



BENEDICT WOOD

Seminary

St. John Vianney College Seminary
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Year

Discipleship IV

Parish

St. Thomas More Parish,
Appleton

Birthday

January 10

Contact

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What is the best type of ice cream?

I love plain vanilla; it is classic, refreshing, and perfect for a hot summer day.

What do you consider to be your greatest personal victory?

Before entering seminary, I was studying musical theatre, and the last show I was in, I was cast as the leading man. It was a hard role, but thanks to excellent directing, the show was fantastic, and I look back on it fondly.

What was the first thing that you learned about Jesus?

When I was young, I often said with childlike joy, "Jesus died... then ROSE again." This is the first thing I learned about Jesus: that He entered into the doors of death but rose again to bring us new life. This basic Gospel message is something I strive to keep in mind throughout my life so that I can live in the spirit of joy Christians are called to embrace through the Resurrection.

How have you celebrated this Jubilee Year?

I have made several visits to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion. This apparition site has a special place in my heart reminding me to place my hope not in earthly things but in the heavenly realities they remind us of. This coming semester, I will have the opportunity to study abroad in Rome, and I hope to visit the pilgrimage sites there. My prayer is that by embracing the Jubilee Year at both the local and global levels, the Lord will inspire in me a deeper appreciation for the unity in diversity that is the Church.

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

Colossians 3:1-4: "If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your life, appears, then you too will appear with him in glory."

This verse reminds me that the Christian life is one of pilgrimage. We live on earth, but with our eyes fixed

on heaven. As St. Peter tells us, we are strangers and sojourners on this earth as we journey toward the heavenly city. In this quotation from St. Paul, however, he reminds us that this pilgrimage is not just a journey of expectation. We live in the Kingdom of God now even as we await its fulfillment when we see Christ face to face. By keeping our eyes fixed on what is above, we can experience heaven on earth.

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

St. Paul commends us to think of what is above, and in that, I think he exemplified the virtue of hope. His eyes were constantly fixed on Christ and his Kingdom which is what empowered him to live the life he did. In the midst of St. Paul's struggles: rejection, capture, shipwrecks, stonings, and many more, he was at peace. This peace was not the result of gritting his teeth to just get through it all, but instead the natural result of having his hope placed fully in the Kingdom of God. Wealth, power, honor, and pleasure all lost their allure for Paul because he understood that the Kingdom of God was being offered to him. This world and all the good things in it were meant to direct his gaze upwards so he could see God through them.

I aspire to imitate this virtue. The more I continue on in my seminary journey, the more I find areas of my life that are not given over totally to Jesus. As I continue along in my studies, I wish to follow St. Paul's example and cast my gaze upward, allowing my eyes to be fixed on Christ at all times and in all things that I do. I wish for my prayer, work, academic studies, and leisure to all be united in one singular quest to seek the realms that are above and grow closer to Christ.

Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

St. Bonaventure. This great saint integrated his spiritual and intellectual lives, understanding that in coming to know Truth, he was coming to know Christ. I desire to imitate this virtue.