

CAST YOUR NETS

A JOURNAL SUPPORTING VOCATIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG

Ordinations to the Priesthood



(Left to Right: Deacon Kyle Bell, Deacon Lou Turcotte, Deacon Tim Williford)

Bishop Gregory Parkes will ordain Kyle Bell, Louis Turcotte and Timothy Williford to the priesthood at 11:00 am on Saturday, May 19, 2018 at the Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle.

All are invited to attend the ordination and reception immediately following in the Parish Center. If you are unable to attend in person, you are invited to watch the live video stream on www.dosp.org and listen on Spirit FM 90.5.

Let Us Rejoice Together!

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ANIMUS

One of the most joyful and important days in the life of a Diocese is the Ordination day of new priests. On May 19, 2018 at 11:00 AM at the Cathedral of St Jude the Apostle, Bishop Gregory Parkes will ordain three men to the Sacred Priesthood. These three men are no strangers to readers of this newsletter, Deacon Kyle Bell, Deacon Lou Turcotte, and Deacon Tim Williford. These three young men are all extraordinary. They have studied, worked, and been formed for seven years and are looking forward to being Ordained priests of Jesus Christ and begin serving the people in our Diocese.

When meeting anyone of these men you can see, instantaneously, the joy of Christ radiate from them. They all have different stories of how they heard and answered the call of Christ to serve His Church. At times it was not easy to follow this call yet they, to a man, will tell you even though it was not easy and at times they worried if this call was authentic the joy they felt in following the Lord allowed them to continue and persevere in their vocation. They and we are happy their yes was fulfilled.

Deacon Kyle Bell began his journey toward priesthood in a Methodist seminary. After graduating from FSU Deacon Kyle felt the call to ministry and entered a Methodist seminary convinced he would become an ordained Methodist minister. However, in his studies of the Church Fathers he would begin questioning and his questioning led to the Catholic faith. Even more convinced he was not called to Catholic priesthood but as a teacher. Deacon Kyle would earn a Master's in Theology Degree from Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. As Deacon Kyle moved closer to his desire to teach the faith the call to priesthood became more apparent. Unable to get the thought out of his mind he would apply and be accepted as a seminarian for our Diocese and begin formation at St. John Vianney College Seminary as a Pre-Theologian seven years ago.

Deacon Lou Turcotte was born and raised Catholic. Lou was very involved in his parish growing up and considered seminary after high school. However, he felt it was not the right time and began college at the University of Florida. It was at UF that Lou became involved with FOCUS, The Fellowship of Catholic University Students; It was through his involvement with FOCUS that Lou's vocation began to show itself. Lou would graduate in three years and

apply and be accepted as a seminarian for the Diocese and become a classmate of Kyle.

Deacon Tim Williford was also born and raised Catholic. He is a graduate of St Paul Catholic School in St Petersburg and it was there that Tim discovered his gift of music. He would go on to Gibbs High School for performing Arts. Tim's talent and musical giftedness would land him jobs as a church musician before the age of 16. He would continue his music career while attending the University of South Florida where he would earn a degree in Business Administration. Eventually Tim came to the realization that the Lord was calling him to more than music ministry in the Church. He would apply to seminary as well and begin his formation with Lou and Kyle at St. John Vianney College Seminary where they would also become dear, dear friends.

The Church of St Petersburg will rejoice with the family and friends of these three wonderful men on May 19th as these three men will be anointed Priests of Jesus Christ.

Let us Rejoice and be Glad!!!

God Bless you all,



Fr. Carl Melchior
Director of Vocations

SEMINARIAN PERSPECTIVES

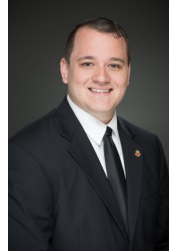


Stephen Eschenfelder
St. John Vianney College Seminary

When I entered seminary at the beginning of this year I was thrust into a world I didn't know and surrounded with people I didn't know, who also had some differing views than my own. So in a word, my first few weeks in seminary were hectic to say the least. Although as I moved forward I had a choice to make, and it would make or break me as I started formation, and it was to either go into myself and be "safe" or to cast myself into the infinite love and mercy of God and to give myself wholly to my newfound brothers and be open with the formation team. Ever since I made the decision to be open to formation I have been growing in ways that I never thought I could. One of the greatest graces that I have had is the privilege to enjoy the strong brotherhood of the seminary. You are never really alone in any struggles here because there is someone there who knows the struggles you face in seminary formation.

Another grace that has filled my soul is the bond that I have formed with the seminary formation team. The priests here are like fathers to me and even the professors here are genuinely interested in making me a better version of myself which has helped me with my education and life in general. At the start of my second semester I experienced one painful situation after the other from a loved one having health problems to my own health problems and then the death of my Grandfather who was like a father to me. When my life seemed to be falling apart I was picked up by my brothers here at St. John Vianney and by the formation team which was like a light in a dark room for me which then brought me closer to Christ in his suffering on the Cross and in his resurrection.

I have grown here and I am excited to go into my junior year at St. Johns. I hope to continue to allow the formation to help me to grow into the man that God longs for me to be, the man that I long to be.



Joshua Hare
St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary

What seemed like a distant reality eight years ago is suddenly becoming more and more imminent as the days grow closer to April 14th. As I sit at my desk typing, only two days have passed since I was recommended by the seminary to receive the order of deacon. In just a few short months I will dedicate my life to the Church and to Christ through the promise of celibacy and obedience. I will commit myself to praying each day the Liturgy of the Hours. I will become a cleric in the church and my wardrobe will take on a noticeably darker hue. On the weekends I'll exchange watching football for preaching homilies and performing baptisms. Ordination which once seemed so far away is suddenly knocking at the door. There is still much to do before April 14th and it's not technically official until I receive the letter from the Bishop, so in the meantime, I will keep my focus on Christ.

I still have many months of academic work ahead of me and there are many preparations that need to take place before that day comes. Throughout the next several months there will be ample opportunities to get caught up in the minutia and take my focus off Christ. It will become easy to be distracted by the planning and coordinating that lies ahead but I am reminded of the simple words that Jesus spoke to St. Faustina "Jesus, I trust in you". These are the words that I pray now as I prepare to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders and they were the words that I prayed as I entered seminary just eight years ago. I also know that the Lord has been preparing me for this moment for many years and that receiving this sacrament will bring with it an incredible joy. For instance, I can't wait to be able to celebrate the sacrament of baptism for the very first time. Or when I am simply able to bless someone's rosary or to pray over water to make it holy. Or even the first time that I can preach to the community in the context of the mass.

Someone asked me just the other day in a discernment group "Can I be a priest even if I don't feel worthy"? The truth is nobody is worthy to serve at the altar of the most high God. However, there is an adage that has almost become cliché during my time in seminary that rings true now more than ever "God doesn't call the qualified he qualifies the called". As I approach ordination what I am called to do is to trust. I must trust the seminary that they have prepared me well. I must trust myself that I have diligently engaged in the process of formation. Most of all I must trust in God who called me on this journey and who will give me the grace to live out this incredible vocation.

SEMINARIAN PERSPECTIVES - CONTINUED



Kenneth Keenan
St. John Vianney College Seminary

Growing up, my family attended Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Dunedin, Florida. During this time, the foundation of my faith would be formed and in seventh grade, while attending Mass with my family, I would experience the call to the priesthood for the first time.

While in high school, this calling seemed to go dormant. Later, while studying accounting at Florida State University, I attended a retreat with the Catholic Student Union and again experienced the call to the priesthood. Throughout this time in college, I began attending Mass throughout the week and growing in my faith.

After college, I began working for an accounting firm in Tampa and became a licensed CPA. Although I was exceling in my first year of work, I again felt the Lord calling me to follow Him. During this time, I contacted the Office of Vocations for the Diocese of St. Petersburg and applied for seminary. In August of this past year, I began seminary formation for the priesthood at St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami, Florida.

When I first arrived at seminary for new student orientation, I had no clue what to expect. My first two weeks were filled with exploring campus, attending conferences regarding seminary life, and becoming acquainted with the city of Miami. At the end of orientation, our class of new seminarians entered into a three day silent retreat and soon after class began.

As the fall semester progressed, I began to settle into the rhythm of seminary life. A typical day includes morning prayer, Mass, class, lunch, evening prayer, dinner. On Wednesday nights, the seminarians from the Diocese of St. Petersburg come together to pray for our diocese and to share how life in seminary is going. This time of prayer with my brothers is often a source of peace and encouragement during a busy week.

Now in my second semester, Christ is continuing to draw me deeper to Himself. In saying yes to God's plan to attend seminary, I am experiencing much peace. Through prayer and the guidance of the priests at seminary, I am being formed into the man that God is calling me to be. With much joy I am thankful for the journey which the Father is guiding me and I am thankful for the prayers and support of everyone who is journeying along with me!



Deacon Timothy Williford
St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary
Almost There...

This week, I received a phone call from our highly esteemed vocation director, Fr. Carl Melchior, and he congratulated me on being approved for Holy Orders by our seminary formation team. He reminisced about how far I had come from when he first went to my house to have dinner with my family over seven years ago, as part of the application process for becoming a seminarian. I won't lie, at this point, it feels like I have been in the seminary forever! But at the same time, the goal of becoming a priest, which seemed so far away for so long is finally coming into fruition. The time is almost here! I am very deep into the ordination planning process with Deacon Lou and Deacon Kyle. I am thankful to the seminary and its program of formation, because I do feel effectively prepared to become a priest. There were many moments along the way where I was scared of the next step and asked myself often, "Do I have the skills to do this? To preach? To counsel people? To celebrate the sacraments well?"

I remember the first few months that I was ordained a Deacon, I still felt I needed to prove myself before I could really feel confident as an ordained minister. That my ordination didn't mean anything until I proved to myself and to others that I could do it. Not only have I grown in all these areas (with the help of my classmates, weekend parish experiences, so many great instructors and the Lord of course), but I actually feel excited to finally do these things that I've been training and preparing for seven years to do.

At this point in time, I'm already starting to look around my room and thinking to myself "I have to move all this stuff home for good." I see the books I have, I see a couple of lamps, a cheap plastic table on my patio, my recliner, my guitar, all the little Knick knacks (like drinking glasses, coffee mugs, random toiletries, etc.) and I'm already trying to create a plan of what to give away, and how and when to transport the rest home. I'm anxious to hear where Bishop Parkes assigns me for my first priestly assignment. But, I still have assignments to accomplish here at St. Vincent de Paul. The mission here isn't going to be complete for another few weeks. What will energize me and keep me focused is to use these last few weeks to really buckle down so that I may give myself fully to the good people of the Diocese of St. Petersburg. I can't wait to be back...for good!!!

VOCATIONS AROUND THE DIOCESE

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

This year we celebrate World Day of Prayer for Vocations on April 22, 2018.

The purpose of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations is to publically fulfill the Lord's instruction to, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2) As a climax to a prayer that is continually offered throughout the Church, it affirms the primacy of faith and grace in all that concerns vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated life. While appreciating all vocations, the Church concentrates its attention this day on vocations to the ordained ministries (priesthood and diaconate), to the Religious life in all its forms (male and female, contemplative and apostolic), to societies of apostolic life, to secular institutes in their diversity of services and membership, and to the missionary life, in the particular sense of mission "ad gentes".

2018 marks the 55th Anniversary for World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Pope Francis' message can be found on the vocations website, in both English and Spanish. There are also resources available on the website.

John 21 Discernment Group St. Lawrence Parish, Tampa



John 21 is a discernment group for young men who are reflecting on God's call in their lives and are considering the possibility of priesthood or religious life. Just as the disciples gained clarity of their call while eating breakfast with the Lord, so too will we.

The group is open to anyone high school age and older. All are welcome!

The group meets on Saturday morning at St. Lawrence Parish in Tampa (5225 N. Himes Avenue) beginning with mass at 8:30 am in the Church.

Fr. Chuck Dornquast, Parochial Vicar, is the leader of this discernment group. After mass, the group will gather for breakfast and conversation, followed by scripture reflection and question and answer session.

The next meeting will be:
May 12, 2018

Please RSVP to Heidi Varley in the Office of Vocations (727) 345-3452 or hlv@dosp.org.

Holy Hour for Vocations

Cathedral of St. Jude

Sponsored by the Serra Club

Every 4th Wednesday of the month (with a couple of exceptions) the Serra Club hosts the Holy Hour for Vocations from 7:00 pm until 8:00 pm at the Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle. Please consider attending one of these holy hours to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Upcoming dates are as follows:

April 25, 2018

May 23, 2018

June 27, 2018

Upcoming Events:

April 14, 2018

Transitional Deacons Ordination for our seminarians
Anthony Astrab and Joshua Hare
St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary

April 15, 2018

Altar Server Appreciation Mass
3:00 pm, Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle



50th Anniversary Upcoming Events

May 6, 2018

Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
3pm, Cathedral of St. Jude

June 16, 2018

Anniversary Mass
11am, Cathedral of St. Jude
(ticketed event)

October 27, 2018

10am-6pm
Family Faith Fest, Al Lopez Park

For information on these events and more, go to the following link: <http://www.dosp.org/50/events/>

Calendar of Upcoming Events

April 2018

† April 15, 2018 (3:00 pm)

Altar Server Appreciation Mass
Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle
(reception following)

† April 25, 2018 (7:00 pm-8:00 pm)

Diocesan Holy Hour
(Sponsored by SERRA Club)
Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle

May 2018

† May 6, 2018 (3:00pm)

Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle

† May 12, 2018 (8:30am-10:30am)

John 21 Discernment Group
St. Lawrence Parish
(5225 N. Himes Ave, Tampa)

† May 18, 2018 (7:00 pm)

Ordination Vesper Service
St. Paul Parish, St. Petersburg
(1800 12th Street North)

† May 19, 2018 (11:00 am)

Ordinations to the Priesthood
Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle

† May 23, 2018 (7:00 pm-8:00 pm)

Diocesan Holy Hour
(Sponsored by SERRA Club)
Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle

Our Seminarists

St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary

Donald Amodeo	1st Theology
Anthony Astrab	3rd Theology
Zachary Brasseur	1st Theology
Deacon Kyle Bell	4th Theology
Joshua Hare	3rd Theology
Israel Hernandez	2nd Theology
Reinaldo Jara	1st Theology
Fredy Medina	3rd Theology
Michael Orajaka	1st Theology
Deacon Louis Turcotte	4th Theology
Deacon Timothy Williford	4th Theology

Pastoral Year

Connor Penn	Christ the King
Mark “Drew” Woodke	St. Ignatius of Antioch

Pontifical North American College-Rome

Joshua Bertrand	2nd Theology
Ralph D’Elia	3rd Theology

St. John Vianney College Seminary

William Bennett	Freshman Year
Mark DeSio	Sophomore Year
Stephen Eschenfelder	Freshman Year
Christian Galvan	Pre-Theology II
Kenneth Keenan	Pre-Theology I
Christopher Marte	Sophomore Year
Alejandro Posada	Pre-Theology I
Khalil Selim	Pre-Theology II



2017/2018 Diocese of St. Petersburg Seminarians



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