



**Michael Groth**  
**Theology 3**  
**Mundelein Seminary**  
**St. John Paul II, Kankakee**  
**Birthday: August 23**

I am the only child of Todd and Deb Groth, and was raised in the Kankakee area my entire life. I attended grade school at St. Martins, which is where the first thoughts of priesthood began. Following grade school, I attended Bishop McNamara Catholic High School, where I attempted to push the thought of priesthood out of my head. After high school, I attended Kankakee Community College for two years, while working at the local parish. In the later years of high school and then into college, I was trying to give God ultimatum as to what I was going to do in my life. That common punch line, "If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans." That is exactly what I was trying to do, and you see how well that worked out!

In third grade, my teacher, Sr. Rose Urbanczyk, a Missionary Sister of the Holy Family, told me that I was going to become a priest. I had absolutely no idea what this meant, let alone how she could possibly know what I was going to do in my life. Fr. Dennis Settles, my pastor for 16 years, was always sure to keep priesthood in my heart. By calling me to be an altar server, he was always there to answer the numerous questions of my life, which soon began to revolve around the priesthood. As the years went on, Fr. Settles was getting me more involved in the parish through different programs. He was a great inspiration for me by the way he continuously poured himself out in love for me.

When Fr. Settles retired, I was blessed to receive another inspirational pastor, Fr. Mario Quejadas. Fr. Mario taught me many things in the years he was my pastor. One example of the charity that Fr. Mario exhibits, and has called others to, is in service to the poor. Through Fr. Mario's personal invitation, I was blessed to serve on three Diocese of Joliet college mission trips to the Philippines. During the first mission, with Bishop Conlon and Fr. Mario, I finally decided to stop trying to persuade Jesus and give this seminary thing a shot. After trying to create my own plans in life, it was time to surrender to what the Lord's plan is for my life.

The three years of formation at St. John Vianney College Seminary were such a blessing. Joy and happiness have pervaded my life through prayer and fraternity. I have been gifted with great relationships of people who inspire me daily. One of the great experiences I had while at St. John Vianney was studying in Rome. One of the biggest graces of spending five months in Rome was encountering the Communion of Saints – especially St. John Paul II and St. Catherine of Siena.

I just finished my second year at Mundelein Seminary. While at Mundelein, I have been assigned to Immaculate Conception Parish in Elmhurst, under the pastoring and mentoring of Fr. Tom Paul. It has truly been a blessing to be at IC, to get to know the families, be involved in the grade school and the high school, and to give my life to and for the parishioners. I look

forward to continuing these parish related activities for the remaining years in seminary, and I particularly look forward to soon be able to preach, baptize and be a deacon for them.

Thank you for all your prayers and support. Know of our prayers for you!