

TOGETHER

a monthly bulletin insert from the archdiocese



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A STATEMENT FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF IOWA



23 May 2022

A STATEMENT FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF IOWA REGARDING THE DOBBS DECISION

Guided by science and faith, Catholics are praying fervently that the U.S. Supreme Court will overturn the claim to a constitutional right to abortion in its ruling on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. A draft opinion leaked from the Court would seem to indicate majority support for a reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. This would have the effect of allowing many states to determine their own abortion policy.

But not Iowa. In 2018, a Supreme Court decision created a fundamental right to abortion in Iowa. That's why we advocate for the "Protect Life Amendment," so Iowans can once again debate abortion and perhaps even pass laws protecting preborn children.

In the meantime, as we affirm the dignity and value of every human life, we welcome the possibility of saving countless unborn children as well as sparing women and families the pain of abortion.

We exhort our nation to prioritize the well-being of women, children, and families so that no woman ever feels forced to choose between her future and the life of her child.

Through its charity agencies, and the independent efforts of its members, the Catholic Church is supporting all women in addition to the child in the womb. We accompany women and couples who are facing unexpected or difficult pregnancies,

and during the early years of parenthood, through initiatives such as Walking with Moms in Need.

The Church provides abortion healing ministries, most often called Project Rachel Ministry, so that women and men receive forgiveness, healing, and spiritual renewal through Christ's infinite mercy.

We also encourage those of good will to contact their legislators in support of the "Iowa MOMS" bill, which will ensure that every pregnant woman in Iowa has better access to quality prenatal and postpartum care.

In all these ways and more, the Catholic Church witnesses to the sanctity of all human life, from conception to natural death, and works to build a true culture of life in our nation. No matter how the *Dobbs* case turns out, we have a responsibility and opportunity to take action to support the dignity of the human person and the common good.

Please help in these efforts and pray for a favorable ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court, which will lift up the sacredness and dignity of all human life.

Michael O. Jackels
Archbishop of Dubuque

Thomas Zinkula
Bishop of Davenport

R. Walker Nickless
Bishop of Sioux City

William Joensen
Bishop of Des Moines



PRIEST, TRANSITIONAL DEACONS ORDAINED AT THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. RAPHAEL IN DUBUQUE

By Dan Russo

DUBUQUE – Three men received the sacrament of Holy Orders recently at the Cathedral of St. Raphael in Dubuque.

Archbishop Michael O. Jackels ordained Father Ben Valentine to the priesthood May 28. Deacons Jeff Frieden and Casey Flack were ordained to the transitional diaconate May 27. The trio joined the clergy at Masses concelebrated by priests from around the archdiocese. A large number of permanent deacons also attended. The assembly during both liturgies was filled with family, friends and mentors.

Father Valentine will officially begin his first assignment July 12 as associate pastor of the Archangels Catholic Cluster, which includes St. Patrick Parish in Britt, St. Patrick Parish in Buffalo Center, St. Wenceslaus Parish in Duncan, St. James Parish in Forest City, St. Boniface Parish in Garner, and St. Patrick Parish in Lake Mills. As he makes the transition to his new post, he has a request for the people of his future parishes.

"I would ask you to pray for me: that I may be faithful to God, to you, and the promises that I have made," said the Cedar Rapids native. "Know of my prayers for you. I am humbled by God's love for me in calling me to serve you as a priest. I am truly excited to serve you, the

Archangels Cluster, alongside Father Andrew (Marr).”

Father Valentine, 26, grew up as a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Hiawatha. After earning a bachelor's degree in philosophy and Spanish at Loras College in Dubuque, the young man finished his studies and formation at Mundelein Seminary. He gave credit to the Holy Spirit for helping to sustain him through his many years of preparation for his vocation. He also expressed gratitude to all the people who have supported him.

“... I would like to thank my parents for loving me and raising me in the Catholic faith and my whole family for supporting me in my vocation,” he said. “The priests of the archdiocese: especially those who served me as rectors/spiritual directors at the seminary, pastors, chaplains, internship pastors, and those who received my team for Totus Tuus.”

Father Valentine enjoys running, reading and sports. In his spiritual life, devotion to the Blessed Mother has impacted him greatly.

“Mary has been the most important woman in my life,” he reflected. “She has deepened my own love and relationship with Christ, she has shown me what it means to follow Christ, and she has confirmed and strengthened me in ministry and in my vocation to the priesthood.”

Father Valentine said he would like to give additional thanks “for the religious in the archdiocese who prayed for me and trained me to serve the poor. For the lay people of the archdiocese who worked on parish staff or were faithful parishioners that inspired and encouraged me. For all of the priests, faculty, staff, and parishioners that served at Mundelein Seminary in any capacity in my four years there.”

Deacons Frieden and Flack will undergo another year of formation at Mundelein



Father Ben Valentine receives the gifts from his parents during his ordination Mass May 27. (Photo by Deacon James Pfaffly)



Above: Archbishop Michael O. Jackels (center) poses with Deacons Jeff Frieden (left) and Casey Flack May 27. Page 1: The archbishop lays hands on Father Ben Valentine during his priestly ordination May 28. (Photos by Deacon Jim Pfaffly)

in Illinois before becoming priests of the archdiocese in 2023.

Deacon Jeff Frieden was baptized at St. Cecilia Parish in Ames, but was a member of St. Pius X Parish in Cedar Rapids for most of his life. The deacon's sense of a call to the priesthood first developed when he was in grade school.

“When I was younger, my faith was formed by my mom encouraging my curiosity about our faith and by altar serving,” recalled the 25-year-old. “When I graduated from Xavier High School in 2015, I joined the seminary at Loras College. I graduated from there in 2019 and began at Mundelein Seminary north of Chicago that fall.”

As a youth, he started altar serving and reading books about faith. He was active in the church as a teenager. During his senior year in high school, he contacted Father David Schatz, the vocations director for the archdiocese at the time.

“My interests in seminary include church history, helping with a monthly food drive in a poor neighborhood in Chicago, and assisting at a parish on the weekends,” stated Deacon Frieden.

Deacon Frieden's advice for anyone in high school who feels they might be called to the priesthood, or at least the seminary, is to “serve God's people where they are.”

“Please pray for me and for all of our seminarians as we continue our formation,” he asked shortly after his ordination. “And may God bless you and all those whom you love with every blessing under heaven and every spiritual gift.”

Deacon Casey Flack grew up in the Quad Cities. The 27-year-old began his personal journey of faith through serving at a Bible school for children with special needs and

through a youth Bible study. He graduated from Loras College in 2017; then studied at St. John's University in Queens, New York City before entering Mundelein.

“My biggest motivation is to follow the Lord,” reflected Deacon Flack in an interview published through the Office of Vocations of the Archdiocese of Dubuque. “I spent a long time ignoring this call, not necessarily because I didn't want it but because I didn't understand how I could live as a priest.”

“It took time for me to learn how and in my desire to stay close to the Lord, I must go where He is leading me,” he continued. “Along the way I have found a deep love for the life of the Church in the Sacraments, Tradition, and Scriptures. I want to share that life with others. In particular I have a desire to give these gifts I have received to others. I received a great gift in the persistence of God in my own life, and I hope I can return that gift by giving it to others as well.”

Many priests and lay people of the archdiocese have played a role in Deacon Flack's spiritual development.

“Some of my biggest influences are those priests who formed me from the beginning: Bishop (William) Joensen, Father Dennis Miller, Father Bob Gross, along with those I encountered along the way; Father Tom Toale, Father Greg Bahl, Father Kyle Digmann and those who form me at Mundelein,” he said. “More than that, most of my biggest influences are the people I have met. People who long to have priests in their life to share the important moments, to give the Sacraments, and know Jesus more deeply.”

The ordination Masses were livestreamed. Video recordings of the events are available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/DBQArch/videos>.