours out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (cf. Rom 5:5).

Beholding the Heart that loves us so greatly impels us to be witnesses of His love in the world. Jesus calls us to spread the goodness and love of His Heart to others, especially to the poor and suffering. Pope Francis wrote of our Christian mission as “a radiation of the love of the Heart of Christ” (Dilexit Nos, No. 209).

In our mission of evangelization and catechesis, teaching true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a beautiful way to help our students discover the source of truth and goodness for their lives. As the Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus teaches us, the Heart of Christ is the “wellspring of all virtue,” and the “delight of all the saints.” May we all grow in this devotion and spread it! In doing so, we are spreading the truth and beauty of the Gospel.

*This article from the April 2026 edition of Catechetical Review, Online Edition ISSN 2379-6324, Issue 12.2, is reproduced here with the permission of its publisher, Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio, USA. The article originally appeared on pages 17-28 of the printed edition.*

Beholding the Heart  
that loves us so greatly  
impels us to be witnesses  
of His love in the world.  
Jesus calls us to spread the  
goodness and love of His Heart  
to others, especially to the  
poor and suffering.

**Additional Resources for America at 250**

As the United States prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. bishops will mark the occasion by consecrating the country to the Sacred Heart of Jesus on Thursday, June 11. The bishops invite all the Catholic faithful and parishes to participate through Eucharistic adoration, works of mercy and a special novena to the Sacred Heart. To learn more, visit [diocesefwsb.org/america-250](http://diocesefwsb.org/america-250).

# From Rome to Home

After Years of Formation at the Center of the Church, Deacon Patrick Ernst Is Eager to Return to the Diocese

BY SCOTT WARDEN

There is a line in the rite of ordination that Deacon Patrick Ernst has been sitting with in prayer as June 6 approaches.

During the Prayer of Ordination, Bishop Rhoades will ask God to “renew deep within them the Spirit of holiness” — words the rite itself designates as essential to the validity of the act. For Deacon Ernst, they carry the full weight of what he is about to receive.

“That’s been at the forefront of my thought as I approach ordination,” he told *Today’s Catholic* from Rome earlier this year. “I pray that the Lord will make me a holy priest and to renew that deep within me as I embark on priestly ministry.”

On Saturday, June 6, Deacon Ernst will be ordained to the priesthood at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, alongside four fellow transitional deacons — Johnathon Hickey, Noah Isch, Samuel Martinez and Greenan Sullivan. Deacon Ernst has spent the past several years studying at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, but his heart has never strayed far from northern Indiana.

While he has loved his time in Rome, he acknowledged that “being in a parish with people from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend sounds like heaven to me.”

## Nurturing the Seeds of a Vocation

Deacon Ernst is the youngest of four children of Michael and Cathy Ernst, members of St. Pius X Parish in Granger. He was, by his family’s affectionate account, a boy of considerable energy — one who broke his arm four times before high school and threw himself into everything Marian High School in Mishawaka had to offer: football captain, state-qualifying wrestler, rugby player, choir singer.

He went on to play football at Ohio Northern University before transferring to Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, where he became an All-American rugby player.

His vocation took root quietly amid all of that. A pivotal moment came after a Good Friday service in high school, when a family friend, Bobby Kloska, watched him serve at

## ABOUT DEACON PATRICK ERNST

**Home parish:** St. Pius X, Granger

**Ordained a deacon:** October 2, 2025, at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome

**Favorite hobbies:** Rugby, skeet shooting, singing

**Favorite saints:** St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face, St. Augustine, St. Bernard of Clairvaux

**Favorite Scripture:** Psalm 32:7

**What made you want to be a priest?** I would say three things primarily. Meeting both happy and holy priests around the diocese, having people tell me time and again that I should seriously consider going to seminary, and finally, in the quiet of my heart, hearing the Father lovingly invite me to go to seminary.



Today’s Catholic

the altar and sent him a message afterward.

“He said: ‘Patrick, the thought occurred to me that you would make an outstanding priest,’” Deacon Ernst recalled in an earlier interview with *Today’s Catholic*, quoting the message from memory. “Besides possessing all the necessary characteristic traits and a heart of service for others, you just seem to fit so naturally into that role on the altar.”

It was, Deacon Ernst said, the first time he had considered the priesthood as a possible voca-

tion. Other voices reinforced it over the years — Monsignor Michael Heintz, his former pastor at St. Matthew Cathedral; Father Chris Lapp, then a parochial vicar at St. Matthew; and Stephen Jagla, who taught theology at Marian High School.

“All these people whom God has put in my life said, more or less, that you should consider the priesthood,” Deacon Ernst reflected. “It never came off in a way of forcing me to do this but pointing out my vocation. And it was marvelous, because

at that time others believed in me, and that really gave me the confidence that I needed to turn to the Lord on my own time and dime, if you will — my own volition — and figure out that, yeah, He really was inviting me to this vocation.”

## Formed in the Shadow of the Vatican

Deacon Ernst’s years at the Pontifical North American College have placed him at the center of the Church’s life in ways that few American seminarians experience. He has been present for the deaths of Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, witnessed the subsequent conclave, stood in St. Peter’s Square when Pope Leo was elected, and chanted the Gospel during Mass celebrated by the American pope on the solemnity of Epiphany earlier this year. He was ordained a deacon in St. Peter’s Basilica last October.

Those experiences, Deacon Ernst said, lead him “to having a much more firmly rooted love of the Holy Father and respect for what he does,” he said.

That closeness to the successor of Peter has shaped how Deacon Ernst thinks about his own approaching ordination —

“I think of Peter’s great many times when he says, ‘Depart from me, Lord, I’m a sinful man.’ Maybe he was experiencing a sense of unworthiness, too, and I can certainly resonate with that approaching ordination — and yet the Lord still chose him.”

DEACON PATRICK ERNST

and his own sense of unworthiness before it. He said he finds comfort in the faults and faith of St. Peter.

“I think of Peter’s great many times when he says, ‘Depart from me, Lord, I’m a sinful man,’” Deacon Ernst said. “Maybe he was experiencing a sense of unworthiness, too, and I can certainly resonate with that approaching ordination — and yet the Lord still chose him.”



Provided by Deacon Patrick Ernst

DEACON ERNST, page 18

# 'Whatever You're Called to, There's Happiness There'

As He Prepares for Priestly Ordination, Deacon Johnathon Hickey Says Joy Is Found in Saying Yes to God's Call

BY MOLLY JO ROSE

"I can feel the happiness of ordination day already," said Deacon Johnathon Hickey, who will be ordained a priest on Saturday, June 6, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

In his junior year of high school, Johnathan Hickey opened himself up to discerning his vocation. In the last few minutes of his lunch period at Bishop Luers High School, he routinely went to the chapel and asked the Lord what He wanted him to do with his life. There in the chapel, Deacon Hickey said he needed to "just listen. Listening is the hard part because there tends to be a lot of things that distract us, a lot of loud voices in the world that are not necessarily contrary to the Faith, but they can pull us away."

In addition to listening for God's call, Deacon Hickey found the Lord working subtly through the joyful priests surrounding him. As a young man trying to decide what to do with his life, he took note of the happiness, peace and "witness to joy" in priests such as Father Cyril Hernandez, Father Daniel Whelan and Father Andrew Budzynski.

"God is going to put people in your life that subtly lead you to where He wants you," Deacon Hickey told *Today's Catholic*. "That witness to joy is the biggest weapon we have."

## 'Everything Fell into Place'

That galvanizing weapon was



Provided by Mount St. Mary's Seminary

first felt in his home, where the beauty of his parents' marital vocation and their participation in the Church served as a witness for him and his three siblings. His identical twin brother, Michael, also heard a call to the priesthood, and the brothers shared with each other their growing desire to become priests.

With the benefit of hindsight, Deacon Hickey recognizes that God is always "working with your desires." As a young man, he

and his brothers enjoyed working at Science Central, where he developed the ability to "get in front of a crowd and talk and teach something, and I know for some guys that would definitely be a hurdle." But God had plans for him where this skill set was going to be necessary.

Deacon Hickey also desired to be a police officer, so as he continued to contemplate the priesthood, he pursued a degree in criminal justice from

Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne. During this time, he continued to feel the Lord forming him. It was to Father Dennis Di Benedetto, the chaplain at IPFW, to whom Hickey first vocalized his discernment to the priesthood. He told Father Di Benedetto, "I could see myself being a priest." Father Di Benedetto agreed with him, and it is this priest's surplice Deacon Hickey wears to this day.

After that, Hickey applied

for the seminary, an act that was not surprising to his family. He went to church for a vocations team meeting and said he "wasn't actually even thinking about asking for an application that day," but "everything fell in place." He was speaking with Father Budzinski, the vocations director at the time and one of the joyful priests who inspired his calling, and before he knew it, he was walking home with an application in his hand.

"Guess what I just did?" he said to his dad. His dad's first guess was that he'd been to confession. When Hickey said he hadn't, his dad asked, "Did you get an application for seminary?"

## Brothers in Faith

Hickey began his studies at Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, Maryland in 2020. Having recently finished his sixth and final year of seminary, he said he loved every minute of his time there. Deacon Hickey said there have been unexpected joys during these six years, pointing to an immersion summer in Guatemala and ministering to the students on campus as particularly enriching experiences that have informed how he wants to encounter people as a priest.

Deacon Hickey has the unusual experience of sharing a very real paternity with his fellow seminarian brother Michael, but he also speaks of priestly paternity as a lifelong support structure for him. He knows that the beauty of every-



Today's Catholic

## ABOUT DEACON JOHNATHON HICKEY

**Home parish:** St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne

**Ordained a deacon:** May 24, 2025, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne

**Favorite hobbies:** Playing trombone, watching sci-fi movies, walking in nature, computer hardware, playing with dogs

**Favorite saints:** St. Martin of Tours, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. John the Baptist

**Favorite Scripture:** Galatians 4: 4-7

**What made you want to be a priest?** I started seriously discerning the priesthood my junior year at Bishop Luers High School. I have had a few experiences during this time of discernment where I felt a peaceful sense of clarity that I should pursue this desire of possibly going to seminary. One of these times took place after my parish's 2018 Corpus Christi procession and afterwards having adoration. Right after adoration, I was given the Eucharist, which we were all adoring moments earlier in the monstration! At that moment, I felt a strong desire to do what that priest was doing — giving people Jesus in the sacraments! This and other moments like it made me want to enter seminary.



Provided by Deacon Johnathon Hickey

**FIRST MASS OF THANKSGIVING**

Following his ordination, Father Johnathon Hickey will celebrate his First Mass of Thanksgiving at St. John the Baptist Parish in Fort Wayne at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, June 7. A Corpus Christi procession will follow Mass, with a light reception afterward in the school gym (enter through Door No. 4 off the parking lot). A Holy Hour and first confessions will also be held the evening prior on Saturday, June 6, from 3-4:15 p.m. at St. John the Baptist.

day life alongside the men with whom he has been in formation will serve as a backbone of his priestly life.

“The guys that I laid on the cathedral floor with and was ordained with, I’m going to be with them in the diocese for the rest of my life. One of them I will probably ask to preach at my funeral.” Deacon Hickey said he is looking forward to “being with them in this for the rest of my life in the intensity of that spiritual journey.”

Along with his brother and seminary brothers, Deacon Hickey points to St. Thérèse of Lisieux as a spiritual mentor.

“Her humility, her desire to bring other souls to Christ, and even wanting to do that with her time in heaven, is just profound. She’s been a really good friend

along the way,” Deacon Hickey said.

**‘This Is My Vocation’**

Deacon Hickey has a clear desire to bring people to Christ as he prepares for his ordination. He said he is most looking forward to celebrating the sacraments, especially confession. After years of commuting back and forth between seminary and the diocese, he is excited to be here permanently so he can form relationships with people and be a “lifelong companion” of parishioners along the journey.

Finding the quiet to hear God and saying yes to His plan has been Deacon Hickey’s path to the priesthood and to happiness. He is prepared to practice obedience to the bishop, who will have his “yes at my ordination.” Deacon

Hickey said we should all “keep saying yes each day. One person we can model is Our Lady. She is the model of yes for us all. The Lord works through our yesses.”

Father Jonathan Norton, the diocese’s director of seminarians, told Today’s Catholic that Deacon Hickey is a “man of calm strength. He is a genuine leader who seeks to serve the needs of others before his own. He truly loves Jesus and the Church, and I believe he will help draw many others to do the same.”

The happiness Deacon Hickey is looking forward to on his ordination to the priesthood is already present in him as he exudes the witness to joy that pulled him toward the priesthood many years ago.

“This is my vocation,” Deacon Hickey said, and his life as a witness to joy is a reminder to all of us to listen and say yes. “Whatever you’re called to,” Deacon Hickey said, “there’s happiness there.”

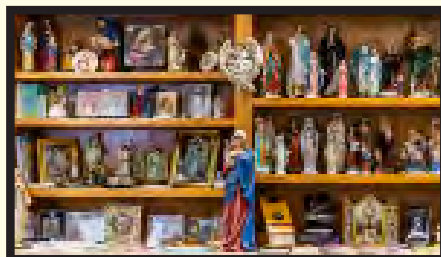
When asked if he thinks his family and friends will see him differently when he becomes a priest, Deacon Hickey said, “No. What I hope is they’ll be able to see Jesus. That,” Hickey said, “seems pretty successful to me.”

# LOVE AND BLESSINGS GIFT SHOP

Need a special gift for a wedding, first communion, baptism, or other special occasion? Crucifixes, rosaries, statues, books, jewelry and other beautiful items are available.



**Located in**  
**St. Mary of the Annunciation Church**  
**411 W. Vistula St. in Bristol**  
**574-848-7799**



**Gift Shop Hours:**

Monday - Thursday:  
 9:30 a.m. to 1p.m.

Friday - CLOSED

Saturday: 4-6 p.m.

(closed during 4:30 p.m. Mass)

Sunday: 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

(closed during 8:30 and 11 a.m. Masses)

# 'My Goal Is that They Encounter Christ'

## Deacon Noah Isch on the Childhood Calling that Led Him to the Altar

BY TIM JOHNSON

As a child, Noah Isch saw priests as something like superheroes.

He watched closely at Mass, mimicking their gestures and words, even "celebrating" his own version of the liturgy at home. With makeshift vestments and a chalice fashioned from thrift store finds, he would play priest — sometimes even offering "Communion" to family members who didn't quite know what to make of it.

"It wasn't like cops-and-robbers play," his father, Tim Isch, recalled. "He really wanted to emulate the priest."

Deacon Noah Isch will be ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend on Saturday, June 6, at 11 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. He will celebrate his first Mass of Thanksgiving the following day at 11 a.m. at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Fort Wayne.

### Learning the Life of a Priest

As he prepares for ordination, Deacon Isch has already begun to experience the rhythms and responsibilities of priestly life through his diaconate year.

Serving in parish assignments, including bilingual ministry, he has preached, assisted at the altar and celebrated baptisms — experiences that have only deepened his certainty.

"Every time there's a brand-new Catholic ... it's a joy," he said.

One of his first baptisms, however, came with unexpected challenges.

"There were seven families ... and I didn't even know one of them was coming," he said, recalling the experience with a laugh.

Preaching, too, has become a meaningful part of his ministry.

"I was very intimidated by preaching," he told *Today's Catholic*. "What am I going to have to offer these people?"

Over time, that fear has subsided, and preparing to preach, he said, has "helped me learn how to pray in a new way ... and there really is fruit. People will come up after Mass and say, 'Deacon, I needed to hear that today.'"

Those experiences have only strengthened his desire to serve

### ABOUT DEACON NOAH ISCH

**Home parish:** St. Charles Borromeo, Fort Wayne

**Ordained a deacon:** May 24, 2025, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne

**Favorite hobbies:** Watching Colts and Notre Dame football, playing golf

**Favorite saints:** St. John the Evangelist and Pope St. John Paul II

**Favorite Scripture:** John 6

**What made you want to be a priest?** Serving Mass at St. Charles, as well as the beauty I saw in the Mass led me to want to be a priest. The Eucharist was, and has been, a huge part of my discernment.



Today's Catholic

as a priest, particularly in celebrating the sacraments.

"I think the greatest thing anyone could do with their life is to offer the sacraments," he said.

### An Early Call

That calling began long before seminary, rooted in childhood encounters with the Faith.

"I always go back to second grade," Deacon Isch said, reflecting on his preparation for first reconciliation and first holy Communion. "That was a powerful experience for me."

At home, his parents saw those early signs take shape in unmistakable ways.

"He always wanted to play Mass," said his mother, Ann Isch. "He used crackers for the host and did Mass all the time."

Tim Isch remembers one moment in particular that still stands out.

"He would give 'Communion' to my dad," he said, noting that Deacon Isch's grandfather was a Protestant minister.

From an early age, Ann sensed something deeper at work.

"From second grade on ... I thought he had a call," she said.

### Rooted in parish life

That early desire matured through parish life — first at Queen of Angels School and later at St. Charles Borromeo School and Parish.

It was through altar serving,

"It wasn't like cops-and-robbers play. He really wanted to emulate the priest."

TIM ISCH,  
DEACON NOAH ISCH'S FATHER

particularly during his middle-school years, that his vocation began to take shape more clearly.

"I got to see what the priest does beyond just Sunday Mass," Deacon Isch said. "I fell in love with the Mass and the Eucharist in a brand-new way," he said.

Several priests played important roles in his discernment,

especially those who served as parochial vicars and spent time with young people.

"They put a lot of time and energy into us," he said. "That made a big difference."

### 'A Tugging on My Heart'

At Bishop Dwenger High School, that foundation continued to grow.

"There were so many opportunities to pray," Deacon Isch said.

Daily Mass, Eucharistic adoration and confession were all part of student life, helping to cultivate a deeper relationship with Christ.

"Those things help nurture whatever the Lord is already doing in your heart," he said.

After high school, Isch en-

rolled at Marian University as a math major. But the call to the priesthood remained.

During his first year of college, it became undeniable.

"I just felt over and over ... a tugging on my heart," he said. "Like the Lord saying, 'You know where you're supposed to go.'"

He reached out to a priest mentor, who asked him a pointed question: Why haven't you gone to seminary?

"I tried to come up with an answer, and I had nothing," Deacon Isch said.

Soon after, he applied.

When he shared the news with his parents, they were not surprised.

"You're the only one who didn't know," Ann recalled telling him.

### Formed for Priesthood

At Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, Isch's formation unfolded in stages — beginning with human formation and deepening into a life rooted in prayer.

"You are boys, and we're trying to make you into good Christian men," he recalled of his early formation.

Later, his formation focused more intensely on spiritual growth.

"There's a culture of prayer," he said. "If you're not praying, people notice."

That emphasis has shaped how he understands both



Provided by Deacon Noah Isch



Provided by Deacon Noah Isch

**FIRST MASS OF THANKSGIVING**

Following his ordination, Father Noah Isch will celebrate his First Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Charles Borromeo Parish on Sunday, June 7, at 11 a.m. A Corpus Christi procession will follow Mass, with a reception afterward in the Hession Center.

priesthood and his own vocation.

“My whole life ... will flow from that relationship with the Lord,” he said.

For Tim and Ann Isch, both teachers, their son’s vocation has been a source of deep joy — and deep faith.

“I am so proud I can hardly contain it,” said Ann, who teaches theology at Bishop Luers High School. Tim is a teacher in Fort Wayne Community Schools.

Ann acknowledged the surrender that comes with a priestly vocation.

“I felt like I had to give him up. ... God has chosen him,” she said, adding that raising a son who has discerned a call to the priesthood “has definitely deepened my faith.”

**The Priest He Hopes to Be**

As he prepares for ordination, Deacon Isch returns to the

image that has guided him for years.

“The priest is that bridge,” he said — one who brings God to His people and people to God.

Deacon Isch said his desire is not for recognition but faithfulness.

“My goal isn’t that people love me,” he said. “My goal is that they encounter Christ. ... The best thing I can do is get out of the way and let Christ work.”

“My goal isn’t that people love me. My goal is that they encounter Christ. ... The best thing I can do is get out of the way and let Christ work.”

**DEACON NOAH ISCH**

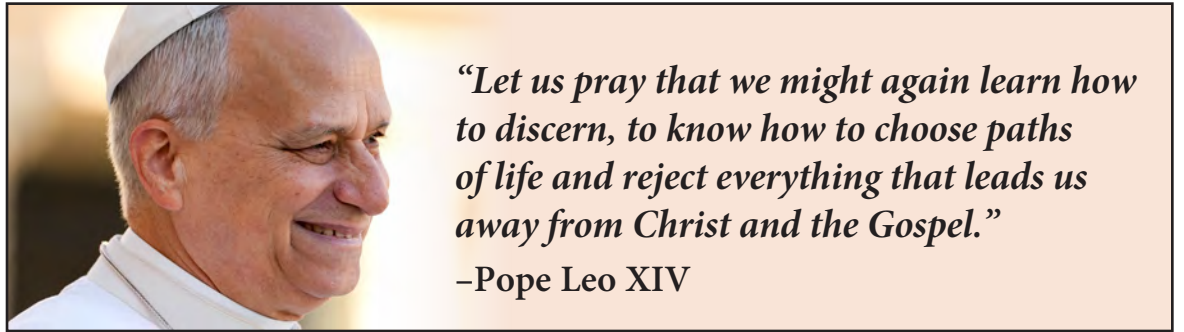
out of the way and let Christ work.”

Above all, he hopes to be a holy priest.

“I want my life and ministry to flow from my relationship with Christ,” he said.

And he remains in awe of the calling before him.

“The fact that I’m going to be able to administer the sacraments ... it just blows me out of the water,” he said, still marveling at the call he first sensed as a child.



“Let us pray that we might again learn how to discern, to know how to choose paths of life and reject everything that leads us away from Christ and the Gospel.”

—Pope Leo XIV

# BRADLEY BANNING

## COUNTRY MUSIC FOR THE FAMILY

EVENING CONCERT ON THE GROUNDS

6:00 PM

COST: 15.00 PER PERSON

CHILDREN 5 AND UNDER FREE

2304 LOWER HUNTINGTON RD CALL 260-747-9139 FOR MORE INFO



**Save the date:**  
August 7, 2026  
Friday

BEER TENT  
FOOD TRUCKS  
FEATURING: SNO BALLS

Good Shepherd

BOOKS · GIFTS

# THE WORD IN COLOR

2026

## Summer Reading Program

**CHILDREN, TEENS, & ADULTS**

### WIN PRIZES FOR EVERY BINGO!

Visit Good Shepherd Books and Gifts to collect your BINGO CARD beginning May 30!

**DON'T MISS OUR END OF SUMMER READING PARTY!**

## SATURDAY AUGUST 15

For more information visit

915 S. CLINTON ST. FORT WAYNE, IN 46802  
OR CALL 260.399.1442

[WWW.GOODSHEPHERDBOOKSTORE.ORG](http://WWW.GOODSHEPHERDBOOKSTORE.ORG)

Closed June 29 - July 5 for inventory!

# Called to Feed God's People

Deacon Samuel Martinez's Path to Priesthood Shaped by Service and a Desire to Nourish Others in Faith

BY ERIC PEAT

Caring for the sick and feeding the hungry have always been important to Deacon Samuel Martinez. As a registered dietitian, he performed these tasks daily for his hospital patients.

That was before a divine prompting to the priesthood put a new spin on these works of mercy.

"The Lord was certainly asking me to care for the sick and feed the hungry in a more particular way than what I was doing," said Deacon Martinez, who at one point even worked as a baker — a fact that isn't lost on him as he jokingly ponders the Lord's musings: "Yes, Sam, you want to feed people with bread. Great! OK, well maybe it's just the wrong bread," Deacon Martinez recalled. "It's kind of comical looking back now."

On Saturday, June 6, Deacon Martinez will answer a resounding "yes" to that prompting when he is ordained a priest of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. It will be the culmination of a journey that Deacon Martinez credits to the countless prayers of the faithful from across the diocese.

"It's been a really humbling thing to see how many people that we don't even know have been praying for us this entire time that we've been at seminary," Deacon Martinez told Today's Catholic. "It just kind of reminds me how the Church is just so big, so full, so alive."

## Hearing the Call

Born and raised in Fort Wayne, Deacon Martinez grew up just down the street from St. Charles Borromeo Church, where he attended grade school. Though becoming a priest wasn't "something that I thought about or felt called to from a young age," Deacon Martinez said his family's parish involvement helped foster a "subliminal openness to whatever the Lord was calling me to."

It was while attending Snider High School and participating in youth groups at both St. Charles and St. Jude parishes in Fort Wayne that Deacon Martinez first began receiving comments concerning the priesthood.

"People would always mention, 'You should think about being a priest,' or 'You would make a good priest,'" Deacon Martinez



Provided by Deacon Samuel Martinez

## FIRST MASS OF THANKSGIVING

Following his ordination, Father Sam Martinez will celebrate his First Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Charles Borromeo Parish at 9 a.m. on Sunday, June 7. A reception will follow in the Hesession Center. Father Martinez will also return to participate in the Corpus Christi procession following the 11 a.m. Mass.

recalled. "That whole time, there's always that, 'Nope, I'm not interested in that. Sorry, guys. Thanks for being interested, but I'm not.'"

However, it was while studying nutrition science at Purdue University that Martinez first seriously considered that the Lord's plan for his life may not include marriage and a typical career — the trajectory he found himself on as he dated throughout college and entered the workforce.

"I always joke around that the Lord is very patient, in that I've always known what I wanted to do and have always pursued what I thought was in my best interest," Deacon Martinez said. "Once I finally started asking the Lord what He wanted me to do, it was just beautiful to see how He was already asking me and leading me in this direction — I just wasn't answering it fully yet."

## Finding the Support

As Martinez began speak-

ing with the vocations director and applying to the seminary, he waited to reveal anything to his parents until it was certain. That made for an interesting conversation when he finally informed Jesse and Frances Martinez that he was headed to the seminary.

"If I remember correctly, I think I was already accepted before I even told my mom and dad," admitted Deacon Martinez. "So, when I did that, they weren't exactly what we'd call happy; they were in total shock."

However, after recovering from the initial surprise, his parents acknowledged that they had already known that the priesthood was a possibility for him. To this day, Deacon Martinez appreciates their humble support, knowing his decision changes their lives as well by "taking on a whole new sacrifice for them that they didn't really get to choose, and that can be pretty hard."

Martinez also received en-

## ABOUT DEACON SAMUEL MARTINEZ

**Home parish:** St. Charles Borromeo, Fort Wayne

**Ordained a deacon:** May 24, 2025, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne

**Favorite hobbies:** Ice hockey, playing guitar, baking bread, cooking, nutrition

**Favorite saints:** St. Maximilian Kolbe, St. Jacinta, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Peregrine, St. Jude, St. Charles Borromeo, St. James the Lesser, and of course the Blessed Virgin Mary

**Favorite Scripture:** John 21

**What made you want to be a priest?** The realization that with everything God has given me, the best I can do is offer my will back to Him to do with as He wills.

couragement from a number of priests throughout his journey. Father Tony Steinecker taught Deacon Martinez in eighth grade at St. Charles and helped plant a seed as "one of the first priests that ever invited me to really consider the priesthood." He also noted his full-circle relationship with Monsignor Tom Shoemaker, who was pastor at St. Jude while he attended youth group and is now pastor at his home parish of St. Charles.

Finally, Deacon Martinez expressed gratitude for his good friend, Father Dennis Di Benedetto, a steady voice in his discernment process. "He was so patient and good at listening to my concerns and questions, just kind of helping steer my conscience in a way that really made me more free to say yes to that call to go to the seminary."

## Cherishing the Formation

While Deacon Martinez said he has thoroughly enjoyed his seven years at Mount St. Mary Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, he understands the transient nature of this phase of his life.

"It's one of the most privileged times you'll ever have — to be surrounded by other good Catholic guys who are trying

to grow in holiness, who are genuinely interested in learning more about the Lord and becoming more like Christ," Deacon Martinez said. "It's a surreal environment to live in. ... But at the same time, we know that it's temporary — that it's a beautiful opportunity, but it's not actually the vocation that we're called to."

One of his highlights from seminary has been growing in brotherhood with fellow Deacons Johnathon Hickey, Noah Isch, and Greenan Sullivan, beside whom he will lie prostrate at ordination. Deacon Martinez marveled that the Lord placed him with these young men who, "if we weren't studying to be priests, I wouldn't know at all — all of us being from different cities, different churches, different ages, different schools, different walks of life," Martinez said.

"It's a beautiful testament to the fact that our Church is truly universal and that all people are being called to follow the Lord in a profound way."

As a seminarian, Deacon Martinez has had the opportunity to serve in a handful of parishes: St. Pius X in Granger, St. Anthony de Padua in South Bend, and St. Therese, St. Henry, and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton



“It’s been a really humbling thing to see how many people that we don’t even know have been praying for us this entire time that we’ve been at seminary. It just kind of reminds me how the Church is just so big, so full, so alive.”

**DEACON SAM MARTINEZ**



Today's Catholic

in Fort Wayne. “Being at such different parishes over the years kind of reinforced that fact to me — that everyone needs the Lord,” Deacon Martinez said. “We’re all made for relationship with God, and truly, all of us desire to know and love God, and to be known and loved by Him, even if we don’t know and recognize it at first.”

**Living the Vocation**

As he prepares for his priestly ordination, Deacon Martinez is relying on a litany of saints from whom he asks to intercede for him every morning. In addition to the patrons of the parishes where he has been assigned, others who have “had their

own little mark in helping me” include St. John Vianney, St. Maximilian Kolbe, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and most recently, Sts. Francisco and Jacinta Marto, the shepherd children from Fatima.

Deacon Martinez looks forward to remaining physically

active as a priest, especially with cycling and mountain biking — hobbies that not only help keep him healthy but serve as stress relievers and opportunities for community with his brother priests. However, he is most eagerly awaiting being able to administer the sacraments,

especially reconciliation. “Every time I have really grown in my relationship with the Lord and really overcome barriers or gone through significant conversions, it’s been in relation to confession,” Deacon Martinez said. “But at the same time, I see that as beautiful as that is, that means the stakes are kind of high, too. . . . You just realize that it truly is a work of grace to be able to do well, so seeing just how willing and open our priests are back home to hearing confessions and to doing so often, I realize that that’s going to be a beautiful part of being a priest, but it’s also definitely going to be daunting. So, I just keep praying for the grace to be able to do that well.”

“Once I finally started asking the Lord what He wanted me to do, it was just beautiful to see how He was already asking me and leading me in this direction — I just wasn’t answering it fully yet.”

# Find freedom and flexibility in your career

Become a Knights of Columbus insurance agent.

Field Agent openings in Fort Wayne! Appy today using the QR code below.

LIFE INSURANCE | DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE | LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE | RETIREMENT ANNUITIES



Apply today.  
kofc.org/careers



1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510, United States

Contact me today to learn more:  
Phillip J. Stackowicz, FICF, FSCP, CLU  
General Agent  
574-282-1082  
StackowiczAgencyMail@kofc.org



111321313

# Finding Joy in the Faith He Once Ran From

After a Decade of Saying No to the Priesthood, Deacon Greenan Sullivan Finally Answered the Call

BY PAULA LENT

St. Irenaeus is often credited with saying, “The glory of God is man fully alive,” and when Deacon Greenan Sullivan shares his experiences working in parishes, he becomes noticeably animated.

At the beginning of our interview, for which he took time away from studying for final exams at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, he asked to limit our time to 30 minutes. Yet when the Zoom call ended after 40 minutes, he immediately rejoined and excitedly continued, explaining he had “found a lot of joy” in parish work.

That he's found such joy is a confirming sign ahead of his ordination to the priesthood, which will take place on Saturday, June 6, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

But Deacon Sullivan will be the first to tell you that, though the seeds of his call were planted early, they weren't always tended to. In fact, he spent a decade of his life evading this call.

## Denying His Calling

A South Bend native, Deacon Sullivan is the oldest of six children whose parents fostered a faith-filled home. They read from the Magnificat together each day, learning to hear God's voice through Scripture — an experience Deacon Sullivan calls “a very formative part of my upbringing.” Outside the home, Sullivan was drawn to altar serving, often serving not only on Sundays but also at weekday Masses in the summers.

He began experiencing early stirrings toward the priesthood during middle school. However, like the seed that fell among thorns in Luke's Gospel, those stirrings were soon choked by life's anxieties and pleasures before they could bear mature fruit.

## ABOUT DEACON GREENAN SULLIVAN

**Home parish:** St. Anthony de Padua, South Bend

**Ordained a deacon:** May 24, 2025, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne

**Favorite hobbies:** Basketball, fantasy novels

**Favorite saints:** St. Jude and St. Lawrence

**Favorite Scripture:** 1 Maccabees 3:17-19

**What made you want to be a priest?** A love for souls.

Though he continued to feel called to the priesthood in high school, Deacon Sullivan says he “rejected that call” because he was more concerned with fitting in. “I didn't want to live the way that I thought that God wanted me to live,” he recalled. “So, I got into some bad habits and did not want to focus on a possible vocation. And that persisted all the way to about junior year in college.”

## Letting ‘the Enemy’s Voice Prevail’

At Ave Maria University in Florida, Sullivan found success on the basketball court as a collegiate athlete and in the classroom as a biochemistry major. As he focused on crafting the life he wanted, he experienced intermittent moments of grace when he had the clarity to recognize he wasn't truly happy.

Yet, whenever those moments came, he'd inevitably cede to “the enemy's voice,” which reminded him of everything he'd have to give up if he wanted to live a holy life entirely devoted to God.

“I kind of let the enemy's voice prevail during those years,” he recollected, noting that doing so led to “a soft form of despair,



Photos provided by Deacon Greenan Sullivan

where it's like, oh, actually living this virtuous holy life — this life I really think God's calling me to — is out of my ability.”

The moments of grace failed to take root, in part, because Sullivan's prayer life lacked consistency and depth.

“I would still go to Sunday Mass, and I might say a Rosary here or there, but it was always organized around if I needed something,” he shared.

Then one day, Sullivan had a realization.

“It was a moment where I realized: The way I'm doing

things now is not going to lead to anywhere positive, certainly not going to lead to my happiness,” he recalled.

## Reorienting His Life

In response, he returned to his roots by making time for regular confession and returning to daily Mass. Then, he signed up for a Holy Hour at the university's 24-hour adoration chapel — though he admits his initial intentions needed refining.

“It was really more of a pride hour, because I signed up for 3:30 a.m. on Sundays to show I was

serious,” he told Today's Catholic. “But God still used that time in adoration to speak to me and encourage me,” he said.

He soon began spending those early morning hours reading his Magnificat, and through that, his childhood love of Scripture was rekindled.

Sullivan continued to orient his life around prayer and the sacraments during his senior year at Ave Maria, and he said those practices gave him the grace necessary to finally respond to God's call.

“All of a sudden, very directly, the thought of becoming a priest entered back into my mind,” he said. “At that point, I really had the freedom and the grace from the sacraments to [realize] it was not only what God was calling me to do but was what I wanted to do as well,” he continued. “So, I was able to align my will with His, finally, after about a decade.”

## Deepening His Love of the Lord

Upon graduating, he wasn't fully ready to enter the seminary, so he returned to Ave Maria to complete a theology degree. Providentially, as a biochemistry major, Sullivan had filled all his electives with theology classes (“because I just enjoyed them,” he said). This enabled him to complete a

“All of a sudden, very directly, the thought of becoming a priest entered back into my mind. At that point, I really had the freedom and the grace from the sacraments to [realize] it was not only what God was calling me to do but was what I wanted to do as well. So, I was able to align my will with His, finally, after about a decade.”

DEACON GREENAN SULLIVAN



**FIRST MASS OF THANKSGIVING**

Following his ordination, Father Greenan Sullivan will celebrate his First Mass of Thanksgiving at 10:30 a.m. at St. Anthony de Padua Parish in South Bend. A Corpus Christi procession will follow Mass, with a reception afterward in the parish hall.



Today's Catholic

theology degree in one year before joining Mount St. Mary's Seminary in 2020.

In seminary, Sullivan thrived. He found the academic formation "very excellent" and was inspired by his teachers, whose love for learning and sharing about God was infectious. He also formed a strong community with his fellow seminarians and said that leaving them is the only downside of becoming ordained.

Through classes and prayer opportunities, Sullivan learned forms of mental and contemplative prayer that helped him develop a conversational prayer life with God, and he claims, "The greatest benefit that I received from formation here at the Mount is a deepening of my prayer life and my friendship and love of the Lord."

**Finding Purpose in Parishes**

Sullivan spent three of his five

summers as a seminarian working in parishes, with placements at St. John the Baptist in Fort Wayne, St. Pius X in Granger, and SS. Casimir and Adalbert in South Bend. He found these experiences helpful and noted that as a new seminarian in his first parish placement, "You really don't know what to do, and that's part of the point."

His placements first allowed him to learn what goes on in a parish outside of sacraments by sitting in on financial, pastoral and staff meetings. He recalls realizing, "Oh, I have to be concerned about taking care of the grounds of a parish." His summer assignments also showed him the importance of building relationships with parishioners. Finally, as a deacon, he learned to both administer the sacraments and work with students through parish youth group activities and catechesis.

During his last parish placement, in South Bend, Deacon Sullivan thrived most. He found deep beauty in presiding over funerals and baptisms, and in passing along his seminary knowledge to high schoolers and college students who worked as catechists.

Working in youth ministry was meaningfully redemptive for Deacon Sullivan, as he experienced God bringing good out of his wayward past by enabling

him to uniquely empathize with those who were spiritually struggling and to offer them guidance.

**'A Great Love for the Faith'**

Deacon Sullivan said he is excited to be ordained on June 6 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. Reflecting on his journey, he said: "I definitely think that part of my discernment was that the Lord had given me a great love for the Faith — and for learning about

the Faith — at an early age. Part of any discernment is looking at where the Lord has moved in your life and what true desires He has put on your heart. And that's always been one: the love of the Faith and teaching it."

After spending many years evading it, it is within the pursuit of ordained life that Deacon Sullivan has found happiness. He now looks forward to a lifetime of sharing the joy of the Faith with others.



**SAINT JOSEPH HEALTH SYSTEM**

A Member of Trinity Health

**SAINT JOSEPH PACE**

Your health, your goals, your team. We help seniors stay safe and independent, all while receiving medical and social support services at our wellness center. At Saint Joseph PACE, we partner with seniors for care that's as personal as it is complete.

Connect with us to learn about our coordinated care. Call 574-247-8700 or visit [saintjosephpace.org](http://saintjosephpace.org).

Complete care, with and for you.

We See All of You™

PACE-ET2405-2510

# The Ethics of Suicide and Organ Donation



## MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

FATHER TADEUSZ PACHOLCZYK

Physician-assisted suicide involves asking a medical professional to write a prescription for a toxic drug so that a patient can ingest it and bring his or her own life to an end. The practice sadly appears to be growing around the world, especially in Canada, Australia, Europe and the United States.

In early 2023, a 66-year-old former nurse in Australia, Marlene Bevern, was suffering from an aggressive form of motor neuron disease and opted for physician-assisted suicide. She was also very determined to donate her organs for transplant afterwards — something that had never been done before in Australia.

To make the donation, Bevern had to spend her last day in an ICU bed. Her assisted suicide had to be carried out close to the operating room where her organs would be harvested, because, if it were done at home, the organs would not be as useful for trans-

plantation due to the extended time between cardiac arrest and organ procurement.

Before taking her own life, Bevern was given information about how many other people her organs would help. “I’ll never forget her face,” the organ transplant specialist said later, describing how she received that information. “She lit up with a big, beautiful smile.” Following her suicide, her lungs, liver and kidneys were transplanted and reportedly helped to save four other lives.

Many ethical concerns arise in a case like this. The prospect of donating one’s organs can clearly incentivize and motivate a patient’s intention to carry out physician-assisted suicide.

Hospitals and medical facilities face the danger of corrupting their healing mission if they begin supporting the practice of organ harvesting from patients who are making plans to end their own lives through physician-assisted suicide. These institutions should not provide an environment facilitating physician-assisted suicides, should forbid the use of a hospital bed or suite for premeditated suicide, and should ban the use of operating rooms for organ extraction afterwards. By establishing categorical policies

excluding organ donation from such suicides, they avoid giving tacit support to the wrongdoing of the self-killing act.

We can consider related cases to help clarify the ethical lines. Suppose a middle-aged man lets people around him know that he intends to commit suicide by using a large caliber handgun to shoot himself in the head. Suppose further that he lived near a hospital where transplants

were carried out, and he was very insistent that he wanted to donate his organs after pulling the trigger. Suppose he contacted a local ambulance company requesting an ambulance to be standing by the house, so that as soon as the paramedics heard the gunshot, his lifeless body could be rushed to the hospital, where organs would be extracted.

In making these arrangements with the ambulance service, suppose that he further requested that the trained EMTs enter his home a few minutes ahead of

the scheduled suicide, and set up an IV drip to provide him with blood thinner that would help preserve and protect his organs from blood clots after the suicide.

It would of course raise grave concerns for the ambulance company to agree to set up such an IV or to transport his lifeless body to the operating room, when they knew ahead of time that he was making explicit preparations to commit suicide. By agreeing to take either of these steps, they would be signaling their implied or tacit approval of his immoral suicidal choice.

On the other hand, suppose a young man commits suicide by jumping off the 35th story of his hotel onto the sidewalk below. Suppose further that he has a note in large letters attached to his jacket stating: “Please arrange for immediate donation of as many of my tissues and organs as possible after you discover my body.” Would it be wrong if an ambulance arrived and quickly

take either of these steps, they would be signaling their implied or tacit approval of his immoral suicidal choice.

On the other hand, suppose a young man commits suicide by jumping off the 35th story of his hotel onto the sidewalk below. Suppose further that he has a note in large letters attached to his jacket stating: “Please arrange for immediate donation of as many of my tissues and organs as possible after you discover my body.” Would it be wrong if an ambulance arrived and quickly

transported his deceased body to a hospital, and at the same time contacted the hospital transplant team to notify them of his imminent arrival so they could prepare an operating theater to receive his body? Given that the hospital staff and the ambulance company employees had nothing to do with the death itself, neither contributing to it nor acting in a way that offered approbation or support for the act, they could indeed step in and, in a blameless way, strive to procure organs from the young man’s corpse following his tragic suicide.

These examples involving suicide and organ donation remind us of the ease with which we can be drawn into cooperating with evil in the name of doing good. Organ donation serves as a generous decision that can indeed save lives — and is allowable as long as unpaired organs are removed only after death has occurred. Great attention and care are required to avoid contributing to, and therefore becoming partially responsible for, the self-inflicted deaths of others.

**Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk** is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Massachusetts, and serves as senior ethicist at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.

# The Holy Trinity Shows the Depth of God’s Love for Mankind



## THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MONSIGNOR OWEN F. CAMPION

This weekend, the Church celebrates the feast of the Most Holy Trinity. “The Trinity” is the scholarly, theological term to describe the most intimate detail of the reality of God.

Seated in faith in the reality of God, in the first reading, from the Book of Exodus, the Church today reminds us about God — and about ourselves as God’s creatures.

For Jews, the Exodus, or the flight from slavery in Egypt, was the most defining moment in their long history as a people. After wandering across the forbidding Sinai Peninsula, they not only survived but found a land of prosperity, peace and security. It was a difficult trip, to say the least. Without God’s mercy, the Hebrews would not have completed this journey. He

guided them because He loved them.

The first reading reports on another important aspect of life on this trip. Communication existed, through Moses, between God and the people. Divine love continues, allowing us to communicate with God. God reaches out to us. God listens to us.

For the second reading, the Church presents Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

The Christians of Corinth quarreled and plotted among themselves. They sinned. Considering their surroundings, it is not difficult to realize why they so often were wayward.

Corinth was known throughout the Mediterranean world of the first century as a virtual cesspool of vice and licentiousness, brimming with greed and selfishness.

The apostle urged the Christian Corinthians to rely on Jesus and to resist the pressures of their society — superb advice for us today!

Finally, the Church presents, from St. John’s Gospel, the story

of the Lord’s instructing Nicodemus, an important figure in Jewish life in Jerusalem.

Jesus explains that the Messiah’s words are not just the opinions of a mere mortal. The Messiah is from God. The Son is one with the Father. Therefore, to hear the Son is to hear the Father.

Jesus tells Nicodemus that the Father sent the Son into the world of space and time, to be with humanity and to redeem humanity.

Eternal life awaits the faithful. God is merciful and forgiving. God loves humankind. Despite all their sins and weaknesses, God loves humans and wills that they live forever.

Jesus is the perfect intermediary between God and humanity. One of us in the Incarnation, Jesus came as the personification of God’s love.

### Reflection

Catholics believe in what the phrase “Holy Trinity” defines, but it rarely evokes a sense of what it so powerfully expresses.

It is hardly only an academic phrase. It reveals God.

The term tells us of God’s immense love for us. The Holy Trinity, while not unreasonable in the philosophical sense, would never have been known by mere humans as the result of their deduction alone. It had to be revealed. The Lord revealed the Trinity to us so that we might understand in human terms the most intimate aspect of the life of God.

Second, Catholic teaching rests solidly on the belief that God created humans in the divine image and likeness, a breathtaking thought, hardly only the voicing of nice words.

We are out of kilter if we fail to love God. We are not in accord with our nature, our ultimate spiritual DNA, if we set ourselves apart from the human community, and certainly if we do not love others.

All three readings for this feast bear in common the message that God loves us. Long ago, great theologians saw love as the essence of divine life. It

is the kernel of the life of the Trinity. This feast calls us to see that love is of God, and to mirror God’s love in all that we say, think or do.

### READINGS

**Sunday:** Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9; (Responsorial Psalm) Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; John 3:16-18

**Monday:** 2 Peter 1:2-7; Psalms 91:1-2, 14-15ab, 15c-16; Mark 12:1-12

**Tuesday:** 2 Peter 3:12-15a, 17-18; Psalms 90:2, 3-4, 10, 14 and 16; Mark 12:13-17

**Wednesday:** 2 Timothy 1:1-3, 6-12; Psalms 123:1b-2ab, 2cdef; Mark 12:18-27

**Thursday:** 2 Timothy 2:8-15; Psalms 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14; Mark 12:28-34

**Friday:** 2 Timothy 3:10-17; Psalms 119:157, 160, 161, 165, 166, 168; Mark 12:35-37

**Saturday:** 2 Timothy 4:1-8; Psalms 71:8-9, 14-15ab, 16-17, 22; Mark 12:38-44

# Praying the Rosary Is 'an Invitation to Joy'



PAPAL WORDS

MICHAEL R. HEINLEIN

One of the most beautiful homilies of Pope Leo XIV's pontificate to date was delivered on May 8, 2026, the first anniversary of his election. Pope Leo marked the occasion by visiting the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary, also known as Our Lady of Pompeii, "to place my service under the protection of the Holy Virgin," as he said in his homily.

For a pontificate that began last May by placing Christ so prominently at the center, a Marian shrine seemed to be a highly fitting place for Pope Leo to pause and reflect. And who better to reflect upon than Our Lady, Mother of God, Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church?

Mary's powerful and exemplary role at the Annunciation was the context for Pope Leo's reflections at Mass that day. That Gospel scene, the backdrop for the Hail Mary, afforded an opportunity to reflect on this prayer so central to the everyday practice of the Faith. Pope Leo's reflections on the Hail Mary propose an opportunity for us to reflect upon it as a blueprint that allows the Incarnation to shape us and be renewed within each of us.

Observing that the angel's greeting to Mary at the moment of the Incarnation beckons her

to rejoice, the pope described how the light radiating from Mary's womb illuminates the true meaning of history. The angel's invitation remembered in each Hail Mary invites her to rejoice in this inward reality.

"The Hail Mary is an invitation to joy: It tells Mary, and through her all of us, that upon the ruins of our humanity, tested by sin and therefore ever prone to oppression, abuse and war, the caress of God has come, the caress of mercy, which takes on a human face in Jesus," he said.

In the context of today's troubled world, an invitation to rejoice is the tonic we need. And if we consider the wondrous event that began in Mary's womb, and blossoms anew in us each time we receive the Eucharist and spend time with the Lord in His real presence, we have deep, inward reasons to rejoice.

As Mary is "full of grace," she consents willingly to God's plan and brings forth Christ into the world. Our cooperation with God's grace will enable us to allow it to bear fruit through our lives. The Rosary is a vital component of Christian prayer because it helps us in this aim. "This moment in history," the pope proposed, "possesses a tenderness and a power that draw the heart and lift it to that contemplative height where the prayer of the holy Rosary takes root."

With its roots in salvation history, the pope encourages the Rosary as an opportunity to allow the Incarnation to become

reality in our own lives. "Hail Mary! The repetition of this prayer in the Rosary is like an echo of Gabriel's greeting, an echo that spans the centuries and guides the believer's gaze to Jesus, seen through the eyes and heart of His mother," Pope Leo XIV said. "Jesus adored, contemplated and assimilated in each of his mysteries, so that with St. Paul we may say: 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me'" (Gal 2:19).

Quoting St. Bartolo Longo, who built the shrine to which Pope Leo made pilgrimage that day, "The Eucharist is the living Rosary, and all the mysteries are found in the holy sacrament in an active and vital form."

"In the Eucharist, the mysteries of Christ's life are all found, so to speak, concentrated in the memorial of His sacrifice and in His Real Presence," Pope Leo said. "The Rosary marks the rhythm of our life, continually bringing it back to Jesus and the Eucharist."

In my Pauline religious family, our founder, Blessed James Alberione, encouraged a daily Eucharistic visit and to include the Rosary within that hour. It's a fruitful practice, a means to allow the Incarnation to find new meaning in our lives. If that hasn't been part of your prayer life, it seems now is a great time to start.

**Michael R. Heinlein** is author of "Glorifying Christ: The Life of Cardinal Francis E. George, O.M.I." and a promised member of the Association of Pauline Cooperators.

## SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for May 31, 2026

Exodus 34:4b-6,8-9 / John 3:16-18

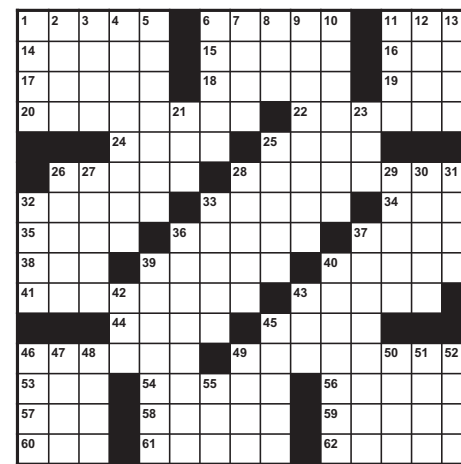
Following is a word search based on the First and Gospel readings for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, Cycle A: The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| EXODUS<br>COMMANDED<br>HIS NAME<br>GRACIOUS<br>MOSES<br>PEOPLE<br>WORLD | WENT UP<br>TABLETS<br>LORD<br>SLOW<br>BOWED<br>PARDON<br>CONDEMN | MOUNT SINAI<br>CLOUD<br>MERCIFUL<br>TO ANGER<br>STIFF-NECKED<br>GOD SO LOVED<br>BE SAVED |
|---|--|--|

### GOD'S HOLY TRAITS

E W O L S U O I C A R G  
X C O N D E M N A N M O  
O H O N O D R A P O E D  
D J O M D E L T U P R S  
U L W K M V O N U O C O  
S T E L B A T T L W I L  
Y L I O N S N C H O F O  
L A W G I E I D F R U V  
H E E N W B V U E L L E  
D R A F S E S O M D F D  
H I S N A M E L P O E P  
S T I F F N E C K E D X

© 2026 TRI-C-A Publications; tri-c-a-publications.com



- 57 Four Catholic colleges in Australia were combined to make this in 1991 (abbr.)
  - 58 You may find one in a garden
  - 59 Pope before St. Anicetus
  - 60 Last letter in Paris
  - 61 "...where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and \_\_\_" (Mt 6:19)
  - 62 Lyric poem
- DOWN**
- 1 Nickname of Catholic composer Haydn
  - 2 Mr. Greenspan
  - 3 Mary made a request of Jesus here
  - 4 Feast which celebrates the adoration of Jesus by the Magi
  - 5 Swordlike knife
  - 6 First name in puppetry
  - 7 Jedi master
  - 8 Asian country, for short
  - 9 Extended musical composition
  - 10 Energetic
  - 11 Lies
  - 12 How many times each day the soldiers of Joshua marched around Jericho
  - 13 Spool
  - 21 Pay ending
  - 23 Not sweet
  - 25 People St. Patrick converted
  - 26 Nose (comb.)
  - 27 Duck with soft down
  - 28 Liverpool lane of song
  - 29 Writer of lyric poetry
  - 30 "\_\_\_ Angelicus"
  - 31 Rock add-on
  - 32 Type of gun
  - 33 Domain
  - 36 Forbearing
  - 37 A place for a pawn
  - 39 Television measure
  - 40 Backslide
  - 42 Winter hrs. in the Diocese of Cheyenne
  - 43 Abbr. for two OT books
  - 45 John wore clothes made from this animal
  - 46 Ruth's second husband
  - 47 Word from Pontius Pilate
  - 48 Collar fastener
  - 49 Russian parliament before 1917
  - 50 Roman statesman
  - 51 Applied
  - 52 Withered
  - 55 Weeding implement

**ACROSS**

- 1 "\_\_\_ in terris"
- 6 Meeting of bishops
- 11 "...and \_\_\_ our salvation, He came down from heaven"
- 14 Confirmation gesture
- 15 White with age
- 16 Serpent's tail?
- 17 Overwhelming fear
- 18 Madison Avenue type
- 19 Alphabet string
- 20 The Eucharistic Prayer
- 22 Fashion ornament
- 24 In Luke's genealogy, he is the father of Joseph
- 25 "\_\_\_ let us adore him..."
- 26 Lariat
- 28 Scripture readings at Mass that are sections of books of the Bible
- 32 Glisten
- 33 Holy object
- 34 Dis partner
- 35 Orderly
- 36 A bit before the hour
- 37 Clue
- 38 Vane reading
- 39 Horses of mixed color
- 40 O'Grady of song
- 41 Usually
- 43 Religious offshoots
- 44 Stalk
- 45 Horseshoe spike
- 46 Rouse to action
- 49 The Road to \_\_\_
- 53 The feast day of St. Teresa of Avila is in this mon.
- 54 Book of the Bible
- 56 Facet

### SAINT OF THE WEEK CHARLES LWANGA AND COMPANIONS Feast day: June 3

Charles and 21 other Ugandan martyrs, ages 14 to 30, were officials and pages in the court of King Mwangi II of Buganda. The king, after first accepting Christianity among his people, began to insist that converts abandon their new faith. He also preyed sexually on the young men at court. As head of the pages and their chief catechist, Charles tried to protect his charges. But when they would not reject Christianity, they were killed in 1885-86; some were speared to death, and others, like Charles, were burned alive. These first martyrs from sub-Saharan Africa were canonized in Uganda in 1964 by Pope Paul VI. They are the patrons of African Catholic Youth Action, converts and torture victims.



Join us in welcoming two providers to our team!

Dr. Julie A. Funfrock, DO    Nicholas M. Lesch, PA-C    Cassandra E. Kaiser, PA-C  
Dr. Emily M. Krach, DO    Cassandree A. Herber, FNP-C    Dr. Andrew J. Mullally, MD

**CREDO**  
FAMILY MEDICINE  
(260) 4- FAMILY • credofamilymedicine.com • Fort Wayne, IN

Answers on page 19.

# WE ARE HIRING!

**St. Mary Mother of God  
Part-time Maintenance and Grounds**

Part time Position open for MAINTENANCE AND GROUNDS at St. Mary Mother of God Catholic Church located in downtown Fort Wayne. Position is 20-25 hours per week, a Valid driver's license is required; oversee the maintenance of church complex and grounds; set up church social hall and provide a security presence for scheduled events and Sunday Mass; be on-call for building emergencies; and perform janitorial duties as assigned.

**IF INTERESTED, APPLY ONLINE AT  
DIOCESEFWB.ORG/CAREERS**

# WE ARE HIRING!

**St. Mary Mother of God  
Part-time Parish Accountant/Bookkeeper**

The parish accountant/bookkeeper is to oversee all financial aspects of St. Mary Mother of God parish and ministries (payroll, bills, and deposits), thank all contributors, manage safe environment program within the parish, end of month and end of year reports, including all data entry, among other duties. This position will work in cooperation with Pastor. Position is 25 hours per week.

**IF INTERESTED, APPLY ONLINE AT  
DIOCESEFWB.ORG/CAREERS**

**DEACON ERNST, from page 7**

**'I Could Not Be More Grateful'**

When Deacon Ernst returns to the diocese, he said he hopes to do as much listening as leading. He recalled advice from Monsignor Bill Schooler, who told him that "the people of a parish" will teach a priest "how to be a good pastor."

"I certainly don't claim to know it all," Deacon Ernst said. "But I pray that the people who have been in the parish for a long time will teach me what it means to be a pastor. So I hope to actually learn and to lean on them in doing so — because they have been experiencing parish life for a long time, more so than I have, and just knowing the sensibilities of the people in our diocese, I'm sure that they could help us learn a lot more about what it means to be a good pastor."

His vision for ministry is straightforward: proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments with reverence, hear confessions, accompany families and encourage vocations.

Deacon Ernst said he is indebted to those in the diocese for supporting him with their prayers and encouraging words throughout his discernment and formation.

"While the vocation, in a loose sense, is mine, it really only makes sense when it is given for others, particularly the people of our diocese," Deacon



Provided by Deacon Patrick Ernst

**FIRST MASS OF THANKSGIVING**

Following his ordination, Father Patrick Ernst will celebrate his First Mass of Thanksgiving at noon on Sunday, July 7, at St. Pius X Parish in Granger. An open house reception will follow in the Monsignor Schooler Life Center.

Ernst said. "Simple comments, such as, 'You would make a great priest,' or 'Have you ever considered a vocation to the priesthood?' have been profoundly influential in directing me to the vocation that God has been drawing me into. For that, I am most grateful, because the people of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend saw something in me that I could not see for myself. They believed in me and continue to support me in many ways as ordination day approaches. I could not be more

grateful for our diocese, especially for the people whom I will soon serve."

He has one request as ordination day draws near.

"Just a simple thank you to all of you who have helped me on the way to priesthood," he said, "and I just simply ask for your prayers as I continue on the way to ordination and pray that I would be a good priest for you all."

*Scott Warden is editor-in-chief of Today's Catholic.*



# DISCOVER THE MARIAN DIFFERENCE!

## MARIAN HIGH SCHOOL CHALLENGES STUDENTS TO:

- > Spiritual & Moral Growth
- > Academic & Physical Excellence
- > Social Maturity



**LEARN MORE AT MARIANHS.ORG.**

*Scan to see our newest video!*



*Job Opening*

**St. Mary Parish Music Director & Music Teacher St. Michael Catholic School**

The music director will coordinate the music ministry program for St. Mary Parish and direct the St. Michael Catholic School K-8 music education curriculum.

The ideal candidate must be a Catholic in good standing, hold a B.A. in Music or have equivalent professional experience, and should be proficient in piano, organ, and vocal/choral music. For a complete list of job duties and qualifications, please visit [munciecatholic.com/employment](http://munciecatholic.com/employment).

Interested candidates should send a letter of interest and resume to Jason Hart at [jhart@parish.dol-in.org](mailto:jhart@parish.dol-in.org).

# WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHAT'S HAPPENING? highlights upcoming events from around the diocese. Discover more Catholic events or share your own at [todayscatholic.org/event](http://todayscatholic.org/event).

## ST. PATRICK ST. HEDWIG ANNUAL NOTRE DAME FOOTBALL RAFFLE

**1st prize:**

2 Season tickets with Bookstore Parking pass or \$1,500 cash

**2nd prize:**

2 Season tickets with White Field parking pass or \$1,000 cash

**3rd prize:**

\$500 cash



**DONATION: \$20 PER CHANCE - ONLY 1,000 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD**

574-381-0970 or [stpatricksthedwig@gmail.com](mailto:stpatricksthedwig@gmail.com) or mail check with name, phone, and email to

**St. Patrick St. Hedwig Raffle**

**331 S. Scott St., South Bend, IN 46601**

**Rectory phone 574-287-8932**

**Drawing August 23 - Need not be present to win Indiana License 002446**

### Summit Awakening 13 Registration Is Open

Summit Awakening is a Catholic retreat held twice per year (early summer and late fall) that creates an opportunity in which young adults can become more fully awakened to the ever-present love of God. Anyone age 18-25 is welcome to attend. This young adult-led retreat challenges students to embrace an enhanced commitment to love, integrity, faith, and most importantly the Eucharist. Scholarships are available for anyone who may need financial assistance to attend. Register online at [summitawakeningfw.weebly.com](http://summitawakeningfw.weebly.com)

### SUNDAY, JUNE 7

#### Sensory Mass

4 - 4:30 p.m.

FORT WAYNE - On the first Sunday of each month, St. Peter Catholic Church, 518 E. Dewald St., provides a safe, stigma-free Mass setting for children and adults with sensory challenges, mental illness or any kind of disability to feel engaged and experience Mass in a meaningful way.

## REST IN PEACE

### Fort Wayne

Yvonne "Bonnie" August, 75, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Patricia Poinatte, 83, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Marsha Chaney, 83, St. Vincent de Paul

Jackie Tippmann, 82, St. Vincent de Paul

### Huntington

Laura Fleck, 82, SS. Peter and Paul

Karen Kohr, 77, SS. Peter and Paul

### South Bend

Judy Allinger, 66, Christ the King

Gilbert Cipriano, 96, Christ the King

Oscar Navoa, 85, Christ the King

Send obituaries to [obituaries@diocesefwsb.org](mailto:obituaries@diocesefwsb.org).



P	A	C	E	M	S	Y	N	O	D	F	O	R
A	L	A	P	A	H	O	A	R	Y	I	N	E
P	A	N	I	C	A	D	M	A	N	B	C	E
A	N	A	P	H	O	R	A	T	A	S	S	E
					H	E	L	I	C	O	M	E
					R	E	A	T	A	P	E	R
S	H	I	N	E	R	E	L	I	C	D	A	T
T	I	D	Y	T	E	N	T	O	H	I	N	T
E	N	E	R	O	A	N	S	R	O	S	I	E
N	O	R	M	A	L	L	Y	S	E	C	T	S
					S	T	E	M	C	A	L	K
B	E	S	T	I	R	D	A	M	A	S	C	U
O	C	T	N	A	H	U	M	P	H	A	S	E
A	C	U	G	N	O	M	E	S	O	T	E	R
Z	E	D	S	T	E	A	L	E	P	O	D	E

[www.wordgamesforcatholics.com](http://www.wordgamesforcatholics.com)



**CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF FORT WAYNE**  
WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

# Golfing For Kids

September 3, 2026

Men's, women's, and mixed teams  
18 Hole  
Florida Scramble

**\$130 per golfer**

- Greens fee with cart
- Use of range prior to start
- Continental breakfast
- Two drink tickets per player
- Awards ceremony & lunch

8:30am Shotgun Start  
Autumn Ridge Golf Club  
Fort Wayne, IN

Sponsorships Available!

Contact Janet Didier  
[jdidier1956@gmail.com](mailto:jdidier1956@gmail.com)  
260-438-0709  
[CHRISTCHILDFW.ORG](http://CHRISTCHILDFW.ORG)



Registration required on or before August 20, 2025

All "FORE" Charity



Fresh Cut Flowers | Custom Silk Arrangements | Plants | Gourmet Fruit Baskets | Balloons | & more!

Mary Green  
Owner

574.232.3354  
[www.wygants.com](http://www.wygants.com)

# Totus Tuus Missionaries Set to 'Light a Fire in Our Youth'

BY BETHANY BEEBE

Ryan Norden, a 2026 Totus Tuus missionary and senior biology major at the University of Notre Dame, said he often turns to Luke 1:36 for inspiration. "Mary said, 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.' My goal is to have the same response as her," Norden told *Today's Catholic*.

He and a group of seven other college-age young adults will be heeding that call to missionary service as they teach elementary- and high school-age participants about the Faith through the Totus Tuus program this summer.

Totus Tuus — Latin for "totally yours" — is an annual diocesan summer ministry led by teams of four college-aged missionaries that aims to inspire the young people of the diocese by challenging them to give themselves to Christ through Mary's example. Participants in each weeklong parish program receive catechesis, go to Mass, and learn about the love of Jesus both in the classroom and through recreation.

Jessica Tillinghast, associate director of youth and adult formation for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, said the diocese's Totus Tuus program aims to inspire a true longing for holiness and ignite the hearts of both the missionaries and those they teach.

"The result," she said, "has been the formation of youth and young adults who continue to dedicate themselves to the Church's mission of evangelization."

Those chosen for the summer teaching roles have a passion for serving the Church.

"They are mature, teachable and humble disciples eager for more," Tillinghast said.

Special training is offered to prepare the missionaries. Tillinghast said before the Totus Tuus summer schedule begins in early June, the missionaries are sent for training to the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois, where the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana's Newman Center has a special emphasis on vocational discernment.

Throughout the summer, the missionaries foster a close connection with one another. New last year were Friday night dinners for the missionary teams. Tillinghast said everyone met at a central location "after a long week of serving the youth to share a



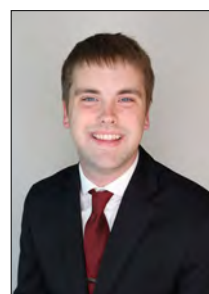
Scott Warden

2025 missionary Luke McKenna teaches children during the Totus Tuus program at St. Louis Besancon Parish in New Haven.

meal, debrief the week together and offer a time of human and spiritual formation. We found that this investment in them affirms their dignity as humans and missionary disciples."

The missionary disciples selected for this year's team exude that fervor of faith.

"I attended Totus Tuus at Blessed Sacrament in Albion when I was in high school," Norden said. "For me, it was an introduction to young adults who were actually interested in their faith and continued



Ryan Norden

to not only practice it but actually minister to younger people. The missionaries that I encountered took ownership of their local church and accepted the responsibility for ministry in a way that was inspiring for me even then.

Norden continued, saying: "While preparing for medical school, I have been encouraged to seek out summer opportunities in fields I am passionate about. In my opinion, there is no better opportunity to engage in youth and young adult ministry — one of my passions — than through Totus Tuus. It will provide me with excellent formation, the chance to meet many new people across the diocese and the opportunity for consistent communal prayer."

Elena Lock, a junior elementa-

## 2026 SCHEDULE

During the summer, two teams of Totus Tuus missionaries will be traveling to parishes across the diocese to host weeklong programs for students. To learn more about the program and to register students, contact the host parishes below.

**June 7-13**  
Blessed Sacrament Parish, Albion  
Immaculate Conception Parish, Auburn

**June 14-20**  
St. Joseph Parish, South Bend  
St. John the Evangelist Parish, Goshen

**June 21-27**  
St. Joseph Parish, Bluffton  
St. Louis Besancon, New Haven

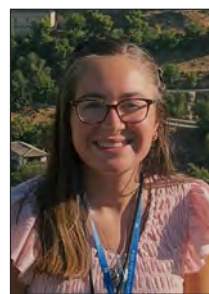
**June 28-July 3**  
Sacred Heart Parish, Warsaw  
St. Joseph/St. Monica parishes, Mishawaka

**July 12-18**  
St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Elkhart  
Our Lady of Hungary Parish, South Bend

**July 19-25**  
St. Dominic Parish, Bremen  
St. John the Baptist Parish, Fort Wayne

ry education major from Wolcottville, also felt Totus Tuus was a spiritual blessing.

"I looked into various summer camps," she told *Today's Catholic*, "but it just didn't feel right. My mom introduced me to Totus Tuus, and it was like an answered prayer. ... I not only get to practice teaching, but I also get the opportunity to share Christ with our youth. What a privilege! Totus Tuus will light a fire in our youth. It will help them fall in love with Our Lord, and to know that I played a part in that is an incredible blessing."



Elena Lock

A family connection also helped Yadira Martinez discern the call to join

the program.

"The Holy Spirit and my mom helped me realize that it would be



Yadira Martinez

an amazing opportunity," said Martinez, who graduated last year with an elementary education degree from Indiana

University South Bend. At each stop along the way, the missionaries stay with a host family while engaging in the day's work.

"I am excited to stay with host families throughout the summer and build connections with people of all ages," Lock said. "I look forward to sharing stories of faith and hearing how God has worked in each of their lives. We

are one universal Church, and I hope this experience will be a beautiful testimony to that unity."

Recalling the unity of the initial disciples of Jesus, Martinez said, "I am excited because I will be able to meet new people and truly travel around as Jesus' disciples did."

The young people who participate in Totus Tuus are not the only ones who benefit from the presence of the missionaries, Norden said.

"The host-family method is a wonderful way to really integrate us into the parish and get to know the people we are serving on a deeper level," Norden said. "In their homes, I also have the chance to witness to them. Many people are concerned with the state of religiosity among young adults, and having energetic and convicted young people in your home and parish is an opportunity to really provide hope."

Providing hope to all present, whether they are native English or Spanish speakers, is one of the aims of the program.

"Bishop Rhoades has made Hispanic ministry a priority during his episcopate," Norden said, "and I have seen the fruits of this in different ministry roles. In talking with parents and students, many are more comfortable worshipping in a language with which they are more familiar, and the vibrancy I have witnessed at majority-Hispanic parishes is beautiful."

Martinez sees the potential for cultural unity through Totus Tuus.

"The Spanish-speaking community has grown so much, and it allows for different communities to be united," Martinez said.

The missionaries who spoke with *Today's Catholic* noted that while their primary purpose is to serve the students and families who attend the weeklong sessions, they are eager to see the fruits of their ministry in their own faith lives.

"So far," Lock said, "Totus Tuus has already impacted my faith by encouraging me to step out of my comfort zone and trust God more fully. It has challenged me to become bolder and more courageous in sharing the Gospel and speaking the truth with love and confidence."

Martinez agreed that, for her, the confidence to trust God has been a great outcome. She said, "It was an opportunity to leave everything in God's hands and worry more about the spirit than the flesh."