

Diocese celebrates DIACONATE ORDINATIONS May 13

THIS MONTH, 10 NEW DEACONS WILL BE ORDAINED IN THE DIOCESE OF LANSING DURING A SPECIAL MASS CELEBRATED BY THE BISHOP.

TWO OF THE DIACONATE CANDIDATES ARE SEMINARIANS, WHILE THE OTHER EIGHT ARE MARRIED MEN WHO BRING AN ARRAY OF UNIQUE LAY EXPERIENCES TO THE ROLE. LET'S HEAR FROM A FEW OF THEM:



James Collom | St. Martha, Okemos

As I approach ordination, I find myself increasingly praying with the words that Bishop Boyea will say after I make my promises of prayer and obedience, "May God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfillment." It is both humbling and reassuring to think that despite the anticipatory nervousness of things like assisting at Mass or preaching, that really, the good things, the things that are of God aren't dependent upon me. That God, the author of every good thing, really is seeking a cooperator, someone to be configured to Christ the servant, through which God can act to bring about some small piece of salvation history. It's an incredibly humbling thought. I think the thing I am most looking forward to are the quiet conversations held with parents as they prepare to have their child baptized or with a couple preparing for marriage or an individual who has some business before the Tribunal. These conversations are so incredibly privileged; to be able to speak on behalf of the Church and God is something that inspires a great sense of reverential awe. If I could beg one thing of the faithful, it would be to please pray for me and for my fellow ordinandi; that our ministries will always be one that leads people to Christ and inspires in others a greater love for our Savior.



William (Bill) T. Kenney | St. Agnes, Fowlerville

The diaconate journey is a two-lane road where discernment and formation lead to a deeper love, service and relationship to our Lord and his Church. I've been blessed with my "navigator" wife Melanie throughout this journey. Her loving support and confidence have seen me through struggles of darkness and doubt. Our seven grown children have been passengers on this journey. They, too, have shared the joys and challenges of having a dad busy most weekends, with classes and practicum activities throughout the week. I give all praise and thanks to God for calling me to this ministry. I pray that I may serve my family, our Bishop Boyea and the people of God at St. Agnes Parish, Fowlerville in all humility, love and grace. *Ad majorem Dei gloriam!*



John Goff | St. Joseph, Dexter

My journey towards the diaconate really started in 2001 when my wife, Sherri, and I went on a Worldwide Marriage Encounter retreat weekend. That retreat had a great impact on my life, as God helped me see how important the sacraments are, especially the Eucharist. I have been doing many things in the Church since that event to grow and learn as much as I can to be a good disciple of Christ, which led me to the decision to start my journey to become a deacon. I had multiple parishioners tell me I should be a deacon, which I didn't really believe myself. But I figured God was calling me to start something. That prodding from others led me on the long journey to my ordination.

As a deacon, I look forward to serving my parish needs and being open to doing whatever God calls me to do. I will continue to work with the men's groups I've been leading. And the marriage preparation programs Sherri and I have been part of to help couples prepare for sacramental life together. I will remain open to see how I am called to serve the community, the poor and the needy. Sherri and I are excited for this journey to begin in the service of our parish and diocese.



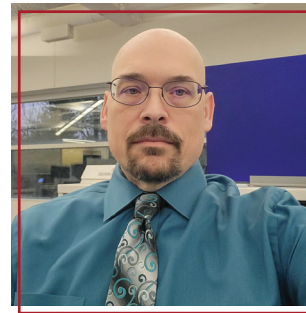
**Eric Pogrmich |
St. Joseph, Howell**

Throughout this process, we are taught to continually discern our calling to make sure we are truly called. This has helped me to know God more on an intimate level. This journey with God has been interesting and fulfilling — every step of the way. It started with meeting Deacon Jerry Brennan to learn about the diaconate process and continued to these last few weeks before ordination. People have inspired me to continue my education through Siena Heights and prayed for me throughout formation. There are no words to express my gratitude for Deacon Randy Desrochers, Deacon Gene Leger, Michael Andrews and the many deacons and guest speakers who have spent their time and energy with me and my brothers. I would be remiss if I didn't thank all the people at St. Joseph Parish in Howell for their continual support and prayers, so THANK YOU. Ultimately, what I am most excited about is to serve our community at large, our parish and all our sisters and brothers in Christ, as stated in Matthew 25:35-40.



**David Taccolini |
St. Thomas the Apostle,
Ann Arbor**

I honestly feel I have been on this journey for 30 years. The first time I looked into it was not long after I was married and was 25. I was politely told I was too young. Ten years and six kids later, I asked again and was sent back to school to get my master's degree in moral theology before entering the formal formation program. Having this day finally arrive means the world to me. I am eager to step into the role of Christ the servant for both my parishioners at St. Thomas the Apostle in Ann Arbor, as well as the wider community. Bringing people to the fullness of faith through the sacraments of the Church from baptism to funeral and helping them experience greater understanding of the Eucharist and all that it holds for them is one of the great privileges of my life.



**Jasen Wright |
St. Joseph, Howell**

As the date of ordination gets closer, I am often asked how I am feeling and if I am excited. I normally answer that I feel equal parts excited and terrified, but I think more than anything I feel humbled to find myself here preparing for ordination. When I think back on my life and all the people who have been instrumental in helping me grow and develop my faith, especially these past eight years of discernment and preparation for the diaconate, I am so thankful for the prayer and support that so many people have offered to me and my family. I look forward to continuing to minister in our parish and community, providing support to my brothers and sisters as we continue our pilgrimage together to know Christ.



Other men being ordained this month are **Ray Rzepecki** (St. Gerard, Lansing), **Arthur Williams** (St. Mary, Charlotte) and seminarians **Joshua Fons** (Christ the King, Ann Arbor) and **Riley O'Shea** (St. Michael, Grand Ledge).

After the ordination, the newly ordained deacons will be given several tasks, including assisting the priest during Mass, proclaiming the Gospel, preaching and administering the sacrament of baptism. The deacons also will be called to serve the poor, the sick and the marginalized and to be a witness to the Gospel in their daily lives.

The diaconate is one of three levels of ordained ministry in the Catholic Church, with the others being the priesthood and the episcopacy. Deacons may be married or single men, and they may serve in a variety of roles within the Church, depending on their particular gifts and talents. †