

The Pastor's Column - August 17th, 2023



Paulist Students at Lake George: (L-R) Chris Malano, Ben Chisholm, Dan Macalinao, Chris Lawton, James Marquez. Not pictured: Zachary Turner, who is completing his summer chaplaincy in Los Angeles

Did you know that three of the six current Paulist seminarians are former parishioners of St. Paul the Apostle? Ben Chisholm, Chris Lawton, and Dan Macalinao came to the parish from different routes, each a standout in their area of expertise. From his work at the Fordham Law School, Ben faithfully came to the 12:10 pm weekday mass during his lunch hour. Dan came from the East Side where he was studying for his doctorate in cancer biology at Gerstner Sloan Kettering School of Biomedical Science. Ever the researcher, he found St. Paul's by googling us! While at the Columbia Medical School up in the Heights, Chris was invited to attend St. Paul's by a college friend.

All three not only came to Mass but got involved in the ministries and social activities of the parish. Each made significant contributions to the Music Program, Apostolists,

Out at St. Paul's, liturgical ministry, and so on. At one point I remember saying to Dan that he was spending more time in church on Sunday than the Paulists did, so he might as well join us. Lo and behold, a bit later, he did! Ben attended a "Paulist Plunge" vocation retreat at our summer home in Lake George, and literally jumped in the water to signal he was ready to fill out an application. Chris took a year fellowship in palliative care medicine at a hospital in his hometown of Milwaukee to discern his decision to become a Paulist novice.

After many years of formation including the tumultuous Covid years, I am happy to share that this September 9th, Dan and Chris will be ordained to the diaconate in Washington DC., and on May 17, 2024, God willing, they will be ordained priests here at St Paul's, the Mother Church of the Paulists. Ben is a year behind. Please support them with your prayers at this time and tune in to the livestream of the ordination on the 9/9 at 9:00am. Many of us will be there! I am so proud of each of these Paulists. I have no doubt they will serve the People of God with grace, zeal, intelligence, and compassion.

Ben, Dan, and Chris are all asking the same question: Who from St. Paul's will follow in their footsteps? Who is considering a call to the Paulist priesthood, permanent diaconate, religious life, or full-time lay ministry in the Church and needs encouragement? These questions can only be answered by our collective prayer and discernment. Let us ask the Lord to send us the spirit of right judgment, that we may recognize in ourselves and our brothers and sisters gifts for ministry and service. Let us nurture in our hearts, our families, and our circle of friends a mindfulness for vocations. Let us be bold and share with someone that he or she has the gifts for ministry. Finally, let us be humble and not dismiss it out of hand when someone affirms us saying they think we would make a great Paulist, priest, deacon or religious sister.

On October 27-29, The Paulists will be holding a "Come & See Retreat" at our new (fabulous, if I may say so) seminary in Washington DC. Fr. Paul, Fr. Evan and I have a mission to send at least

3 parishioners this October. We will pay all travel expenses for those who are eligible and interested. So don't be surprised if we tap you on the shoulder and say: "Have you ever considered....." Better yet, be proactive and ask any of us for more information! There is nothing to lose, and life eternal to gain!

God Bless,

Fr. Eric

Rev. Fr. Eric Andrews, CSP
Pastor, Church of St. Paul the Apostle (NYC)