



Rev. Mr. James Guarascio
Theology 4
Mundelein Seminary
Parish: Ss. Peter & Paul, Naperville
Birthday: August 30

In the 5th grade, I began to feel the first signs of a vocation to the priesthood. The word 'priesthood' seemed to move something within me. It was not until three years later when, soon after my Confirmation, I began to understand what was happening. I found myself overwhelmed by a sense of God's plan for me. I could see how my past experiences, my talents, and my desires were all ordered towards the priesthood. Nevertheless, I hesitated to respond wholeheartedly.

After 8th grade, I attended Benet Academy in Lisle. There, I played on the soccer, volleyball, and swim teams. Despite academic successes, I was left with a lack of happiness and inner peace. Through retreats, confession, and daily Mass, I began to see my life with greater clarity and to seriously pursue God's call.

After visiting the Benedictines at St. Procopius Abbey and the Holy Cross seminary at the University of Notre Dame, I knew God was calling me to the Diocesan priesthood. So, after a few months of discernment group meetings with Fr. Burke Masters, essays, interviews, and other application procedures, I was accepted by the Diocese of Joliet.

Following God's call to enter seminary was the best decision I have ever made. The Lord has received my "Yes" throughout these seven years of formation, and returned to me a 100-fold of blessings, adventures, and joys. I have grown in ways I never imagined possible, and learned more than I would have in a lifetime on my own. Truly the Lord will abundantly bless and transform us to the extent we are willing to follow Him.

This year I served as a chaplain at Good Samaritan Hospital, made visits to DuPage County Jail, spent a semester in the Holy Land, and had a fantastic time as a deacon at St. Dominic's in Bolingbrook and St. Michael's in Wheaton! I have deeply enjoyed the diaconate and I am so excited to serve God and his people as a priest! Every day I grow more thankful for my vocation and the Lord's generosity.

Thank you to everyone in the Diocese for your constant support. Without your prayers I would not be the man I am today, and with your continued prayers I will be further transformed into the servant of people of the Joliet Diocese that God is calling me to be!