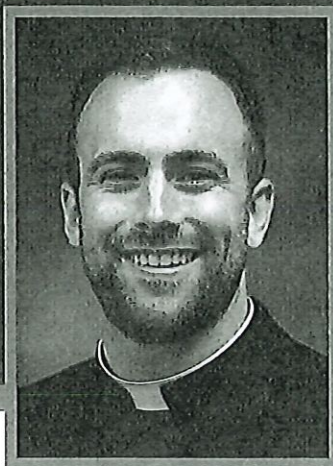




NICHOLAS VANDE HEY

Seminary

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Year

Configuration III

Parish

Holy Cross Parish,
Kaukauna

Birthday

March 11

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What is the best type of ice cream?

The kind Fr. Mark Mleziva (our vocation director) buys when you are home from seminary because it is free and Wisconsin dairy is the best!

What do you consider to be your greatest personal victory?

While going an entire summer without losing a game of cornhole is a close second, perhaps the greatest personal victory is building authentic friendships. Real friendships that are not just based on convenience are challenging and require work, but they are an incredible gift!

What was the first thing that you learned about Jesus?

"Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so..." I do not remember when I learned this song, but I imagine I learned about Jesus' love for me early in life. The crazy thing is that I am still learning how Jesus loves me and how it impacts my life. His love is personal, immense, and challenging. Every day is an opportunity to encounter His love and grow in friendship with Him.

How have you celebrated this Jubilee Year?

In addition to visiting various jubilee sites in Rome, I also did two longer walking pilgrimages to celebrate the Jubilee Year. The first was in the footsteps of St. Francis de Sales in France and the second was following the life of Bl. James Miller here in Wisconsin. Pilgrimages remind us that we are all on a journey, that our journey has destination, and that destination is heaven! Both in life and on pilgrimage, there are real challenges, but if we walk with Jesus, there is always a reason to hope!

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

Romans 8:15 says, "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship, through which we cry, 'Abba, Father!'" No one wants to be a slave or be afraid. Yet, Paul recognizes that there are times when we are afraid and do things we do not want to do: "I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (Rom 7:15). We can all relate to this struggle with sin, but God has given us

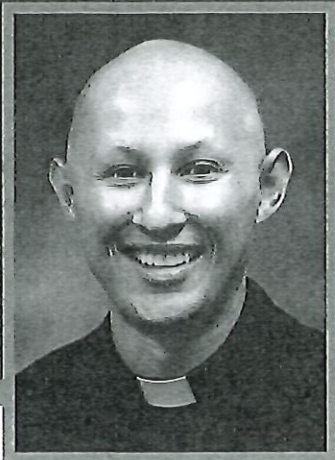
the Holy Spirit! Through baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are set free from this slavery to sin so that we can "walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4). Not only are we able to overcome sin, but we become God's adopted sons and daughters. This is an incredible gift to ponder! We can call God "Father!" When we trust that God is a good Father and we keep running back to Him, we can become truly free from fear!

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

On the road to Damascus, something happens to St. Paul: he encounters Jesus. After zealously pursuing the Jewish law and persecuting Christians, Paul's zeal is reoriented toward Jesus. He then goes to Arabia, the place where Moses and Elijah encountered God on Mount Sinai, perhaps to pray about this meeting with Jesus. I share this because I believe this encounter and prayer is the foundation of Paul's zeal for the Gospel. His incredible zeal comes from a real conviction that Jesus is the savior. He is so convicted of this truth that he desires to spread it to the whole world. He says in Romans 1:16, "I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith." Paul believes that the Gospel really does have power to transform lives. He desires everyone else to encounter the same love of Christ that he experienced. Because of his zeal, he willingly endures "afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments...hunger" (2 Cor 6:4-5) and yet he rejoices in his weakness because God's "power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). He is so zealous for the Gospel that no trial or weakness can take away his hope. When I think about my own life, I desire that same zeal for the Gospel rooted in a deep relationship with Jesus. I hope to persevere willingly through any trial, trusting as Paul does that God will always provide.

Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

St. Therese of Lisieux. Please pray that I might have a priestly heart that is missionary!



MICHAEL JANCZAKOWSKI

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Year
Configuration II

Birthday
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Howard

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What is the best type of ice cream?

Mackinac Island Fudge. I had it once, and it was delicious.

What do you consider to be your greatest personal victory?

There is a rocky prominence in the Santa Catalina Mountains outside of Tucson called Finger Rock. I have twice summited the rock next to it ("the Guard"), and it is cool to look at it and think, "I've been there."

What was the first thing that you learned about Jesus?

My earliest memory of engaging the faith was reading a Children's Bible when I was young. It was one of those cardboard books. I especially liked the stories about Noah and Samson. Later, my first memory of encountering Jesus was around age 10 when my family happened upon *The Passion of the Christ* on TV. It occurred to me that Jesus was real and not just a character in a story.

How have you celebrated this Jubilee Year?

I made a pilgrimage to Rome with my aunt in March. We passed through the Holy Doors at each of the four papal basilicas, and we also went to Assisi. I had a particularly graced time in Assisi including confession, Mass before the San Damiano cross, and time to pray with the saints who are there. We even saw Francis and Clare's habits which are preserved at St. Clare Basilica. Seeing the traces of their lives helped spark hope in my own journey towards heaven.

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

Romans 12:9-21 is a passage to which I like to return. It is such a direct and succinct portrait of what our life is supposed to look like as Christians. "Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good." "Anticipate one another in showing honor." "Do not repay evil for evil ... Conquer evil with good."

I am especially drawn to Verse 16, "Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation." This line makes me think of the many people I have met in

my life: some are polished, others are messy; some you agree with, others you don't. All of them have been a gift to me in some way, and it takes humility to unpack that gift. It takes a willingness to admit that I am kind of a mess too, and that indeed the Lord is working through each of these people to fashion me as He desires.

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

When I read St. Paul, I am struck by his boldness. He possessed such a willingness to proclaim the Gospel at all costs, enduring every sort of trial and persecution (2 Cor 11:22-29). This character trait, of course, followed him from his earliest days (Gal 1:14) and sometimes brought him into conflict with his Christian brothers (Gal 2:11-14). Boldness was a core element of Paul's personality, and if not for his exercise of it, the Gospel would not have spread as far as it did.

There is a certain irony here insofar as St. Paul's original namesake, King Saul, was critically flawed by timidity. We read in 1 Samuel that Saul was an obvious choice for king: he was handsome, strong, and came from a powerful family (9:1-2). Yet at the time of his anointing, he was found "hiding among the baggage" (10:22), and later in his life, jealousy fueled his hatred for David and led to his own demise (18:6-9). We do indeed value meekness as a virtue, but the Scriptures point out that Saul was not so much meek as timid. When the people needed him to be strong, Saul was lacking in confidence.

St. Paul shows no such reservation. His interpersonal conduct was humble (2 Cor 10:1; Acts 18:3), but he never held back in proclaiming the truth and doing so directly if needed. He said what he thought and did what he said. Would that I had the same integrity and courage.

Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

St. Carlo Acutis. He had an authentic love of the Lord and true devotion and piety.