

God's Call

By Scott Zarling, Parishioner,

My name is Scott Zarling, and I have been a part of this St. Dominic Parish Community for about 10 years. I have come to know most of you, and I can say without a doubt, all of you are family to me. With that in mind, as a family member makes a major decision in his life, he tells his family about it. I am happy to announce that I have been accepted into the St. Francis de Sales Seminary and will begin my studies there this coming Fall.

I grew up in Slinger, Wisconsin with my Mom (Rita), Dad (Dale), and my older brother (David). I was a member of St. Peter's Catholic Church and attended their elementary school. During my years here I became more involved in the church. I volunteered as a lector, sang in the youth and adult choirs, became a member of the Knights of Columbus, was a member of the Prayer and Worship Committee, and taught Formation for one of the 8th grade classes. I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of all these various activities, and they all showed me different aspects of the Catholic Faith. The first seeds of God's Call came in my late teens when a few people commented to me that I had the qualities of a priest. I was humbled by these comments, but I felt I was not holy enough to pursue such a calling. However, the thought and feeling of pursuing the priesthood never left my mind.

Those thoughts of the priesthood came back to me during this past year, when churches were locked down and we were not allowed to attend Mass in person. Not being able to partake in the Eucharist hurt me spiritually. I then understood the phrase: "One does not appreciate something until they have lost it." I made a commitment to God to never again take these things for

granted. At that point, I felt that calling by God to pursue the priesthood. This time, I did not dismiss it, but let it consume me; my discernment to the priesthood had begun.

I ask for
your prayers; for
me, and others
called by God to the
Religious life.

~Scott Zarling

I was able to discuss this first with Fr. Dennis Saran, who encouraged me to make prayer a central part of this journey. I started to recite morning, evening, and night prayers and attend Eucharistic Adoration and daily Mass weekly. Adding these prayer opportunities opened my heart up to God's Call and I felt much closer to God than I have ever been before.

Additionally, I started to read more books on discernment and the priesthood in general. The book entitled

"To Save a Thousand Souls," has been an excellent guide for me in stepping through the process of discernment. Another book called "The Priest Is Not His Own," by Archbishop Fulton Sheen, opened my mind up to what it



Scott Zarling is a member of the Knight of Columbus and is seen here at a Pancake Breakfast event at St. Dominic prior to the pandemic.

really means to be a priest and the complete sacrifices he makes for his people.

Interacting with other young men that are on this same journey has also deepened my understanding of what it means to be called by God. I attended a *Come and See* event at the Seminary to get a basic understanding of what Seminary life is like and to also have discussions with other men pursuing this calling. The decisive event was a silent retreat held at Camp Vista in Campbellsport. During this weekend I was able to open my mind, heart, soul and entire being to God. Words really cannot express how silence can affect our time with God. Sometimes we just have to be quiet and let God in and shape us.

In one of his talks on discernment, Fr. John Burns, Vocation Promoter for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, has said God has Spiritually “Marked” a few of His people for the Religious Life. This “Mark” has been branded on that person’s heart when God created them. Am I marked? I believe I am, and am willing to walk on this path toward the priesthood with God at my side guiding me all the way.

I would like to thank Fr. Dennis Saran, who has been a personal inspiration for me and for his guidance in my spiritual growth on this journey. I also thank you, my St. Dominic Parish family, and ask that you pray for me and others called by God to the Religious life.

May God bless you.



Parishioner, Scott Zarling

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Learn more the signs of a vocation, discerning the call, and life as a seminarian at Thinkpriest.org, or reach out to Fr. Dennis or Fr. Aaron, or another priest you may know to begin a conversation.