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Theology 4
Mundelein Seminary
St. Ann, Channahon
Birthday: October 12

Growing up, my family and I attended weekly services at the Presbyterian Church in Joliet where I was baptized. We would also pray at home as a family and as I grew older, I began to pray and read the Bible on my own.

When I entered high school, for various reasons, I struggled to adapt to this new stage of life. I descended into despair and I felt that God could not forgive me for certain sins that I had begun to commit.

One morning during the spring of my freshman year, I was watching television before school and I accidentally turned to EWTN's broadcast of the Holy Mass. I knew that the program was Catholic and I had no interest in watching further. However, in the following weeks, I found myself returning to EWTN's morning Mass, watching the Holy Sacrifice, surely not understanding quite what I was witnessing. It was through this experience and others like it that I grew more confident in God's ability to forgive my sins. At this point, I began to pray again. However, I still struggled with certain sins. It was in this time of struggle, when I dearly desired a change in my life, that I not only heard God calling me to become Catholic, but what I thought was a call to be a Catholic priest. From this point, it took me almost three years to inform my parents of my growing conviction that I had to enter the Catholic Church and that I was thinking of becoming a priest. When I finally told Mom and Dad of my desire, they were shocked. However, their shock abated and they said that they supported my decision.

I entered the Church my senior year of high school and I began attending the University of St. Francis in Joliet the following school year. At St. Francis, both through good classroom instruction and by witnessing the heroic lives of faith of both teachers and peers, my growth in the Catholic Faith was nurtured. Furthermore, making new friends who challenged me in my religion allowed me to enter into more serious discernment regarding my vocation. Finally, a year and a half after graduating from college, I reached the conclusion that God wanted me to enter the seminary.

Praise God, I was ordained a deacon this past March after five years spent in the seminary. I am looking forward to my final year at Mundelein and I would ask all of you to pray for all seminarians of the Diocese of Joliet and for me, that we might make be good priests.