



Come, Follow Me

Newsletter of the Serra Club of North Houston

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On August 7th, 2016, Father John Keller celebrated a beautiful mass in honor of the Prince of Peace Altar Servers. The Serran's from the Serra Club of North Houston served a buffet breakfast for the altar servers and their families. Approximately 100 altar servers attended, with their family members. See thank you note on Page 4 from Fr. John Keller, Pastor at Prince of Peace and Deacon Bill Barnes, Director of Worship Ministry at POP.







Candice received the following e-mail from Father John Keller and Deacon Bill Barnes at Prince of Peace:

Thank you to the wonderful Serran's for a truly beautiful, well-organized, well-executed day that all of us enjoyed. Next time, we'll plan on more tables and chairs!

**This was such a great success! The Serran's made it happen!
Blessings in your wonderful work!**

Father John

www.pophouston.org

Candice,

I can't remember if I told you thank you or not, so allow me to do so now. Prince of Peace appreciates all that the Serra Club does and specifically all that the Serra Club did at the August breakfast for our altar servers. Please let everyone know that supported this great celebration they are a blessing to our community.

**Peace and Blessings,
Deacon Bill Barnes
Director of Worship Ministry**

RENEWAL OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION BR RYAN CLEAR, LC (4)



Fr. Matthew Schmitz, Fr. Kenneth LeBlanc, Fr. Michael Vanderbeek, Fr. Michael Sullivan,
Br. Ryan Clear, Fr. Nathaniel Haslam, Fr. Eamonn Shelly, Fr. John Devlin, Fr. George Martinez



Sister John Paul, O.P. and Sister Anna Laura, O.P. travelled with a group of Frassati high school students to World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland. Leighann, the granddaughter of Doug Rathe (Serran from CGS), was greeted by her two siblings upon returning home (bottom left corner).

Labor Day at the Seminary with Knights of Columbus Council 10872







Getting to know our Seminarians:

Ryan Stawaisz



Home Parish: St. Anne Church, Tomball, TX

Seminary: St. Mary's

Houston, TX

Pastoral Year Parish: St. Anthony of Padua

I'm not a native Texan, but as they say, "I got here as quickly as I could." Until I arrived in Tomball in 2004, I had grown up in six houses, in three continents, over 14 years. By that time, I had met many priests, but I still had no idea of what they really did or how they could be happy in a life of service to others. When I was ready to graduate from high school and made my first major decision about my future, I followed in the footsteps of my brother and attended Texas A&M University to study Engineering.

Without even knowing it, I started to attend one of the most dynamic and fruitful college parishes in the nation, St. Mary's in College Station. While I never missed Sunday mass, school and grades were my top priority and my faith and friendships suffered. During this time, my brother invited me to the Aggie Awakening retreat where I met many great people my age who were excited and engaged in their faith. Recognizing this was what I really longed for, I started to pray about my relationships and lifestyle, I worked to maintain openness to God's will; through this, God chose to speak. In my fourth semester at A&M, I heard a voice from within ask, "God, do you want me to be a priest?" In that simple question, I couldn't deny that I felt his answer was "yes."

While everything in me wanted to stay with my friends and continue the journey of learning and discernment at A&M, health complications required me to leave for treatment in Houston. For a year, I prayed like I had never prayed before, trusted in God's providence, and confided in God's plan for me and my purpose in life. No longer was I afraid to follow his call to seminary and beyond.

After two years of public discernment, I entered seminary for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston at St. Joseph Seminary College in Louisiana. My seminary experience has been filled with God's grace and blessing. I have grown in knowledge and spirituality and I look towards the challenges that lie ahead. As I continue on this path, I am reminded to be courageous and obedient and find these qualities in Jesus' words to Simon-Peter, "Put out into deep water and let down your nets for a catch" (Luke 5:4).

Seminarian Update 2016



Lenten Procession to the Co-Cathedral



This summer I served as a chaplain at Methodist Hospital. I completed one unit in the CPE Program and gained experience in pastoral ministry.



Serving as an Acolyte at mass



Concert for Life 2016. I joined Seminarian David Michael Moses and others to raise money for Pregnancy Crisis Centers at the House of Blues in Houston. That's me on the djembe drum!

Getting to know our Seminararians: Kingsley Nwoko



Pastoral Year Parish: Christ the Good Shepherd, Spring, TX

Seminary: St Mary's Seminary Houston, TX

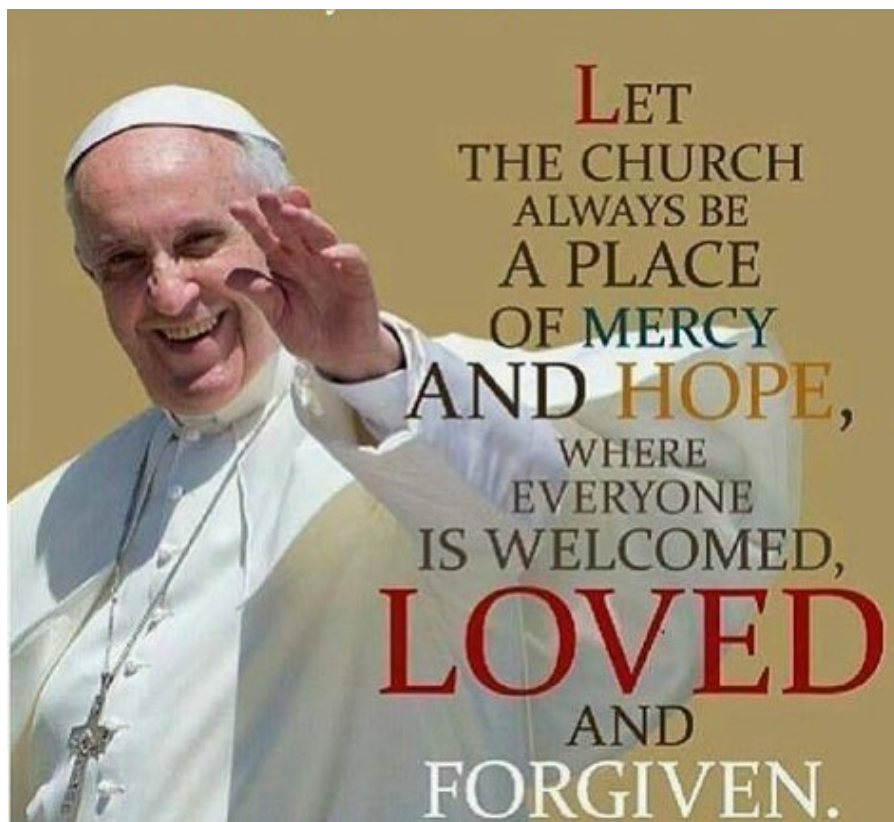
I was born in Ahiara, Imo State in Eastern Nigeria. I am the youngest of six children. I grew up with my parents in my hometown, where my academics and spiritual formation started. After my college graduation, I moved to Italy and later Germany. For other studies in theology and psychology. Before becoming a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, I attended other seminaries for priestly formation in Nigeria and Italy respectively.

My vocation is a journey. It started at the Block Rosary. The Block Rosary was perhaps the impactful experience of my childhood. In Ahiara, a predominantly catholic community, every enclave had a Block Rosary at the end of almost each street for moral instruction, prayers and catechism classes. I was privileged to have one located at the entrance to my father's compound. I was always there at 4:00pm with my siblings to start the rosary. I recall that three children usually led prayers. Two girls and a boy were usually selected in the *Lucy-Jacinta-Francis* model of Fatima. I was often selected to be the Francis of the group as I could recite the whole rosary and litany in both Igbo and English languages at an early age. It was at Block Rosary and while serving mass that I first had the feeling that God may be calling me to the priesthood. This feeling was nurtured and grew over the years.

Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Nigeria (CCRN) is important of mentioning as also impactful for my spiritual growth and courage to answer God's call. At the *CCRN*, like Moses at the "Burning Bush," I saw myself stripped of everything except the unconditional love of God. CCRN experience was an open door for my discernment to priesthood. I wanted to be a medical doctor, but at this stage, God showered me with the grace to say "Yes" to His Divine Project for my life.

My theological and psychological studies focus on how to support couples and families especially at the early stage of their marriages and during the unavoidable period of conflicts. I also love to work with young adults who are not yet engaged in any relationship, to enable them to understand the true meaning of love and marriage and how to make the right choice.

Matthew Suniga, Galveston-Houston seminarian who recently completed his pastoral internship at Christ the Good Shepherd, has been awarded the Bishop Thomas V. Daily Vocations Scholarship for the 2016-2017 academic year. This scholarship is awarded by the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council to seminarians who have demonstrated academic excellence in their formation toward the priesthood. The awarded funds will be used to defray tuition costs for Matthew's studies at St. Mary's Seminary; the scholarship is renewable through his final year in the seminary.



Commenting on the Bishop Daily Scholarship, Matthew said, "Defraying some of the costs for my formation allows the Office of Vocations to allocate funds to other areas of seminarian recruitment & support. My thanks go out to the K of C for their generous support of my formation to the priesthood. I am proud that many of my brother Knights are also active members of the Serra Club of North Houston.

DID YOU KNOW that there are special seminaries for men entering the priesthood later in life, seminaries where students range from ages 25 to 60? Many of these men have thought about being a priest at one time or another but, for whatever reason, pushed the idea to the back of their minds. They are men who have made a career change to a second vocation, the priesthood. They're ordinary people, men who have been electricians, teachers, barbers, policemen, social workers, businessmen, farmers, dentists. Some are widowers, even grandfathers. Diverse though their backgrounds may be, they now share one aim in life: to become a priest and serve God's people. Could you be one of them?

Serra Prayer for the Perseverance of Vocations

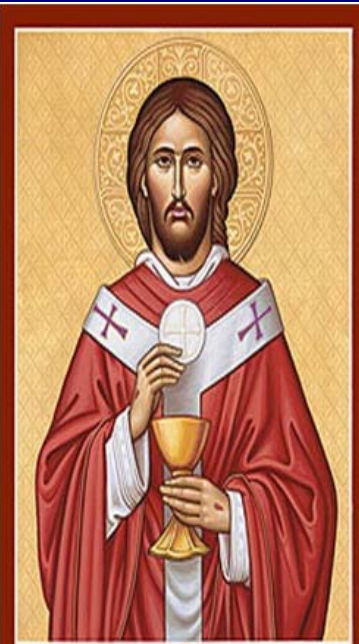
O God, You have constituted Your only-begotten Son supreme and eternal Priest for the glory of Your majesty and the salvation of mankind: grant that those whom He has chosen ministers and dispensers of His mysteries may be found faithful in fulfilling the ministry they have received. Amen

**Pope's mission
of love inspires
the nation.**

**Vocations crisis
needs fervent
prayer not despair
or lax admissions**

**Holy Year is a
reminder to put
Mercy before
judgment.**

After the Baptism of his baby brother in church, little Johnnie sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times, what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "The priest said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, but I want to stay with you guys."



Let Us Continue to Pray For Our Priests, Seminarians and Clergy

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Dates To Remember

Sept 28th...Vocation Video and Orientation.
Oct. 1st...Divine Mercy Movie, CGS Social Hall @ 6:45
Oct. 26th ...Very Rev. Charles Hough IV
Dec. 4th...Advent Party @ Steamboat Steakhouse