DCN. JACOB BOVEE

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
3257 S. Lake Dr.
St. Francis, WI 53235

Configuration IV

BIRTHDAY
September 16

PARISH
St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Greenville

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Joan of Arc.
She has been keeping an eye on me throughout my time in seminary and encourages me to grow deeper in discipline and zeal.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I like many genres. My favorites are alt-rock, ska punk, symphonic metal when I'm feeling energetic, and folk rock or outlaw country when I want something calmer.

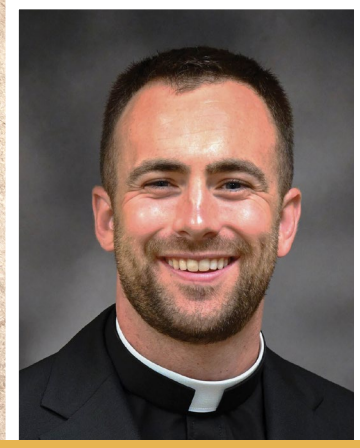
What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
It is hard to pick, but probably Advent. I like the element of anticipation. As a great lover of history and tradition, it makes me happy that it is the time of year that old traditions and family history seem to hold the most sway over our hearts.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Being around chickens. We always kept a flock of them as I was growing up, and I was their designated caretaker. They would follow me around the yard whenever I let them out. I like to imagine that they enjoyed my company, but I must admit that the food scraps I tossed to them probably did the heavy lifting of endearing them to me! I just get such a kick out of them.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
We need you. There's a lot of work to be done, and if you are called to be a priest, we need you to become one. Even if you do not think you have what it takes, consider it. The only thing God asks for is your commitment. He will provide the rest. Perhaps you are afraid that you are too different from the priests you know. Good. It means you will fill a niche that they cannot. The only thing that matters is whether God is calling, and if He is, you will never be satisfied until you answer.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
I try sincerely to spread the faith to all those around me who do not know or understand it yet. To me, this means continuing to make and develop friendships with those who are not Catholic in the hopes of drawing them into the faith. I have often been frustrated at how often Catholic social groups become insular and exclusive, consisting of only other Catholics. There are many wonderful people who have not yet embraced the faith, so I work hard to build up social connections with them to connect them with other good people. I hope that those connections will provide the opportunity to welcome them fully into the Church.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human is to be made in the image and likeness of God. This means that to be human is to be of immeasurable worth. It means irreplaceability, distinction, mystery, and loveliness. To be human is to be worthy of love because with love the reality of each person unfolds before another to reveal ever greater depths. The deeper one plunges into knowing another, the greater the beauty and the goodness that is within that person is revealed. This isn't so with any other creature. A dog, no matter how much it is loved, has no hidden depths. The entirety of its being is bare to see. On the other hand, a person has many hidden layers and can experience interior growth. Much of this growth comes through being loved by God or others. To be human is also to yearn for mystery. There is the desire to uncover and explore the mystery in others and the even greater desire to plunge the depths of mystery in God. We want to understand, to know why He made things as He has, to know who He is, and to know why we are as we are. To me, it is that desire and that capacity for growth which make us human.



DCN. NICHOLAS VANDE HEY

SEMINARY
Pontifical North American College
00120 Vatican City State, Europe

Configuration IV

BIRTHDAY
March 11

PARISH
Holy Cross, Kaukauna

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Thérèse of Lisieux.
Two years ago, I consecrated the rest of my time in seminary to her. With my diaconate ordination on her feast day, I am confident she is praying for me!

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
A little country music out on the lake, a little classic rock at the gym, and Jesus beats in-between make a great mix!

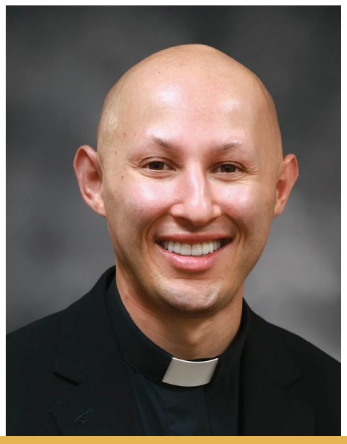
What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Easter! While I am happy that Lent is over, the memory of the struggle of Lent makes the joy of Easter even more real. Each Easter reminds us that Jesus transforms suffering, that darkness and death are not the end, and there is always reason to hope.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
A phone call with family! I am blessed with an awesome family, and my day almost always improves when I have the opportunity to connect with my parents or one of my three sisters. Yes, sisters are sometimes annoying, but as we have grown older, we have also grown to appreciate each other more. The mutual support and love of family is a great gift.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Do not be afraid! When God first put the priesthood on my heart, I worried about it a lot. I did not want to be a priest! Here is the thing – God will never call us to something we do not truly desire. Even if we do not realize the desire right away, God places our deepest desires on our hearts and wants to fulfill them. So, learn to pray, fall in love with Jesus, and say "yes" to Him in little things. He will reveal your true desires and give you the courage to say "yes" in big things.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
This past year, I had the opportunity to spend ten days with a missionary priest serving in Kyrgyzstan. Since that trip, I have been trying to explain what was so inspiring about this missionary. In the end, I think it is incredibly simple: he knows Jesus personally and is utterly convinced that Jesus is Lord. I want to live my life like that, constantly seeking to know Jesus better. Discipleship begins with love of Jesus in prayer and the sacraments. Then, if I have complete confidence that Jesus has overcome the world (cf. Jn 16:33), I have no reason to be afraid. People are suffering and Jesus wants to console them! What a privilege that we can participate in this saving work. In my life, this sharing in Christ's mission might mean actively proclaiming the Gospel or maybe simply giving a smile. Either way, every single moment provides an opportunity to share Christ's love. It can be awkward, but be bold – salvation is worth it!

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
Oof. Tough question! When God creates Adam and Eve, they are made in His image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:26). Who is the image of God (cf. Col 1:15)? Jesus! In other words, the best way to understand the complexity and beauty of humanity is to look at Jesus. As Pope Leo wrote, the mystery of humanity is revealed in Christ. This mystery includes our joys and sufferings, grace and freedom, and all other aspects of our lives. In everything Jesus says and does, He demonstrates what it means to be fully human. He first reveals the infinite love of God for every single human person. He reveals that man is made for relationship with God and others. He also reveals that these relationships are damaged by sin. These aspects of love and relationship are incredibly important. From the very beginning of our lives in the womb, we are in relationship with others and dependent upon them. As we grow up, we learn what is good and develop the ability to choose it. Only humans can pursue true communion rooted in love. Artificial intelligence will never be able to sacrifice for others. The more we become like Christ and grow in this communion, the more fully human we will become. In the end, this is our final destination revealed by Christ. To be human means to be created for eternal happiness and communion with God in Heaven.



MICHAEL JANCZAKOWSKI

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
3257 S. Lake Dr.
St. Francis, WI 53235

Configuration III

BIRTHDAY
June 18

PARISH
St. John the Baptist, Howard

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Gertrude the Great.
I think she has much to teach me about friendship with the Lord and about the great love of His heart.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I like good music! So long as it is thoughtful and creative, I'm willing to listen.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
In the last few years, I have grown in my love for Advent. The overlap we see there between the end of time and the beginning of Christ's earthly life is really interesting.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Sunshine always makes my day better. I love waking up to a sunny day and seeing light pour through my shades. Especially in the winter when things can be dark and grey, the sunshine and blue skies are a great lift for me. There's a reason I went to college in Arizona!

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
For starters, I encourage you to discern in relationship with others. Research and introspection help us expand self-knowledge, but they can easily terminate in the self. Seek, therefore, to move outside yourself by speaking honestly with God in prayer, by contacting a vocation director, by spending time with holy friends, and by engaging in charitable service.

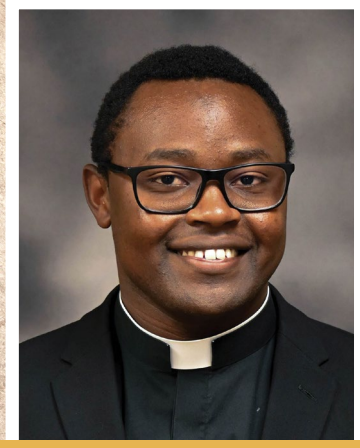
Secondly, trust and prudently take action. You cannot continue to discern marriage without asking someone on a date; so too, you cannot continue to discern priesthood without taking steps toward it (e.g., a "Come and See" or entering formation).

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
In his encyclical, Pope Benedict XVI says that the Church does three things: she proclaims the Word of God, she celebrates the sacraments, and she exercises the ministry of charity (Deus caritas est, no. 25). Witness, worship, service. It is critical that we do all three because they are codependent and inseparable. Without worship, the Church is a social activist group. Without service, the Church is a fraud. Without witness, the Church is an exclusive club. Moreover, we need all three because they are what Christ does — He proclaims the kingdom (Mk 1:15), He serves others (Mt 14:14), and He offers Himself in worship to the Father (Heb 9:26) — and what the head does, so does the body.

For me, living as a missionary disciple looks like showing up for these three things and attending to what is good and beautiful in the midst of them (Phil 4:8). When you are excited about good things, others get excited, too.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
In Genesis, the first man, Adam, comes from the ground (2:7). There is a word play in the Hebrew here: "the ground" is ha'adamah and "the man" is ha'adam. Adam is literally the dirt man, but Adam also has a heavenly origin. The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (2:7). This detail is not said of any other animal; it is unique to humanity. Therefore, we are special dirt people, made in God's image and likeness (1:27), vivified by his holy breath (his spiritus). We stand between spiritual and material reality.

I experienced this dynamism of our humanity once while on retreat at St. Norbert Abbey. Praying in the Abbey church, I took notice of the grandeur and the solidity of its stone structure. It was as if the building itself wanted to sing to the Lord, but it could not. It was just stone. The building needed a person to bring it to life, to give voice to the praise it was offering the Lord. That is what our humanity offers. Sharing in both the material and the spiritual, the human being is the priest of creation, gathering and ordering its goodness into a chorus of praise. We turn from the mountains and tell the Father what the mountains say but cannot speak: "Good job, Dad." God's love is poured out to us in creation and makes a return through our praise.



OLIVIER NDORIMANA

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
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Configuration III

BIRTHDAY
November 6

PARISH
St. Raphael, Oshkosh

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INTERCESSOR
St. André Bessette.
I am really inspired by his story of how he attained holiness through a small job of being a porter and praying with those who came his way.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I listen to music of various genres. However, the genre that I return to most is classical music, especially by G.P. Telemann and Mozart.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Advent is my favorite liturgical season. It's a season of waiting which can be difficult, but I like the longing for Christ that it helps me cultivate. Advent helps me reflect on the three comings of Christ: in history, in mystery through sacraments, and in majesty at the end of time.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
I have found that going on a walk and spending time in nature makes my day better. The seminary I attend is right by Lake Michigan. Taking a walk along the lake and then sitting by the lake and watching the water calms my mind and helps me to feel rejuvenated.

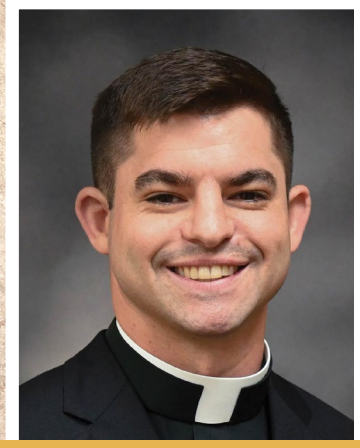
What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
If you are discerning the priesthood, the first advice I would give you is to trust in the Lord and explore with Him the desire stirring in your heart. On a practical level, I would encourage you to pray daily and to attend daily Mass. Secondly, I would suggest regular confession and talking to priests, especially the vocation director. Finally, I would invite you to pray, asking the Lord to know the next step and for the grace and courage to take that step.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
A while ago, I participated in the summer of spiritual formation at the Institute of Priestly Formation in Omaha, Nebraska. During that time, I really came away with the conviction that in order for my missionary activity to flourish, I need to be rooted in who I am, which in turn comes from my relationship with God. So, the primary way I seek to be a missionary disciple is by being rooted in my relationship with Jesus through prayer. It is through prayer that I come to know Jesus deeper and know who I am in Him. Secondly, this entails embracing the mission He is calling me to which is to serve Him as His priest. So, I seek to be a missionary disciple by fully entering into formation and preparing to be the best priest that I can be. At the same time, throughout my life, I share aspects of the Gospel with others when the opportunity arises, hoping to help others embrace Christ more fully in their lives.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
Being human is a mystery which requires a whole lifetime to fully understand, but God has not left us in the dark. He has revealed to us that He made us in His image and likeness and thus made us for relationship with Him and with those around us. We broke that relationship through the fall of Adam but God has reconciled us to Himself through the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For me then, being human means entering into this drama of having been created good, having fallen, and participating in God's redemption of us.

Because God created us good, we experience in ourselves the desire to know Him and to live in a loving relationship with Him. In this vein, no one has articulated better what it means to be human than St. Augustine who said that God made us for Himself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Him. Because we are fallen, we experience various ways in which we and others fail to let our hearts rest in God. Because we have been redeemed, we can also experience the healing of our hearts and relationships when we allow God's grace to transform us. Jesus Christ, as God and man, illumines and brings together all these aspects of being human. Indeed, it is in Him that the mystery of man is made clear (cf. Gaudium et Spes 22).



ROBERT REYNEBEAU

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
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Configuration III

BIRTHDAY
September 5

PARISH
St. John Nepomucene,
Little Chute

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INTERCESSOR
St. John Vianney.
He is a model for priests, and much of his priestly ministry was spent administering God's mercy through the healing sacrament of confession.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I enjoy listening to classic rock, modern rock, and country. I also enjoy listening to Olivier and Michael J. chant sacred music.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
The Paschal Triduum is my favorite liturgical season. It encompasses all of Jesus' passion and resurrection. It is a time for more intense prayer and meditation on what Jesus endured in His suffering for us. It is also an event that we remember throughout the year from Friday to Sunday.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
When I wake up, I like to pray the Morning Offering, go for a short walk outside, and drink a lot of water. Because we begin our days early at the seminary, it helps me to have a simple routine after waking up. I would also add that I like enjoying a cup of coffee, but that is no small thing.

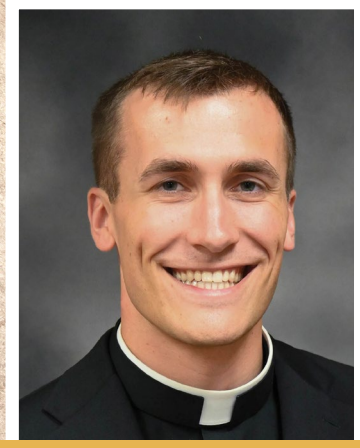
What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Frequent the sacraments, such as the Eucharist and confession. Spend time in prayerful silence every day, ideally in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Try to pray the Rosary every day and welcome the Blessed Mother. Learn the voice of the Good Shepherd.

A wise priest once told me to be a man of action and to take concrete steps in moving toward a vocation. To me, that meant reaching out to the vocation director and discussing my prayer life with him. This advice has stuck with me ever since, because part of discernment means deciding and moving forward.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
In my slow but steady growth in understanding and living missionary discipleship, I am coming to realize the primacy of the Holy Mass. If the saying is true that you can't give what you don't have, then I suppose you can't effectively share Jesus if you do not worship and receive Him sacramentally in the Eucharist. Bringing forth Christ's message to the world does not begin with sailing the seas and living with the poorest of the poor like St. Francis Xavier. It begins with learning to love the Mass, especially on Sundays, and taking those final words, "Go forth, the Mass is ended" to heart. In my experience so far, learning to live as a missionary disciple is an art. I want others to come to love Jesus and the Catholic Church, so I want to share the truth of the faith with conviction and love.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
There are two aspects of being human that come to my mind: First, being created by God for a specific purpose and second, being given an inherent dignity that cannot be lost. The prologue to the Catechism of the Catholic Church begins with this: "God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life...He calls together all men, scattered and divided by sin, into the unity of his family, the Church." Being human ("of the earth") means that you and I are creatures. We are not perfect. That said, we are created in the image of God (cf. Gen 1:26-28) in order to participate in the divine life through the sacraments and are made for eternal life. A major temptation for man is to want to be in control. Being human means accepting our limitations and surrendering to God's will, which is love and mercy.

To be human is also to be endowed with a certain dignity which is greater than the rest of creation. Since humans are made in God's image and are given an intellect and a will, there is an inherent dignity that comes with all human life. Though we are called to love and respect all of creation, God desires us to love our neighbor in a special way, even going as far as to say that what we do to our neighbor, we do to Jesus (Mt 25:35-40).



KYLE ROHAN

SEMINARY
Pontifical North American College
00120 Vatican City State, Europe

Configuration III

BIRTHDAY
July 25

PARISH
St. Clare; Wrightstown, Greenleaf, Askeaton

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Francis Xavier.
As a great missionary, he continues to have a particular concern for raising up men of missionary zeal which I desire to be.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I like indie music, especially those artists with a Christian leaning (Josh Garrels, etc.). To fit the liturgical seasons, I turn to the Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
My favorite liturgical season is Easter. Following Lent, we celebrate what Jesus has done for us in the Paschal Mystery. St. Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain" (1 Cor 15:14). And he has been raised! Thus, we feast!

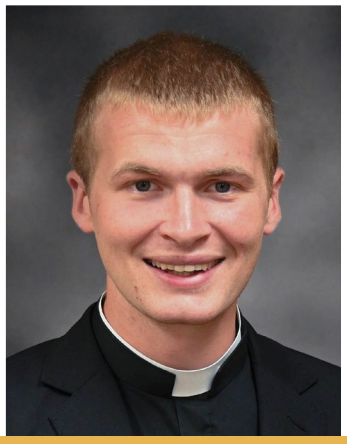
What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
One small thing that almost always makes my day better is when Nick Vande Hey makes hummus. I had never experienced homemade hummus before (to my knowledge), and now I think I have had more varieties than most people will ever have the need to try. Chickpeas? Of course! Black beans? You bet. Anything you could mash up into a dip? Wow! And it is all delicious, regularly making my days better.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Something like the following can be freeing: "A vocation is not something to be figured out. It is a gift to be received." Right now, Jesus is working on your heart, expanding your desires and preparing you to receive that gift. It may be difficult, but we know that God does not play games with our hearts! He is so gentle, and He wants us to know what He desires for our lives. If you spend time in silent personal prayer and visit Him often in the sacraments, you will already be receiving the greatest gift.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
I am still learning how to root every single thing I do in prayer. When Mother Teresa was allegedly asked by some sisters to make their daily hour of prayer before the Eucharist optional, her response was to briefly increase their daily adoration time to two hours! Why is that? She said, "Through our daily Holy Hour, our love for Jesus becomes more intimate, our love for each other more understanding, and our love for the poor more compassionate." She also would repeat a simple sequence: "The fruit of silence is prayer; the fruit of prayer is faith; the fruit of faith is love; the fruit of love is service; and the fruit of service is peace." Notice that service comes well after silence and prayer. Additionally, LOVE is what leads to service. Thus, to be a missionary requires prayer because I cannot give what I do not have. I continue to seek to root mission more deeply in prayer and to always live with Jesus' Holy Face before me. St. Francis Xavier, pray for us!

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
There is, of course, objectivity to being human. We are all made in the image and likeness of God with an intellect and a will and thus, a great capacity to love and be loved. We have infinite dignity, as Pope Francis explained in *Dignitas Infinita*: "Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter." This dignity is defined in this way because God's love for each of us is infinite and unconditional. It is His love that defines me. This is what Pope Leo XIV aims to remind us of in today's digital age. Thus, to be human means to possess an infinite dignity based entirely on God's love for me.

It also means to be limited. I love what our Holy Father writes on human limitation: "We must remember that humanity flourishes not despite limitations, but often through them." In our limitations, we experience suffering, but "to eliminate suffering entirely would mean, in the end, extinguishing love and desire as well. Those who love and desire cannot avoid passing through trial and suffering." Trying to transcend those things "would no longer be human." When we live the Lord's long way, without seeking shortcuts to avoid suffering, we experience the fullness of our humanity. He meets us in our limitation, for "power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9).



NICHOLAS HUZA

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
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Configuration II

BIRTHDAY
October 10

PARISH
St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Greenville

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Francis of Assisi.
He is an often misunderstood saint who lived his life in deep communion with the Lord. The one thing he sought to possess was God Himself, and he accepted no compromises.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I really enjoy bluegrass and contemporary folk music.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
I have come to appreciate the season of Lent. The season is a time of penance ending with Easter. This mirrors how our redemption is won by Christ's passion culminating in His resurrection.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
A small thing that makes my day better is when I accomplish a task that has taken a long time. Whether it is finishing a book I had been reading or a paper that required a lot of time or effort, small accomplishments help add a silver lining to the day.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Growth in the Christian life depends on our generosity with God. Try though you might, you will never outdo God in generosity. If you think the Lord is calling you to be a priest, and other people have affirmed this, go all in! We can invent a million excuses for why we couldn't be a priest or go to seminary, but often this is a temptation to a lack of trust in the God who is calling. Do not be afraid to give yourself to God, because He will give Himself to you!

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
To be a missionary disciple is to learn how to be like Jesus *from* Jesus and then bring Him to others. I am a sinner, and this often inhibits my capacity to do both of these things. Therefore, part of how I seek to live as a missionary disciple is to simply repent and strive for holiness. Furthermore, St. Francis Xavier is the co-patron of the missions along with St. Thérèse of Lisieux. While one was a great missionary priest and the other a cloistered nun, a thing they shared is bringing people to Jesus in prayer, especially in the Mass. One practical thing I do is offer my Holy Communion for various intentions every day. Prayer is often discounted, but it is the best thing we can do to be missionary disciples. Finally, I try to learn more about the faith to be able to explain it to others and to live my life as a witness to what I say. I commend the rest to the Lord.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
Humans are created by God and in His image. The traditional formulation for human nature is a "rational animal." We are rational because we have an intellect which can know and understand, and we have a will that can choose. This understanding and choosing is what makes us capable of loving. God made us to love Him and to share in His divine life. However, unlike angels, we have a body and physical characteristics shared with animals. We have senses – the ability to see, touch, and hear. We have needs and limitations. We need to eat, sleep, take time to learn things, etc. We need to rely on others. Part of being human is to accept our limitations and not be surprised by them. We can be tempted to think that we need to know and do everything perfectly right now. When we fail at this obviously impossible task, we either get frustrated with ourselves or seek one of the many shortcuts the modern age offers. The reality is that our limitations remind us that we always need to rely on God, and that He even loves our weakness. After all, we were God's idea, and He loved us so much as to take on our human nature in the Incarnation.

JOHN SPARKS

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St. Francis, WI 53235

Configuration II

BIRTHDAY
September 11

PARISH
St. Agnes, Green Bay

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

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
It depends on what I am doing. If I am working out, I like something with a lot of energy. If I'm studying, I like instrumentals without lyrics.

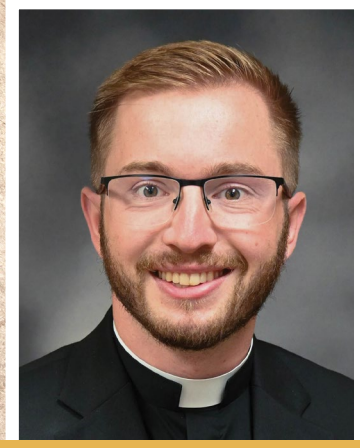
What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Forever my favorite liturgical season will be Advent leading into the Christmas season. Occurring at one of my favorite times of the year, there is a clear sense of hope and peace. Things may be dark, but there is a spark of light that is ready to change everything for the better.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
One small thing that always seems to make my day a little better is taking a nap. It can be really surprising just how big of a difference taking a 20 to 30-minute nap can be to put me into a better mood or make me think more clearly. It can really help to recharge my batteries.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
1. Always be praying. Discernment requires being in communication with the One who gave us our vocation. 2. Do not discern alone. Speak with your parish priest and the vocation director. They may also suggest finding you a spiritual director to help navigate your spiritual life. 3. Be intentional. If you have thoughts about discerning priesthood or religious life, it can be very tempting to sit on the sidelines. Don't. Be proactive. Be brave. God will be there with you the whole way. He loves you and knows what will fulfill you most in this life and the next.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
To be a missionary disciple, in my view, means to go out and make other disciples who go out and make more disciples. This is how the Church spread as far and quickly as it did in the early years of Christianity. As Jesus says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19). That said, Jesus does not give a perfectly clear description of how to make disciples. I try to follow what the Church calls the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. As I volunteer at a food shelter, I exercise the corporal works of mercy of feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty. When I teach kids to altar serve and pray for loved ones, I exercise the spiritual works of mercy of instructing the ignorant and praying for the living and the dead. In doing so, I try to provide a good example for others to emulate. Hopefully my witness can help to make disciples who go and make even more disciples.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
There are many opinions out there as to what it means to be human. However, our Catholic faith tells us that what it means to be human can be found right in the beginning chapters of the Bible. In Genesis 1:26–27, God created mankind in his own image. This short line, although simple looking, tells us a lot. First, it tells us that God is the one who makes us human. To be human is not something we make up ourselves. It is a gift given to us by our Creator. Not only does our humanity come to us from God, but it is also a reflection of God. To be made in His image means to be given the gifts of intellect and will. These gifts are fantastic by themselves, but they are meant for something even better. They have been given to us so that we can know and love God and each other. This is what it ultimately means to be human. However, since the sin of Adam and Eve, we as human beings have had a break in these relationships. Thankfully, Jesus came to heal these relationships. Through His humanity and his sacrifice on the cross, He opened up the way for us to be fully united to God in Heaven.



NICHOLAS KLIKA

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
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St. Francis, WI 53235

Configuration I

BIRTHDAY
December 30

PARISH
St. Bernard, Green Bay

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Peter.
May I imitate his unbridled zeal for Jesus Christ. This zeal allowed him to get out of the boat and come to Jesus on the water despite the storms crashing around him.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I have a great nostalgia for the music that my dad and grandpa Jerry liked and played around me growing up. That means I like a lot of pre-2000's country.

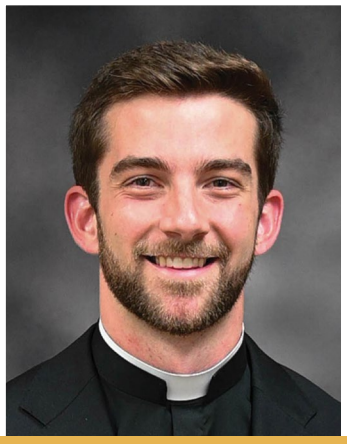
What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Fun fact: Lent ends at sundown on Holy Thursday, beginning the great Paschal Triduum. It is my favorite liturgical season because in a singular liturgy, we commemorate the Institution of the Eucharist, Christ's Passion, and His glorious Resurrection at the Easter Vigil.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
I have a two-year-old niece and a one-and-a-half-year-old goddaughter. By the nature of me being in seminary formation and one of them living in New York, the reality is that I rarely get to see either of these two goofballs in person. Thankfully, this is often remedied by modern technology which allows for their parents to send me pictures of them in action.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Praised be Jesus Christ! Now lose "discerning" from your vocabulary. As has been aptly noted by others wiser than myself, "Ever since discernment has become a buzzword in the Church today, no one has made a decision." If you believe that God might be inviting you to this vocation, trust that call and let the Church discern with you from there. So often, we are afraid that we are going to "get it wrong" or "miss God's voice" (I may be speaking from experience here). Reject that lie and hear John Paul II urging you, "Be not afraid."

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
When it comes to missionary discipleship, the Holy Spirit seems to always convict me with a quote from Mother Teresa: [1.1][1.2] "Stay where you are. Find your own Calcutta. Find the sick, the suffering and the lonely right there where you are. In your own homes and in your own families, in your workplaces and in your schools. You can find Calcutta all over the world, if you have the eyes to see. Everywhere, wherever you go, you find people who are unwanted, unloved, uncared for, just rejected by society, completely forgotten, completely left alone." Sometimes the hardest person to love is the person suffering right next to me. It requires me to be vulnerable and meet them where they are. My time can be the most valuable thing I give them. While I will likely spend my entire priesthood in the Diocese of Green Bay, faithful service to those put in my charge can bear eternal fruit far beyond one place.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
Once again, praised be Jesus Christ for Pope Leo writing his first encyclical on the magnificence of humanity. It is a topic that is very timely and necessary for contemplation amidst the current state of worldly affairs. From the beginning of time, man has occupied a unique and special place in the hierarchy of beings. The Church teaches, "Of all visible creatures, only man is able to know and love his creator. He is the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake" (CCC 356). Furthermore, "Being in the image of God, the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone" (CCC 357). The dignity of man is affirmed incalculably by the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. When God became Man and made His dwelling among us, He came to open up a life that would be fitting to the dignity of man; eternal life with God. He came to show us that we could live in that deep and abiding friendship and intimacy with the Holy Trinity. This involves rejecting sin and putting on His life of grace. In baptism, we experience what St. Paul promises that, "If we die with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him" (Rm 6:8). As St. Athanasius says, "The Son of God became man so that we might become God." To be human means to configure one's life to Jesus in all things.



MATTHEW SCHUMACHER

SEMINARY
Pontifical North American College
00120 Vatican City State, Europe

Configuration I

BIRTHDAY
February 11

PARISH
St. Matthew, Allouez

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Thérèse of Lisieux.
She lived her life on earth with her eyes fixed on the Lord, and I hope to do the same.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
Listening to oldies brings back great memories, but I also enjoy folk music like Brother Isaiah and The Arcadian Wild. In the evening, good ol' sacred chant never disappoints!

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Advent is my favorite liturgical season because it is a season of waiting. As many great priests have said, "Waiting breeds desire." During Advent, we are reminded of our hunger for Christ and for the Good News that the Kingdom of God is here, crying out, "Veni, veni Emmanuel!"

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
This year, I have the privilege of living in Rome, where I frequently see religious sisters around the city. Seeing a joyful bride of Christ never fails to brighten my day and put a smile on my face. When I see someone like a religious sister whose heart is totally given to Jesus, it only makes me want to love Him more.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
My advice is simple: take one more step and see what God does. Often, we mistake discernment for "the search for certainty." In reality, it is listening to the Lord and going where He draws you, one step at a time. Maybe that looks like talking with a priest, attending a vocation event, going on a discernment retreat, or asking for an application. If our hearts are open and we want to do God's will, He will make sure everything turns out all right; there is no need to worry.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
I seek to live as a missionary disciple by simply following Jesus and allowing Him to love through me. I must strive to do everything with Him. If I go "on mission" and try to convert the world on my own, I will fall flat on my face. Being missionary disciples means that we never leave the Lord's side. That way, it is He who transforms the world with His perfect, powerful, and palpable love through us. Practically, this means spending time in prayer and being filled with the same love that will overflow into the hearts of others. In prayer, we get to abide in the loving gaze of our Father. In turn, we bring that gaze to others who so desperately need to know God's unique love for them. For instance, when we are with others, we can ask Jesus, "How are you loving this person right now?" I firmly believe that the world would be transformed if only we knew how loved we really are.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human means to be redeemed. This summer, I had the privilege of attending the Institute for Priestly Formation's seminarian program. While I was there, we often discussed our tendency to dislike our humanness as though it were an obstacle to our relationship with God. We may see it as something that we have to "overcome" in order to love and be loved by Him. However, this is far from the truth. During one of the conferences, the speaker said, "We should not hate what God has assumed, because what has been assumed has been redeemed." Thus, we should embrace what He took on when He became man. He became like us in all things but sin, which means that He has redeemed everything that makes us human, including our weaknesses and shortcomings. In fact, it is precisely in those weaknesses and shortcomings where we encounter Him. We can invite Him into every joyful and painful moment we experience. We can freely relate every raw emotion that we feel to Him. We can ask Him to be our strength when we are weak, our peace when we are fearful, and our hope when we are lost. In short, to be human means to let God love every part of us into divinity.

BENEDICT WOOD

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Configuration I

BIRTHDAY
January 10

PARISH
St. Thomas More, Appleton

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
Bl. Solanus Casey.
I was at his beatification and have seen him as a special intercessor ever since.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
Musical theatre is my first love; I especially enjoy belting out show tunes on long car rides.

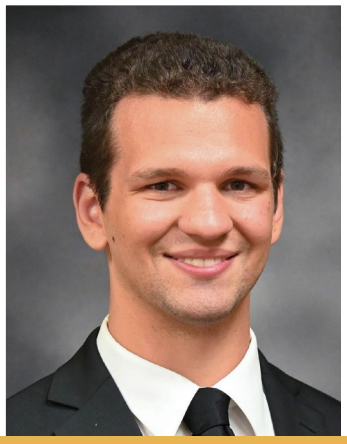
What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Advent always grounds me back into the mystery of Jesus Christ. Reflecting on the Incarnation and preparing for His second coming helps me raise my eyes to the horizon and remember the big picture of the Christian life.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Nothing brightens my day quite like a meaningful conversation with a friend. It can be about almost anything, as I have a variety of interests. That said, simply being with someone in an intentional way is deeply meaningful to me. It helps me remember that my time is best spent not being productive or focusing on my self-improvement (although these things are important) but paying attention to the people I love.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Love Jesus. There is nothing more important in discerning any vocation than to fall madly in love with Jesus Christ. Pray that He will show Himself to you in a new way so that you might fall more deeply in love with Him. Then, chase after Jesus wherever He leads you. It will be a crazy adventure, but each step must be born from that first fundamental love for Jesus. Don't fixate on what you're doing, but instead on *who* you're with. If He wants to be with you in the priesthood, He will lead you there.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
My "missionary goal" has always been to let people know how much Jesus loves them — to let His love be heard. I try to live that out by first accepting that love for myself. If I do not let Him love me, then I can't share His love. For me, growing in missionary discipleship has always meant growing closer to Jesus so I can receive love from Him and then share that love. When I let Jesus love me and start to see myself as He sees me, I begin to change, growing more joyful and more free. When people see this and ask me about it, I can provide a simple answer: I try to live my life in the love of Christ. My hope is that this will open them up to learn more about who Jesus is and just how much He loves them. By living out of Jesus' love for me, I can invite others to encounter that love in their own lives.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human is to love. We are made in the image and likeness of God, and as St. John tells us, "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8). The thing that makes us uniquely human is our ability to give and receive love. First, we can receive the love of God in a special way, especially because God became human in the person of Jesus Christ and loved with a human heart. Second, we can give and share love with each other. The love we receive from God can flow through us to others, and that changes the world. All our creativity, intellectual pursuits, and dreams take on new meaning when we understand them as responses to the love of God to be shared with the world. This is what distinguishes humans from other creatures and especially from machines. We have the capacity to receive eternal love from Love Himself. The more deeply we embrace this love and share it with those around us, the more truly we become magnificently human.



DAVID MARTENS

SEMINARY
Conception Seminary College
PO Box 502
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Discipleship IV

BIRTHDAY
October 13

PARISH
St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Green Bay

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Peter.
He is a profound example of what it means to be in relationship with the Lord and how to follow Him as a true disciple.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I grew up listening to Christian metal and continue to enjoy it while driving or doing homework.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
I love the Christmas season because of the beauty and joy it brings. It is a special time to consider God's love in all that He has given us, which we celebrate with family, friends, food, football, and snow.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
As is typical for a young adult male, food is particularly appealing to me. A simple bowl of ice cream always improves my day. You can't get much better than a bowl of vanilla ice cream on any given day, especially on a warm summer evening.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Some of the best discernment advice I received in high school was from our former vocation director, Fr. Mleziva. He encouraged me to intentionally reflect on three questions regarding priesthood. First, do I believe the Lord is calling me? This is known through a relationship of prayer. Second, do I have the basic capacity to serve as a priest? Third, do I truly desire this life? The Lord will not force me into a vocation against my will, so desire is very important.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
St. Francis Xavier was such a prolific missionary because of a simple approach to evangelization. After helping found the Jesuit order, he was sent east to India and Japan. Once there, he loved the people around him without reserve. This simple, albeit challenging formula is applicable to my life as well. I strive to be present and loving to those around me. Baptizing tens of thousands of souls may not be what I am called to, but I can emulate St. Francis Xavier's love and joy, which lead to encounters of explicitly sharing the message of the Gospel. One difficult aspect of evangelization which St. Francis Xavier embodied thoroughly is constant, unwavering zeal for souls. Not only did he love joyfully, but the man was practically unstoppable. He was very conscious of the spiritual need of the souls around him, which spurred him to great love. In my life, this zeal can manifest itself in my approach to seminary studies and encountering the people of God, but it could always develop further.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human is to be loved. It is easy to see the sinfulness and imperfect nature of the world we live in. Since the beginning, human existence has been characterized by sin and destruction. Despite all of that, our very existence is the result of a profound love that gives each person dignity.

The Kerygma is the basic core of the Gospel and Church teaching. First, it says that God created us completely out of love. Second, humanity rebelled against that creative love, choosing the self over God. Third, God became man, suffered, and died for humanity to restore us to relationship with Him. The reason for this was simply because He wanted to. He loves us. He invites us into a loving relationship with Him, providing the Catholic Church as a guide. Finally, the Lord asks us to spread this invitation of His love to all of humanity. He asks us to evangelize others through love.

The result of the Kerygma is that each person is invited to receive God's love and, in turn, to share it with others. So, whether we realize it or not, each person is deeply loved. Humanity's existence is the fruit of love. Christ's redemptive act on behalf of man reveals God's love. We are actively invited into the dialogue of love with God and with others. The more we embrace that love, the more human we become.

CONNOR QUICK

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Discipleship IV

BIRTHDAY
June 6

PARISH
St. Patrick, Menasha

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
Servant of God Adele Brice.
After my cancer diagnosis last year, I asked many to beg for her intercession on my behalf. Praise God – in June, I received a clean bill of health.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I listen to a lot of indie folk. My most listened to song on Spotify for many years now has been "Hopeless Wanderer" by Mumford and Sons.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Advent is always an exciting time for me. I enjoy the eager expectation of the season as well as the Rorate Caeli Masses. Additionally, I renew my Marian consecration each year on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This renewal is something I look forward to each year.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Though it is already part of my day-to-day routine, something that always makes my day a little bit better is a good cup of homemade coffee. I prefer to make my own coffee, and I've gotten pretty good at it. A pour over is my go-to, but I've recently become fond of using a moka pot for a cafe con leche.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
What I'd offer to say is, "Fall in love with Jesus". As we grow in relationship with God, it becomes easier for us to hear His voice and to have the courage to respond. This sort of love enables us to promise our faithfulness. This "falling in love" is often associated with strong emotions. However, the kind of love that comes after is maintained by choice and strengthened by habit. So, fall in love with our Lord and let your every decision be made out of love for Him. To do any act not out of love would be a waste.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
I begin with prayer. To be a missionary disciple, one must always begin with prayer. It is in prayer that God fills our souls with His grace and mercy. Whatever overflows from that place becomes our good works in the world. As a result, our good works are really only God's good works done through us. Filled with the superabundance of God's gifts, we go out and share with the world all that we have received, giving an account of the hope that is in us (cf. 1 Pt 3:15). As we go, we will inevitably encounter others and accompany them along the narrow path we are also trying to follow. To be slightly more practical, being a missionary disciple is living out my faith boldly. It means courageously following Jesus wherever He might lead.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To define what it means to be human, it is essential to understand where we come from. Genesis spells this out for us very simply, stating that man is created by God and is made in His image and likeness. It is equally important to know that God made man good and that goodness is essential to the nature of being human. That said, this original goodness is corrupted by sin. Like dust on a mirror blurs an image being reflected, so sin obscures man's original goodness. God loves man so much that He was not content to leave them in the shadow of their sin. Rather, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, that man might be healed of his infirmity and reconciled with his Creator. Man is also distinct from God's other creatures in how he thinks and loves. Man can embellish these faculties by choosing to think and love well, or he can persist in his illness of sin by choosing immoral behavior. Lastly, the end of man is to live forever in perfect unity with his Creator, being drawn ever deeper into the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

GABRIEL WALKER

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
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Discipleship IV

BIRTHDAY
January 1

PARISH
Ss. Edward and Isidore, Flintville

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
St. Philip Neri.
I desire his joyful heart and burning love for God. With his help, may I be a beacon of the Father's love in a world of darkness.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
Over the years, I have listened to a variety of music, but country and folk style music have been the go-to genres.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Since a young age, I have always enjoyed serving and entering the Triduum at the Cathedral. Lent isn't always enjoyable, but knowing the Lord has conquered death come Easter Sunday makes it all worth it.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
My morning routine. Typically, a great morning consists of waking up early so I can spend time with our Lord, drinking some coffee, and getting some form of physical activity in. I enjoy a workout or a run at sunrise. The Lord uses the morning to help prepare me for the day that is to come.

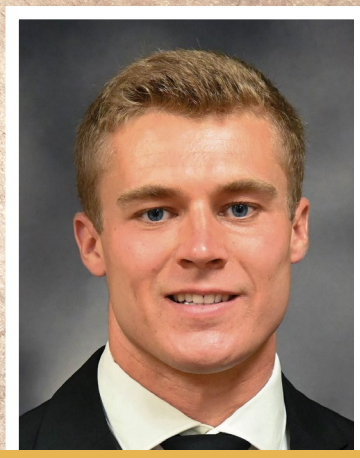
What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Keep saying "yes"! In order to hear the call, it is necessary to spend time in prayer communicating with our Creator. When you are close with our Creator, you will hear His voice. He may invite you to a St. Andrew Dinner, a silent retreat, to serve at the altar, to talk with a priest, or to enter the Kairos Year. Trust in the Lord and say "yes" when He prompts you with an invitation. When it seems scary to take the next step, ask for Mother Mary's help because she gives a perfect example of trust.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
Missionaries like St. Francis Xavier, Fr. Samuel Mazzucheli, Fr. Claude Allouez, St. Isaac Jogues, and Ven. Bishop Baraga have left an example of being radically dependent on God when in the mission field. They traveled through all the elements to bring the Gospel and sacraments to those in need. All of them were willing to give their lives for the faith.

Over the last few years, I have learned more about these missionaries. They have challenged me to be great in the little things by their trust in the face of challenges. I seek to be radically dependent on the Lord so that when the storms come, I can trust that He will provide. The Gospel still needs to be shared as it was shared before. Everywhere we go is mission territory, so let's get after it! Lord, help me to be great in the little things.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be a human is one of the greatest gifts from our Creator because it is an expression of His great love for us. In the summer of 2026, I had the great privilege of teaching first and second graders during Totus Tuus about how God created us in His image and likeness. The children are fascinated by the love their Creator has for them and the tools they have been given for the mission.

God created the mountains which are beautiful and magnificent, but the pinnacle of His creation is you. He gave us a soul, intellect, and free will which separate us from other living things. These tools are what allow us to grow in the likeness of our Creator. God has given us the ability to be co-creators in His creation. As humans, we must strive to grow in holiness and virtue and to model our lives after Jesus Christ who is the ultimate example of the Father's love. When I was with the children, I had them repeat a statement that is true and helps us remember the importance of the gift that God gave us: "My life matters!" Why does it matter? Because God created you out of love and for a special mission which is to love God and to love others. If we know the importance of our life, then we will know where true happiness lives and how to share that love with those around us. My life matters!



CALEB DELSMAN

SEMINARY
St. Francis de Sales Seminary
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Discipleship III

BIRTHDAY
October 7

PARISH
St. Clare; Wrightstown,
Greenleaf, Askeaton

CONTACT
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INTERCESSOR
Bl. Jerzy Popiełuszko.
He has made himself very present in my prayer life. Jerzy, a Polish priest known for his passion in preaching, was martyred for speaking the truth. I desire this courage.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
My favorite genre is silence. However, in the case that I do listen to music, I prefer old country musicians like Garth Brooks and Allen Jackson.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
The Sacred Triduum because of the way it prepares the Church for Christ's resurrection. I particularly enjoy entering into the spirit of Holy Saturday. On Holy Saturday, we simply wait for Christ to rise and save us from our sins. This is a special opportunity to grow in faith.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Spending time outside never fails. This could be as simple as going for a walk or even just standing outside. Some of my favorite outdoor activities include hunting and playing any kind of sport. Getting outside gives me a chance to more intentionally enjoy God's creation and reframe any challenges I experience throughout the day.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
You should spend at least 30 minutes a day in silent prayer attempting to just be with God. "God, who are you?" What is God like towards you during these times of prayer? After this habit is formed, you can begin asking, "How are you calling me to give my life away?" The first question allows you to grow in your primary vocation which is to know, love, and serve God. The second question will help you understand your secondary vocation (priesthood, marriage, etc.). Always remember that in the end, He will be the one to figure everything out.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
First, by seeking to know Jesus in a very intimate way and asking Him to give me a great zeal for souls. If I do not know Christ, I cannot share Him with others. One of my favorite Bible passages is 1 Corinthians 2:1-5. Paul writes to the Corinthians reminding them that he preached to them not with lofty words and worldly wisdom. Rather, he preached only Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ crucified. Paul knows that God does the convincing. The love in Paul's heart could not be denied. I believe one's effectiveness in living as a missionary disciple is entirely dependent on one's docility to the Holy Spirit in the present moment. "Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful." He is the action of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, He is the action of my attempts to evangelize. I seek to be a disciple who swiftly adheres to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human is to say and do as we pray in the Our Father: "Thy kingdom come, thy Will be done." We do this by exercising the faculties that distinguish us as human beings, our will and intellect, in a way that praises, reverences, and serves God. These faculties are gifts from God. If we fail to use them, we stoop to our animal instincts and ultimately become less human. What a responsibility! Sometimes I think a dog has it easy because it perfectly does God's will by simply being a dog! Luckily for us, we have dominion over a dog. That said, do we have dominion over our own animal instincts? Our will can help us here. Holding this dominion is a big part of what it means to be human. The will and the intellect working together allow human beings to be creative. Ideally, we create systems, literature, theories, and objects that praise, reverence, and serve God. The will and intellect complement one another. As we use our intellect and gain understanding of how things are, we are empowered to use our will for good. Then, Christ is able to work through us even more effectively as we seek to accomplish His will.

I believe being human means to practice living the present moment in a way that prepares us for the eternal moment – eternity with God in Heaven: "Thy kingdom come, thy Will be done."

CHARLES MATERNOSKI

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Discipleship III

BIRTHDAY
December 20

PARISH
Ss. Edward & Isidore, Flintville

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INTERCESSOR
St. Teresa of Calcutta.
Her "I Thirst" reflection is beautiful to meditate on. I ask myself how I am satiating Jesus' thirst for souls. First, I must recognize His thirst for my own soul.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
Almost any genre. If I like a country song, I add it to my "favorite songs" playlist. That playlist may include pop, 80's, Christian, or any song that tickles my fancy.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Christmas is my favorite liturgical season. We get to celebrate the Incarnation for eight days straight, while also honoring the Holy Family and the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God! Easter is second, but I love the month of December, helping Christmas take the #1 spot in my power rankings.

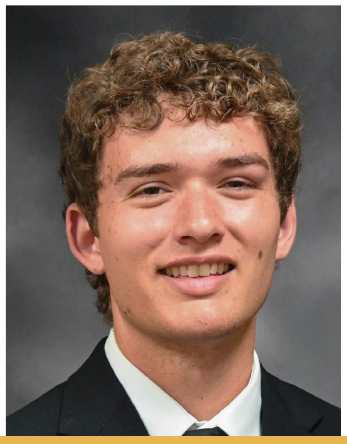
What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Having a conversation on the phone with a family member or a friend. I try to call someone each day as a little break from my work. It serves to reinvigorate me and helps me to continue to foster our relationship! A daily conversation with Jesus also always makes my day better!

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
It is ultimately about whether or not you are loving Jesus with your whole self. Do not get into the mindset of, "I cannot be a priest because of X, Y, or Z." Simply love Jesus fully wherever you are in life, and He will guide you to your vocation. Do this particularly through daily prayer and frequenting the sacraments. If you need to make a choice, just choose. As long as you are loving Jesus in that place of discernment, you cannot go wrong.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
It is not the easiest to live as a missionary disciple in seminary. That said, living the life that the Lord has called me to in seminary is the best way I can be a missionary disciple. Through daily prayer, the sacraments, and being a witness to the Risen Christ, I can best live out my call to missionary discipleship. All of this preparation is oriented towards a higher call of more intentional missionary discipleship, which (God-willing) will occur in six years when I give myself fully to Christ as a priest. This summer, I also had the opportunity to serve our diocese through Totus Tuus. It was a beautiful way to show the youth of our diocese the joy that comes from being a disciple of Christ.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human is to know who you are and to know the person you are created to be. You are made for a relationship with God. Your identity ought to be rooted in said relationship. From that identity flows a supernatural mission. You must acknowledge first that you are living in a fallen world but recognize that there is someone in this fallen world who loves you perfectly and desires to spend eternity with you. The acknowledgment of who you are leads to an understanding that you are created for a relationship with Jesus. Humanity is not made for this world but for Heaven. An identity within this world must not be of the world. We can still have things of the world, but we must not allow those things to supersede that of our most true identity, rooted in relationship with Christ. As we grow in relationship with Jesus, and understand who we are in relationship to Him, He calls us to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt. 28:19).

Every human person's relationship, identity, and mission looks different. That said, at the heart of it all, we must acknowledge that earth is a temporary home for us and we are called to live a life set apart for God.



NOAH VANDEN WYMELENBERG

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Discipleship III

BIRTHDAY
August 18

PARISH
St. Clare; Wrightstown,
Greenleaf, Askeaton

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INTERCESSOR
St. Joan of Arc.
I hope to replicate her magnanimity and fearless faith. "She is easily and by far the most extraordinary person the human race has ever produced." – Mark Twain

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I listen to any song that has a good message or rhythm.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Christmas is my favorite season because of the joy and peace it brings to the world. All of creation led up to that point – the birth of Christ. Christmas is a time of celebration but also silence and prayer, keeping in mind the mission Christ had before Him.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Taking a walk by myself or with brother seminarians or spending time outside always makes my day better. I've always loved the outdoors. Fishing, playing sports, or other outdoor activities always help me to clear my head and relieve any stress accumulated throughout the day. I have recently implemented praying the Rosary while I walk, which has slowly become one of my favorite parts of the day.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
I would tell him two things: God is never outdone in generosity, and you will never have the complete picture, so you must take a leap of faith. There are possibly many things you are giving up: college, a prospective career, and relationships among other things. It is important to remember that whatever you give God, He will give back to you a hundredfold. It can also be hard to take that first step because you never know what could happen. Just remember that fear of the unknown is an invitation to grow closer to Christ.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
In our modern society, giving up control and abandoning your plans to God's plan for you is not very popular. People cannot fathom that giving up control brings more joy and peace than following their own whims and desires. I have found an immense amount of joy and peace in my vocation and in following God's will for my life. That is why I seek to be a missionary disciple by witnessing to those around me that joy can be found in God's plan. Although I may not be evangelizing in the same manner as St. Francis Xavier who preached and catechized in foreign lands, my witness is just as loud and powerful. I've had people ask, "Why are you so happy?" or "I sense you have a lot of peace." That is the invitation to tell them why. When people see that listening and discerning their vocation can lead to joy and fulfillment, their disposition towards abandonment shifts, and they are more willing to follow Christ.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human means to desire, above all else, to love and be loved, especially by God. While on poverty immersion in Detroit during the Kairos Year, I encountered a man at the local food pantry. I was at the front desk scanning identification cards when he asked me if there were any possible job opportunities at the facility. I said I was unsure since I was just a volunteer and only there for the week. He seemed astonished that I was a volunteer and asked me, "You would do that for me?" This man had never experienced sacrificial love before in his life, and it was here that he first encountered it. I realized then and there that this man, and every other person at that food pantry, desired to be loved more than anything else. This is all rooted in a deeper desire to love and be loved by God. To be human also is to fail over and over again, but to run back to God and ask for forgiveness every time. It's out of love that we run to Him in times of weakness, and it's out of love that He forgives us whenever we ask.

NATHAN WOLF

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Discipleship III

BIRTHDAY
April 25

PARISH
St. Nicholas, Freedom

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INTERCESSOR
St. Thomas Aquinas.
As I enter philosophy studies this year, he is an inspiration to study diligently and place my relationship with the Lord before all else.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
Country music is my favorite, particularly when it tells a unique story. Also, it often has my favorite instrument, the fiddle!

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
My favorite liturgical season is Lent because when I strip back distractions through fasting and increase focus on prayer, it has always led to great spiritual growth.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Seeing my one-year-old niece is something that always brightens up my day. It amazes me how much she grows every time I see her, and I never get tired of answering her seemingly endless questions of, "What's this?" I look forward to attending St. Francis de Sales in Milwaukee this year, very close to where she lives. I hope to see her more often.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
The advice I would give to a discerner is to pray consistently in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and to ask Him to make His will known. I would also encourage him to not be afraid and trust in the Lord. If the priesthood is God's will for the discerner, then it will bring more joy than one could ever imagine. Another practical thing I found very helpful in my own discernment was reading the book *To Save a Thousand Souls* by Fr. Brett Brannen.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
St. Francis Xavier is one of the Church's greatest missionaries and has been an inspiring example and intercessor for me. Following his example, the first and most basic step I try to live in missionary discipleship is to be a follower of Jesus. I strive to first know Jesus through a life rooted in prayer. The great joy of the Gospel, then, naturally flows into a missionary spirit as we heed Jesus' command to "go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15). We are compelled to share the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection with the world once we discover it ourselves. In sharing the Gospel, one inspiration I try to follow from St. Francis Xavier is to always show great joy and enthusiasm. This appeals to people in a world lacking hope. "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope" (1 Pt 3:15). St. Francis Xavier, pray for us!

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
From the beginning, humans were created in the image and likeness of God, but another distinguishing feature of humanity is our limitations. We are finite beings and are only capable of so much. In the first sin, Adam and Eve rebelled against God by refusing to accept their limitations and attempting to gain wisdom that belongs to God alone. Pope Leo XIV lays out in *Magnifica Humanitas* the example of the Tower of Babel, a prideful monument meant to replace our need for God. As we advance in technology, humanity can increasingly pretend it has no limitations. Machines can replace our physical labor, the internet can magnify our knowledge, and now AI has the potential to substitute our use of reason and creativity. This kind of technological advancement is not inherently bad but can lead to a fundamental misunderstanding of what it means to be human as we try to erase all limitations.

Instead of only relying on our own work to advance past our natural obstacles, God desires us to rely on Him. "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). Our weakness is meant to be a place where we can encounter God. He wants to fulfill all our deepest desires and heal our wounds, but we often lack trust and attempt to find fulfillment in this world through our own work. To be truly human means we must accept our own limitations while cooperating with God's grace and placing our faith in God to perfect us in our weakness.

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Discipleship II

BIRTHDAY
September 28

PARISH
Our Lady of Lourdes,
De Pere

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INTERCESSOR
St. Joseph.
I desire this year to focus on growing in purity of word, action, and thought. There is no greater intercessor than the one who has the most chaste heart.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
The music I like to listen to most is either Christian music or instrumental.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
My favorite liturgical season is Advent because it was a pivotal time in my discernment before entering seminary. I am also a big fan of the St. Andrew novena which primarily takes place during Advent.

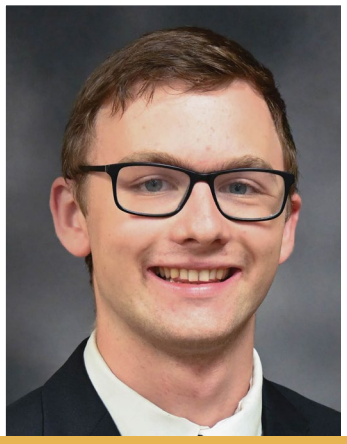
What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
A small thing that makes my day better is sitting outside early in the morning while drinking a cup of coffee. Starting the day with silence, taking in some fresh air, and taking in the rising sun gets the mind right. The coffee is just a normal part of my morning.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
STOP OVERTHINKING IT! Build a strong daily prayer routine. Receive the sacraments frequently, have a conversation with a priest you know as well as other people you trust who can answer questions, make sure you're getting enough sleep, and make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Champion (you should probably make a few). Keeping it simple helps reduce some of the back-and-forth that occurs during discernment. Always trust in the Lord and where He has you. There is a reason that you are thinking about it; let Him be the one to guide you.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
At its simplest, a missionary disciple is someone who actively brings Christ to those around him. In the context of seminary, being a missionary disciple is lived out in a very certain way. Everyone in seminary has a relationship with Jesus, so it is more focused on being a cheerleader for them to grow in a deeper desire to become a saint. I seek to be present to and pray for the seminary community that they follow the will of God. To follow Christ, first and foremost, is to grow in holiness, and to follow whatever secondary vocation God desires for them. During the school year, there are many opportunities to be in the public and serve others in the community. To bring Christ is to help them know how loved they are by their Creator, and to encourage them to live a holy life with Jesus and the sacraments at the center.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
The first few chapters of the book of Genesis summarize the roles that humans were made to do, including the need to love others. The majority of the tasks given to Adam in the garden were for the good of both Adam and Eve. The basic things we do should have others' needs in mind, with the aim of their good. However, the roles of humans are not the end to which we live, but the means by which we achieve the end. The end to which we live is to be in communion with God. The more one lives in what we are made to do, the more we are fully human. In reverse, sin makes us less like the humans we were made to be. Humans were made to worship and sacrifice to God, as is evident throughout the Old Testament. Either worship God or other idols – we always worship.

The Incarnation of the Son of God gave us the ideal for how to be the most human. He lived a perfect life that highlighted how to be human to the fullest, all stemming from sacrificial love, the epicenter of which was his crucifixion. The secondary vocations we are called to all focus on the self-sacrifice manifested in the crucifixion. To be human is to imitate Christ and his example of sacrificial love.



HENRY VANDE HEY

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Discipleship II

BIRTHDAY
January 3

PARISH
St. Katharine Drexel, Kaukauna

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INTERCESSOR
St. Aloysius Gonzaga.
When he joined seminary, he lovingly embraced formation, even though the ways they were asking him to pray and live were quite different from his earlier life.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
The music I listen to most is classic or folk rock.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Though all the seasons are beautiful, Christmas has a special place in my heart. Christ the King came from Heaven to win our hearts. He is all-powerful yet He chose to come to us as a child. For these reasons, Christmas is my favorite liturgical season.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
A hug goes a long way. Whenever I'm feeling down, I can always count on a hug from my grandmas, my grandpa, or my mom or dad. After a hug from one of these, I instantly feel better. Just knowing of their unconditional love for me in those moments does wonders to make my day better.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Commit to time in front of the Blessed Sacrament. The best way to discern God's call is by growing in relationship with Him. As we grow in that relationship, we begin to understand His desires for us and the desires He has long planted in our hearts. One of the best ways to grow in a relationship with God is through consistent time in adoration, no matter how painful it gets. An hour might be too long to commit to each day. Just start with 15 minutes and work your way up slowly. God will reveal His heart to you.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
One way I seek to live as a missionary disciple is by trying to stay docile to the workings of the Holy Spirit in everyday moments. It is so easy to get caught up in the work of the moment like a paper I need to write or the books I need to read. However, I try to live according to what the Lord asks of me at any given moment. Most of the time, what God really wants of me is to write that paper or read that book. That said, there are plenty of other moments throughout the week where the Lord asks me to give myself in little ways like reaching out to someone and asking how his day went or cleaning up after someone else. St. Therese of Lisieux, who is the patroness of the missions, provides me with my playbook. If I can be anything like her, bringing the love of Jesus into everything I do, then I will be able to bring the most people to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
I feel most human when I have a healthy spiritual life, intellectual life, and community life. We were made for God. Therefore, I am most myself when I am living the life He has in store for me. He intends for me to seek Him in the transcendentals: Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. This is a broad scope of where I can search for God. As a result, I am given much freedom within my responsibility to search for Him. I can seek God while studying any subject because everything always points towards His magnificence. I personally like to seek Him by reading great literature.

In literature, I learn truths about the world and how God made man. Classic literature teaches me about the goodness of His creation, even through difficult passages. There have also been numerous times I have had to set down a book after a chapter because of how beautiful or powerful it was. The amount of tears I have shed while reading novels would be embarrassing to most. That said, these emotional experiences are evidence of my intimate encounter with our Creator in well-written novels.

While reading good literature can be moving, I must be careful not to lose myself in the fiction of novels. A good and holy community helps me to remain grounded in the real. It grounds me in the reality of the world and helps me to build up my relationship with God.

BENJAMIN BOHMAN

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Kairos Year

BIRTHDAY
September 17

PARISH
St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, Greenville

CONTACT
bbohman123@gmail.com

INTERCESSOR
St. Thomas Aquinas.
He is my patron saint, and I want nothing more than to embody all the virtues he excelled in, especially his knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and chastity.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
My favorite kind of music is music that favors the guitar and is technically complex. I love all music that takes a lot of skill to make.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
The Easter season is my favorite. There is nothing more gratifying than having a great sacrificial Lent and reaping the spiritual benefits that come from it.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Giving God the gratitude which is due to Him always seems to make my day better. Admittedly, I do not do it often enough. That said, there is nothing that flips my perspective on a day or a task more than expressing this gratitude. It can be easy to let challenges or small sacrifices bring down my mood. Recognizing that all is a gift from God and thanking Him for it always helps to bring purpose to my struggles.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Immerse yourself in prayer and the sacraments! Opening yourself up to God's grace will allow you to more easily recognize His voice and discern what He wants from you. The entirety of the discernment process is all about discerning what God is calling you to. It is a deeply relational process between you and God. Just like all relationships, it can be hard to know what someone wants from you if you do not speak with them and spend time with them. For me, adoration was so important for recognizing my call and finding the courage to listen.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
The most important aspect of a missionary disciple is to, first and foremost, truly be a disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. Disciples strive to reflect Christ in prayer, virtue, and sacrifice. A priest once shared that we must first receive to properly give. If we do not receive the grace of God, we will never be effective in sharing Christ. The Holy Spirit is the one who converts the heart of every man. A missionary disciple is a disciple who has received and then goes out to meet new people and new communities for the purpose of bringing Christ to them. Many think that a missionary must go to foreign lands or communities, but that is not the whole story. The first mission of any Catholic is to bring Christ to his neighbors, friends, and family. My most fulfilling experience was helping to bring two friends into the Catholic Church, and I hope to repeat this experience as much as possible.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be a human means to be created in the image of God. All humans are equal in dignity and value. I believe that God views humans as the crown of His creation. The greatest created being of all time is the Blessed Virgin Mary! Even though angels have a more 'heavenly' nature, our nature prepares us to become even more like God. God Himself became man, after all.

The purpose of humanity is to serve God, to love Him, and to eventually experience Him in his fullness in eternal life. The Book of Genesis reveals that humans are not made to be alone. We are social beings, and isolation is a dangerous thing that can drag us down if we are not careful. This highlights how important it is for all humans to remain connected. We are even blessed to share a connection in prayer with the saints!

I heard once that the social nature of human beings is a reflection of the relationship each person of the Trinity has with the others. The sacramental bond of marriage, in particular, reflects the Trinity. This is just another example of how humans truly are made in the image of God! He desires us to be like Him in everything we do, which I will strive for throughout my time in seminary.

STEPHEN DCAMP

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Kairos Year

BIRTHDAY
August 17

PARISH
Most Blessed Sacrament,
Oshkosh

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INTERCESSOR
St. Ignatius of Loyola.
Throughout my discernment, St. Ignatius has been with me, helping to guide me in learning about his life, praying with the Ignatian examen, or using Ignatian meditation when reading scripture.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
A little bit of everything: rock, classical, jazz, pop, and sacred polyphony. If you do not know that one, look it up; you will not be disappointed!

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
The season of Advent! I have so many wonderful memories of going to church during this season. I have always felt drawn to the joyful expectation at the Incarnation that this season calls us to.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
It would have to be either going for a walk or hike at sunrise or sunset. This allows me to experience the beauty of creation. Otherwise, getting to spend some time with a friend always makes my day better. It is even better if both of these happen at the same time.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Pray, hope, and do not worry. If you think you might be called to discern priesthood, commit to growing your prayer life. Have hope in the Lord and trust that He knows you better than you know yourself. God is not going to call you to something that would be detrimental to you. Do not worry! No amount of fretting will make the right choice appear, nor will it change God's plan for your life. Finally, do not forget to talk to your priest. There is so much to be gained in having someone help you on your path of discernment.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
One of the main ways I seek to live out a life as a missionary disciple is to strive to recognize Christ in everyone I encounter throughout my day. In the day to day, this tends to be rather small. I take care to give people my time and attention when they need it and to remember what people have told me. In a culture that is so saturated with instant and impersonal digital interactions, repeated care and attention to the dignity of each individual through these small interactions is so important. By being attentive to those I interact with and sharing my faith through these encounters, I have been able to have very deep and unexpected conversations with people. My prayer is always that throughout the course of these interactions, they can come to know Christ just as I come to know Christ more through encountering them.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
I am reminded of the quotation, "To err is human, to forgive divine." As humans, we are called to holiness, but we live in a fallen world; we make mistakes and get back up again. The hope each time we stumble is to learn from our failings and continue to grow in holiness and closeness to God. When we sin, when we fall from the path of holiness, we must get back up with the help of God's mercy. In making mistakes, we also come to learn from mistakes. To be human is to learn, to grow, and to desire something more: holiness and union with God. As we learn and discover what is true, good, and beautiful, God ultimately reveals more of who He is to us and to those around us. When we learn and study, whatever it might be, we are studying God. When we learn how to paint, to write a sentence, or to balance a math equation, we are learning more about the universe and so also its Creator. To be human is to err; we will inevitably fall on our journey towards holiness, but we must get back up as many times as it takes so we can know and follow Christ to the end.

THOMAS FRITZ

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Kairos Year

BIRTHDAY
December 1

PARISH
St. Jude the Apostle, Oshkosh

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INTERCESSOR
St. Patrick.
He has long been my patron saint. His willingness to answer the call and return to the place of his captivity to share the Gospel has continued to inspire me throughout my life.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
My favorite artist is George Strait, and I generally enjoy country music from the 1980s to early 2000s.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
Lent has been my favorite liturgical season for years now. The times spent in more intense prayer, fasting, and focus on the crucifixion serve as a powerful reminder of how much our Lord loves us and makes the joys of Easter that much greater afterwards.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
An encounter with wildlife almost always brightens my day, be it a birdsong in the morning, crickets chirping in the evening, watching a rabbit munch a dandelion, or seeing squirrels hide nuts. Just having a moment to watch them live their simple lives amongst the hustle and bustle of our world reminds me of the beauty of creation. This beauty can so easily be lost in all of the noise.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
My own discernment has been greatly helped by taking my time, being intentional about this discernment in prayer, and speaking about it honestly with a few trusted individuals. I have not had all the answers or everything figured out perfectly, but as I have felt called to take each step, I have taken them in trust that He will not lead me astray and will correct me if I overstep. If you are feeling called, even if you are unsure, I would recommend treating it with all due seriousness and openness to the possibilities it may provide.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
Living the Gospel by word and deed is how I seek to live as a missionary disciple. I want others to notice the love of Christ through my everyday behavior and actions, even if I may not have the chance to speak with them directly. Most often, I aim to do this through simple acts of charity, sometimes as simple as listening to someone's concerns or providing support and encouragement in the face of adversity. In conversation, I have enjoyed sharing with friends and coworkers how Christ has transformed my life, bringing me from a place of sin and hopelessness to healing and joy. He has done such marvelous things in my own life so far, and I know He can do the same for them if they allow Him to. I have great hope that even my friends most distant from Him will slowly be drawn into His fold as I continue to express God's love.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To be human is unique among creation, bearing the image and likeness of our Creator and Heavenly Father. While other creatures may possess some ability to know and choose things, the human unity of both a material body and rational soul is not found anywhere else. As computers and machines grow in power and capability, they have been able to generate seemingly impressive works of art, sometimes in manners far more technically capable than many of us. That said, the works produced by computers have an emptiness to them, as they are ultimately just the results of formulas and calculations: electrons flying through microchips to produce a mathematically pleasing image. In contrast, even the far less capable image produced by a child is so rich in comparison. A simple crayon drawing of a car or a dog, drawn and presented to a beloved friend or family member, is much more valuable to the recipient than anything produced by a computer alone, as the child pours all his heart into his work. This inclusion of our own selves in our works is unique to us and is something a machine cannot do. The machines are finite and solely material, bound by the laws of physics. The human possesses a transcendent, immortal soul, and this very immaterial essence is something the physical machine cannot replicate.

EVAN GRADE

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Kairos Year

BIRTHDAY
October 9

PARISH
St. Mary, Appleton

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INTERCESSOR
St. Thérèse of Lisieux.
Because of her little way of allowing God to work through her life.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I enjoy listening to classic rock, classic pop, and some country music.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
My favorite liturgical season is Easter because of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. Our faith stands upon the truth of the crucifixion and resurrection, which is why Easter is my favorite season.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
One thing that almost always makes my day better is praying with my mom. We don't have too much time to spend together, but we do enjoy praying together. Sometimes we will pray with scripture or simply just talk about our own faith lives.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
If I were giving advice to a young man discerning the priesthood, the first thing I would tell them to do is pray. As children of God, our main call is to holiness and to be a holy disciple of Jesus. Without prayer, it becomes very difficult to hear the Lord's calling in our lives. Along with prayers, I would encourage building strong faith-centered relationships with others. Community will greatly shape your faith, life, and relationship with the Lord. Finally, spiritual direction can help to deepen your faith and discernment.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
Living as a missionary disciple begins with accepting my identity as a beloved son of God. In order to serve God and follow His mission, I have to accept His love on a constant basis. Seeking to live as a missionary disciple in my life starts with prayer. Prayer is the baseline of mission work and discipleship. One of the ways I seek to live as a missionary disciple is with those close to me, specifically family and friends. I hope that my prayer life and actions reveal Jesus to those close to me. In this way, I can be a resource for them in the faith. Another way I hope to live as a missionary disciple is with the people I see that I do not know. From small interactions at cash registers to a simple "hello" passing by, I desire to always have a positive impact in others' lives. Finally, serving in the community and helping at my parish is a way I seek to live as a missionary disciple.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
To me, being human means needing the Lord in our lives and being a wonderful creation of God. He is the Creator of our world, our lives, and everything good. Being human does mean that we have a fallen nature and original sin. We are in need of God's mercy and His forgiveness. However, part of being human also means that this is overcome by Jesus Christ and His death on the cross and resurrection. As human beings, without God we can do nothing, but with God we are capable of anything. Without God, we can't fight our sinful nature or overcome struggles, but with God our sin is forgiven. With God, we are able to bring about wonderful things. We are loved beyond our sin, and God has given us the grace to love others beyond their sin. In our wonderful and fallen humanity, Jesus has shown His love through the cross and the Eucharist. Another part of being human means not fully understanding God's love. While this might be the case, we can spend all of our time on earth growing in a deeper understanding of that love.

EMMANUEL VANDE HEY

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BIRTHDAY
December 29

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INTERCESSOR
St. Ignatius of Loyola.
I went to St. Ignatius Catholic School in Kaukauna, and St. Ignatius is a patron saint of spiritual discernment, which is crucial for me as I discern my vocation.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I like to listen to '60s and '70s pop. I especially enjoy The Beatles and Paul Simon.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
My favorite liturgical season is Lent. It culminates in Holy Week, where we follow the Lord's Passion and join our suffering to His. Lent also contains the Annunciation, which is one of the most important solemnities and my personal favorite.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Saying a little prayer praising or thanking God always makes my day better. If something good happens, I thank God for his incredible generosity. If something bad happens, I thank God for giving me an opportunity to grow in holiness. It makes me feel better to remind myself that God is behind everything and that everything happens according to His plan.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
My advice to a young man discerning a priestly vocation would be to discern only one thing at a time. Do not date a girl and try to discern priesthood at the same time. Our brains cannot multitask and everything will just confuse you more. Stick to discerning one thing at a time until you know who God is calling you to be. Also learn about St. Ignatius' "Rules for the Discernment of Spirits." They are a fantastic resource about desolation and consolation, and you will learn what to do in both scenarios.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
I seek to live as a missionary disciple through living the Gospel. Our mission is to love and serve God here on earth, become perfectly united with Him in Heaven, and to bring as many people to Heaven with us as we can. By living the Gospel, others will be drawn to me, and I can help bring them to the Lord. I strive and will continue to strive to be more like Jesus, both in character and in deed. Additionally, I pray for those who have lost their way, that they can come back to the Lord. I trust in Jesus that He will lead them back. It is so important to trust in Jesus as a missionary disciple. He is the Way, and so we must follow Him and trust in Him to fulfill our mission to reach paradise.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
Being human means to be made in the image and likeness of God. We, as humans, are God's children and are loved most by Him, our Creator. Other creatures are not made in God's likeness. We are different from angels too, who are only spirits without bodies. We are almost like a combination of angel and animal, making humans the perfect creatures. We are a body and soul composite.

To be human also means that we can replicate things into art. Animals cannot make or appreciate art. Humans can see something, take note of it, and recreate it in a form of art. We can understand and contemplate things, striving for the truth, and put them down in various forms of art.

Being human is to be loved by God, but also to be given the choice to love Him back. We can see His love and everything He does for us and either accept it or reject it. We can put it down on paper and share His love with others. In God's love for us as His sons and daughters, He gives us free will. This is essential to being human. With this, we can choose to respond to his love.

JACKSON WURTH

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Kairos Year

BIRTHDAY
September 8

PARISH
St. Bernadette, Appleton

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INTERCESSOR
St. Maria Goretti.
She is one of my confirmation saints and has been a powerful intercessor for me over the past few years. I greatly admire her purity of heart and love for Christ.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I like to enjoy a wide variety of music. Right now, my favorite genres are probably rock and Gregorian chant, which always provides me with a feeling of peace.

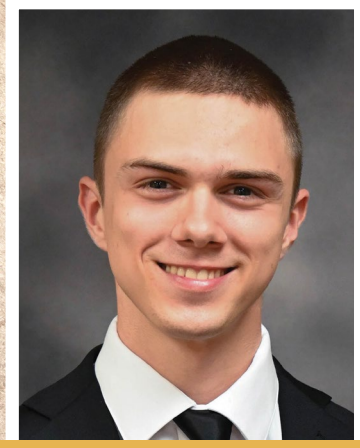
What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
I have always enjoyed Advent the most out of all the liturgical seasons. I love the anticipation for the coming of Jesus that grows throughout the four weeks. Also, I get to enjoy what is objectively the greatest Christmas movie ever made: *The Muppet Christmas Carol*.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Having a little time in my day to spend outdoors in God's creation always makes my day better. Ever since I was a kid, I have loved spending time in nature. Whether it is hiking, swimming, watching a sunset, or praying under the stars, I will take any chance I can to spend some time outside.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
A young man discerning the priesthood should take some advice from Nike and "just do it." Don't be afraid of what God might be calling you to. Persevere and keep going forward in your discernment of the priesthood, unless of course you genuinely discern that God is calling you in a different direction. Each one of us has been chosen and made by God with a certain vocation in mind that will fulfill us. No vocation is easy, but we have to trust that whatever we are called to will give us joy in Christ.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
A lot of times when people (including me) hear the words "missionary disciple," they think that it refers to people who go halfway around the world to preach the Gospel like St. Francis Xavier did. While this is a great way of living out missionary discipleship, it is most likely not the way that God is calling us to be missionaries. We can learn from St. Philip Neri's life that a lot of times God is calling us to be missionaries right where we are. Although St. Philip wanted to be like St. Francis Xavier, Jesus asked him to spread the good news right where he was in Rome. We are called to do the same. We must be missionaries to our classmates, coworkers, friends, and families. This is the main way that I seek to live as a missionary disciple. We must be simple and living examples of charity to the people that God places in our lives.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
What makes us human is that we are all beloved daughters and sons of the Father. We are chosen by Him. This is told to us in the first chapter of Genesis. In being made in God's image and likeness, we are given a unique dignity that is not shared with the rest of creation. The next logical question would probably be: what does it mean to be made in God's image and likeness? One of the central parts of being made in the image of God is our ability to love. Just as God loves, we are made to love others. As we do this, we grow in our holiness and in our likeness of God. Often, this means giving up something we like or doing something hard. To live fully, we have to prioritize the good of others. When I was in elementary school, a priest taught me that to find joy, we must put Jesus first, others second, and ourselves third. It is in this recognition of our own belovedness and our call to love that we fully live out our identity as human beings.



JOHN ZEPP

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Kairos Year

BIRTHDAY
September 4

PARISH
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INTERCESSOR
St. Lawrence.
He has been my advocate this summer and reminds me that the poor and suffering are the true wealth of the Church and that there is no pain great enough to overcome true joy.

What kind of music do you like to listen to?
I love Gregorian and Byzantine chant, movie soundtracks, American Civil War songs, and select oldies.

What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
My favorite liturgical season is the Triduum. In that season, we celebrate the Paschal Mystery and the offering of Christ as priest, altar, and sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. The Church has so many beautiful, moving liturgies which never fail to bring me to tears.

What is one small thing that almost always makes your day better?
Seeing the smile of someone who is truly joyful tends to always brighten my day. While the smiles of those who are simply happy, not joyful, can have some effect, it is nothing compared to the smile pouring forth genuine joy. A theologian once defined joy as "the contemplation of the good," and focusing on higher goods thus leads to a higher joy.

What advice would you give to a young man discerning a priestly vocation?
Be patient and trust in God. God loves you far more than you have ever loved anyone else, and He wants you to know your vocation more than you want to know it. God knows you better than you know yourself, so He knows how to get you there better than you yourself ever could. God knows what He's doing. Discerning will never be easy, but God's love and strength will get you through it with joy if you let Him. All you have to do is be truly open, which includes prayer, reading, and all those other elements of active discernment.

Our diocesan patron saint, St. Francis Xavier, is also the patron saint of missions. How do you seek to live as a missionary disciple?
Scripture tells us that God created us in his own image; we are made in the image of God. Man, then, shows God to others by his own nature. To show God to others is what it means to be a missionary. Therefore, man is naturally a missionary. However, when Adam and Eve sinned, they stained human nature. Imagine an image that falls in the mud: it is still an image, but it is corrupted. It no longer shows its subject to the world until the mud is removed.

So, fallen humans like me are called to be true missionaries by nature. In allowing Christ to sanctify us, we reveal Him to others. I seek to follow Christ and to be His disciple. Disciples do not just listen to their master's teachings. Rather, they follow Him closely: they go where He goes and do as He does, imitating Him in their lives. Missionary discipleship, then, is our imitation of Christ, our being true images of God. What follows is our natural evangelization to everyone we meet.

Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical is entitled *Magnifica Humanitas* (literally 'Magnificent Humanity'). For you, what does it mean to be human?
Man's humanity flows not from himself but from his Creator, and it is directed not toward himself but toward others. Scripture tells us, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him" (Gen 1:27). From this fact flows human nature in all its incomprehensible depth and magnificence. If man shares in the image of God, he shares, while in a finite way, in the infinite dignity of God. If man shares in the dignity of God, he shares with God certain unchanging rights. Every human being deserves and is indeed owed both love and respect. For this reason, man is bound to seek the greatest good, salvation, for himself and for others.

Being made in the image of God impacts more than man's dignity; man's very nature emulates the nature of God. St. John tells us that "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8), so man is made in the image of love. To love is to will the good of another, so man's nature is not to seek his own good but the good of others. This is why living life seeking pleasure and gratification tends to leave man so empty; he is acting contrary to his nature. He is rejecting God, who is love, and he is thus rejecting himself, who is the image of love.