



# DAVID MARTENS

**Seminary**

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**Year**

Discipleship III

**Parish**

St. Francis Xavier Cathedral,  
Green Bay

**Birthday**

October 13

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**What is the best type of ice cream?**

Vanilla ice cream is the best, plain and simple. It has a good combination of sweet, rich, and creamy, but not overbearing. Additionally, you can add any toppings you desire.

**What do you consider to be your greatest personal victory?**

Academically, I have always been at the top of my class. In high school, I was home-schooled and thus graduated at the top of my class. Yet this past year I received an award for academic excellence among my class proving high school was not a fluke.

**What was the first thing that you learned about Jesus?**

The first thing I learned about Jesus is that He loves me. He loves me enough to die on the cross for me, to give Himself to me as food in the Eucharist, and even give me His own mother. My parents worked hard to point that out to me during the Mass and visits to the church and continue to do the same for my brothers and sisters.

**How have you celebrated this Jubilee Year?**

During my spring break, some friends and I took a road trip to Washington, D.C. to visit Fr. Kyle Sladek and see some of the sites. On the trip back, we stopped in numerous cities to visit beautiful churches. We were able to stop and pray at a good number of Jubilee Year sites. During the many hours on the road, we had plenty of time to discuss seminary formation, our hopes for future ministry, and the signs of hope we see around us and in the Church at large.

**What is your favorite verse from St. Paul's writings?**

Every Thursday evening, the Church meditates on 1 Thessalonians 5:23 during Night Prayer. During my first year of formation, my spiritual director would end our meeting with a blessing which included this verse. Typically, we would meet on Thursdays, so I would end the discussion of the Lord's movements in my life hearing this Pauline blessing, and then I would read it again that night to close the day. Often, we can be tempted to try

to do everything to make ourselves perfect in holiness, but at the end of the day, this verse reminds us that it is "the God of peace" who perfects us and preserves our lives. Each time I hear or read this verse, it speaks to me of the integrated nature of the human person and of the Church: spirit, soul, and body, looking forward to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Which virtue exemplified by St. Paul do you most aspire to?**

One of the first virtues that comes to mind when I think of St. Paul is fortitude. Fortitude proves the extent of our love and dedication to the Lord. The Lord seems to say, "Okay, I know you love me right now, but how deep does it go? Will you still love and trust me in the hardest of life's challenges?" Abraham, Job, St. Paul, Christ, and many others gave us examples of this fortitude through their tireless pursuit of the Lord. In 2 Corinthians 11, St. Paul famously recounts some of the major trials that he endured while spreading the message of the Gospel. Yet he simply mentions it to prove the authenticity of his call to preach; he uses it to point to how God has sustained him to continue upbuilding the young Church. St. Paul hardly seems to care that he survived all those afflictions; if anything, he is waiting for the next one. It is not hard to want to outlast everything that comes at me using my own strength, but to rely on the Lord for that strength is very challenging. It causes me to lose any control I think I might have and to leave the comfort of doing things myself. However, the result is a profound dedication to the Lord, which manifests itself in love for Him and those around me.

**Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?**

**St. Peter.** He serves as a man who struggled mightily in his pursuit of the Lord yet was still called to sanctity through the priesthood.



# CONNOR QUICK

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**Year**  
Discipleship III

**Parish**  
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**Birthday**  
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## **What is the best type of ice cream?**

That would be coffee ice cream. It's all the joy of a good cup of coffee with the added enjoyment of a creamy frozen dessert.

## **What do you consider to be your greatest personal victory?**

I believe that my greatest personal victory has been my own growth in the confidence that I hear the Lord speaking to me.

## **What was the first thing that you learned about Jesus?**

The first thing that my parents tried to teach me about Jesus was that I was loved by Him. They knew, as well as many others, that despite the ease in which we say, "I know God loves me," we can often feel and act as if that's not true. But if we allow ourselves to be transformed by His love, we have everything.

## **How have you celebrated this Jubilee Year?**

Something very exciting to celebrate the Jubilee Year was making a pilgrimage down to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. Our Lady of Guadalupe has been a devotion of mine for about five years now since I made my first consecration on her feast day. What a gift it was to visit the site of the apparition as well as see St. Juan Diego's tilma right there in front of me. If this were not amazing enough, we even got to serve Mass at the main altar just feet below the tilma.

## **What is your favorite verse from St. Paul's writings?**

A verse from Paul that I've been reflecting on an awful lot as of late is that of Galatians 2:20: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." In this verse, St. Paul powerfully articulates his dying to self and his taking on of Christ. I'm deeply moved by this image of putting away the old self, but also of Christ as that which "lives" in Paul's heart and soul. Christ tells us that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Consequently, to truly live is to allow ourselves to be changed and transformed by our encounter with the living person of Jesus. To allow Christ to live in us is to surrender our will, abandon ourselves

fully to His love and mercy, and embrace the new life He offers. This daily surrender is both a challenge and a profound gift.

## **Which virtue exemplified by St. Paul do you most aspire to?**

The virtue which I most desire to emulate of the great St. Paul is that of his gratitude. It is a disposition which St. Paul embodies very frequently throughout his epistles. Often, he thanks God for the people that he is ministering to (Phil 1:3-4), for His own calling (1 Tim 1:12), and even for his weaknesses and sufferings (2 Cor 12:9-10). St. Paul's gratitude is remarkable because it persists even amid trials and challenges, showing how deeply rooted his faith and trust in God were.

In a book I read this last year by Dietrich Von Hildebrand, there was a quote that said, "The person... permeated... by [an] attitude of gratitude, is the only person who is truly awake." Gratitude is a recognition that every second of every moment of every day is a gift. It is this awareness that so permits a soul to be "awake" to all the gifts that God is showering upon it.

Further, a grateful soul is one that is joyful. Von Hildebrand suggests just the same when he asserts, "The essence of gratitude is joy." Indeed, gratitude opens the heart to receive God's blessings fully and helps overcome discouragement by focusing on the goodness already present in our lives. To cultivate gratitude like St. Paul is to cultivate a spirit of humility, dependence on God, and a joyful awakening to divine love.

## **Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?**

**St. Elizabeth of the Trinity.** Since she began "following" me last November, this Carmelite has transformed my prayer life and deepened my experience of God's abundant love.