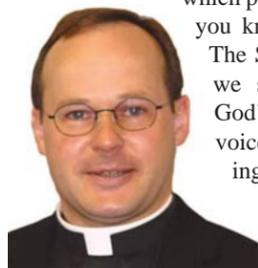


## Five steps to prayerful decision making

As deacons Joe Dougherty and Shane Mathew are preparing for their priestly ordination on June 3, one of the most popular questions which people will undoubtedly ask them is "How did you know that you wanted to become a priest?" The Scriptures teach us that it is God who calls; we simply respond. But how does one hear God's call? And how does one recognize the voice of God when so many other voices are calling for attention? While there are as many different answers as there are priests, there are some basic elements common to any attempt to make a prayerful decision.



Fr. Edward Lohse

Whether one has the benefit of the seminary system with its spiritual directors, daily Mass, and the support of an entire community all asking the same questions and seeking the same answers, or whether one travels through these steps alone, the basic elements of the process remain the same. Likewise, the process remains the same whether one is considering a vocation to the priesthood, considering whether or not to marry, to take a new job or to decide which college to attend.

I like to identify five basic steps in prayerful decision making. None of these steps is complete in itself, but when all five are taken together, people can usually arrive at a reasonable degree of certitude about what God is calling them to do.

The first step is to listen to your heart. Your heart has a tremendous capacity to tell you if you are in the right place at the right time; you will either be at peace inside or restless. Did that recent college visit leave you unsettled? Was there something about that visit that troubles you but which you just can't put your finger on? Trust your intuition, and check to see if other people confirm your thoughts. But be advised: your heart can tell you if you are not where you are supposed to be, but it cannot tell you where to go. For that, you need the other four steps.

Secondly, consider what other people are saying. If lots of different people are saying things to you like, "You should think about being a priest," or "You two would make such a wonderful couple," it just may be that God is trying to tell you something. You can't be absolutely sure that such is the case, but by considering all five steps together, you can help to verify if God is speaking to you through other people.

Thirdly, consider the facts. What is possible, and what is not possible? If you are wondering about taking that vacation to the Bahamas but simply do not have the money to afford it, you can be reasonably sure that God does not intend for you to go on vacation in the Bahamas, at least for now. God does not instruct us to do the impossible.

Fourthly, just as a radio must be tuned to the proper frequency to pick up a station, so we too must be in a state of grace if we wish to hear what God is trying to tell us. Otherwise, all we will hear is static. Make frequent use of confession and receive the Eucharist often.

The fifth step may be the most obvious: pray. Experience shows us that if we put our trust in God and say, "Lord, put me where you want me," then God will take us at our word and we will end up where we are supposed to be. But again, there is a caution: we won't get there along a straight line, and we probably won't end up where we thought we would.

In the end, of course, the Scriptures are correct: it is God who calls; we simply respond.

Fr. Edward Lohse is vocation director and vice chancellor of the Diocese of Erie. Contact him at 814.824.1200 or [elohse@erieRCD.org](mailto:elohse@erieRCD.org).

## Bishop to ordain two priests for Erie Diocese

By Jason Koshinski  
FaithLife editor

The Erie Diocese will soon have the ministry and service of two new priests.

Joseph Dougherty and Shane Mathew will be ordained into the priesthood by Bishop Donald Trautman on June 3 at St. Peter Cathedral, Erie. The Mass and ordination ceremony is set for 7:30 p.m.

Shane and Joseph, both transitional deacons, are currently concluding their academic study at their respective seminaries.

Shane is finishing up his studies at St. Mary Seminary and University in Baltimore. His home parish is St. George in Erie. For his diaconate assignment, he has served at Ss. Cosmas & Damian Parish in Punxsutawney.

"I'm very humbled both by the gift of vocation and the magnitude of the job that awaits," Shane says.

A native of Erie, Shane attended Villa Maria Elementary and Mercyhurst Prep. Turning his thoughts toward college, he envisioned a career in computer science.

"I applied to colleges, and right around the time to send the deposit in I decided I wasn't thrilled with the entire process," he says. "Instead of sending it in, I applied to St. Mark Seminary."

Shane, 26, cites a number of sources contributing to his vocation discernment including many priests and interaction with seminarians during their parish placements.

"My experience is probably unique in that during grade school and high school, I was surrounded by women religious," he says. His grade school class was the last to be held in the Eighth Street mother-



For seminarians in their final year of study, it is customary to participate and function as deacons for the bishop when they are able. Joseph Dougherty and Shane Mathew, standing left and right of Bishop Trautman, have served at several Masses this year including diaconate ordination.

house. He also has a number of relatives who are Benedictines.

Joseph is concluding his studies at St. Vincent Archabbey in Latrobe. His home parish is St. Gabriel the Archangel in Port Allegany. For his diaconate assignment, he has served at Holy Redeemer Parish in Warren.

"The whole formation process in coming to an end," Joseph says. "I'm just trying to do the will of God and realizing that he is calling me to the priesthood. It's gone fast, the whole process."

Originally from Willow Grove outside of Philadelphia, he moved to Port Allegany in 1988. While he was happy working on his farm and at Pittsburgh Corning glass plant, Joseph says he realized God was calling him to something else.

"If God is calling you, that call is always going to be there,"

Joseph says, "no matter what you're doing in your life."

Ten years ago, Joseph was engaged. Figuring his call to the priesthood would diminish, he says it only got stronger. Now, at 48, he realized his call through seminary.

Thankful for the many people that have contributed to his vocation, Joseph also points to his Catholic education at St. David grade school in Willow Grove. Of the 50 boys from his class, he will be the third to be ordained a priest.

While preparing for ordination, Shane and Joseph are also awaiting their new assignments as priests from Bishop Trautman.

Currently there are 23 seminarians enrolled in the diocese's clergy formation program studying at St. Mark's, St. Vincent, St. Mary's and North American College in Rome.

## REFLECTIONS from ROME

VATICAN CORRESPONDENT

**Editor's note:** Joseph Campbell is a seminarian from the Erie Diocese studying at North American College in Rome. In *Reflections from Rome*, he writes about witnessing the events at the Vatican from John Paul II's death through Benedict XVI's election. To read more and view his photos, go to [www.ErieRCD.org](http://www.ErieRCD.org).

### Part II – The Holy Father's Funeral

The funeral Mass took place on the morning of April 8th. It was reported that the security for the event was the largest the world had ever seen, far exceeding even the renowned G8 Summit. Helicopters surveyed the area for days, and armed soldiers guarded every entrance.

I was blessed to be among the thirty members of the North American College choir invited to sing for the funeral of Pope John Paul II. We were stationed in the atrium of St. Peter's Basilica, less than seven yards from the opening procession. From where I was seated, I could see President George W. Bush and the American delegation; I saw England's Prince Charles and Prime Minister Tony Blair being escorted to their seats. I witnessed the procession of cardinals and the passing of the pope's coffin, a site that pierced the very depths of my

soul as I sang *Requiem aeternam dona ei Domine*. The ceremony was magnificent. As I gazed upon the church present in a sea of young people, St. Augustine's words echoed in my soul, "Oh beauty ever ancient ever new." The body of the man was buried, but his joyful spirit was aroused in our hearts.

After Mass, I approached the altar to take a picture. Overjoyed in the grace I had just received, I was about to return to the seminary when I found myself being ushered into the Vatican with all the visiting dignitaries. I spoke with many of the American cardinals and received the blessing of Austria's Cardinal Christoph Schonborn. I was able to approach United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who was kind enough to have his photo taken with me. It was exhilarating to find myself in the company of so many world leaders.

Noticing that all the Vatican guards were occupied securing the diplomats and world leaders, I took advantage of the opportunity to take my classmate on a tour of the Vatican gardens.

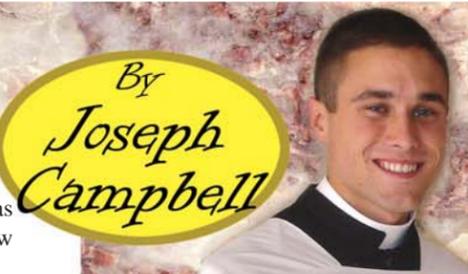
As we were leaving half an hour later, we noticed that all of the diplomats and Vatican guards had departed. The entrance to the crypt level of the basilica—where

many popes have been entombed—was open. We decided to seek out the new resting place of John Paul II.

We quietly approached five religious sisters whom we found praying at the open tomb. We watched in amazement as a handful of men set the lid of the vault in place and laid the flooring over the tomb. For ten minutes we prayed while watching unforgettable events taking place around us.

Eventually I noticed two bishops sitting behind us. I asked my friend if he recognized either of them. He acknowledged one of them was the secretary of the papal household, the pope's personal secretary and dear friend Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz. The other bishop present was U.S. Archbishop James Harvey, who was in charge of the papal household. At that moment we realized we had been praying at the tomb of John Paul II in the company of the pope's closest and most intimate companions, the five sisters who had tended to the late pope during his illness and the two archbishops who organized his daily life.

Archbishop Dziwisz approached the sisters and we joined them as they lined up to pay their respects to him. He gave each of them a rosary which was among



the last blessed by Pope John Paul II and then extended the same gift to us. Interiorly, we both experienced a feeling of excitement beyond description, while exteriorly, we maintained a calm and solemn demeanor. After reciting one last prayer at the tomb, we exited with the rest of the party. Reflecting on this experience, I realize with gratitude how fortunate we are to have been among the first to pray at the pope's tomb.

I returned to the seminary immersed in my emotions and decided to grab a small lunch before calling home to inform my family of all that had taken place. While digesting the experiences of the day, I felt convinced it couldn't possibly have been more extraordinary. Then, out of nowhere, Jesus from *The Passion of the Christ* (Jim Caviezel himself), who had just finished filming a show for EWTN at our seminary, walked into the cafeteria and joined me for lunch. After an inspiring and faith-filled conversation, he quite fittingly signed my funeral program, "God Bless."

Next: Part III – White Smoke

# Mural Q&A

**Editor's note:** Bishop Donald Trautman recently discussed the new mural at St. Peter Cathedral with FaithLife. Commissioned in 2003 during the sesquicentennial celebration, the mural honors 150 years of Eucharistic worship throughout the Erie Diocese. The work was formally dedicated by Bishop Trautman on May 14. Artist Fr. Tom Ribits was also on hand.

## Q. What were your thoughts on commissioning a Eucharistic mural?

A. I wanted to tell the history of 150 years of faith and good works in our diocese. Fr. Tom Ribits is an outstanding artist priest who did a great mural in the chancery office of the Diocese of Buffalo, so we talked to him, and he liked the concept. My thought was to tell the history of our diocese, to show the work and the witness of the bishops, the priests, the religious and the laity through those 150 years.

## Q. What significance will the mural have next to the tabernacle?

A. The space available is right next to the tabernacle. The Blessed Sacrament, the living presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, is the reason this diocese exists. It seems to me most appropriate to have that history of Eucharist in our diocese. From the wood-framed log cabin where the pioneer priests first celebrated Eucharist down to our cathedral today, that's the story of Eucharist in our diocese and that's what the mural portrays.

## Q. What are your impressions of Fr. Ribits' work?

A. He has achieved marvelous success in accomplishing what we set out to do. The story is told poignantly. We can see the faces of different leaders, the story of the communities of religious women in our diocese. People will be able to easily understand.



Artist Fr. Tom Ribits with his latest work.

## Q. How does it tie into our future?

A. It's important that we know our past so that we can embrace the future with the same faith and devotion of the pioneers who went before us. I'm fond of saying that a lot of blood, sweat and tears have gone into the formation, the founding of this diocese and the sustaining of this diocese down through 150 years.

## Q. How does the mural add to and enhance the worship experience and atmosphere of the cathedral?

A. I think it will be an artistic sensation. I think people will recognize its artistic qualities but also see it as an encouragement in their faith life. It identifies real people who prayed, sacrificed and led Catholic lives in this diocese.

# By the Way...



Jason Koshinski

The **Legion of Mary Curia** is sponsoring a project to send **Miraculous Medals** to our military forces in Iraq. The Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, ministers to 375,000 men and women in uniform and 204,000 Catholics in the Reserves and National Guard. One dollar will help send medals and pamphlets that include the meaning of the medal and a novena to the Blessed Mother to our soldiers.

The medal was given to **St. Catherine Laboure**, a member of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, by the Blessed Mother in 1830 with a promise of great graces made to those who wear it when blessed.

If you would like to contribute to this project, send your donation to: Legion of Mary Curia, c/o St. Mary Conrad, P.O. Box 224, Villa Maria, Pa., 16155.

**Christ the King Manor** in DuBois has welcomed **Deacon William Wright** as director of pastoral services. Some of his duties include listening to personal spiritual concerns, providing pastoral comfort and support and being a liaison between residents and their pastors. The new chapel at the manor is now the home for the weekly rosary and Communion services.

The **Neighborhood Art House** has received the **Erie Reading Council's Literacy Award** for 2005. The award is presented annually to a local agency, individual or institution for significant contributions to literacy in northwest Pennsylvania. The art house estimates that 1 million books have been read to children by 2,000 Hooked on Books program volunteers in the past nine years.

**Bishop Trautman** will celebrate Masses next month honoring this year's priest and religious **jubilarians**. He will celebrate Mass on June 6 at St. Mark Catholic Center for women religious and for priests during the annual Emmaus Convocation June 20-23 held this year at St. Vincent College in Latrobe.

We are planning a special vocations issue honoring this year's jubilarians that will be published in the fall.

Jason Koshinski is editor of FaithLife. Contact him at [JKoshinski@erieRCD.org](mailto:JKoshinski@erieRCD.org) or 814.824.1171.

## Priests mark 65th anniversaries



Photo by Jason Koshinski

Two of the longest tenured priests in the Erie Diocese recently celebrated their 65th ordination anniversaries at a lunch with Bishop Trautman. Msgr. Walter Lohse and Fr. Joseph Maryland, both of the priests' retirement residence in Erie, were ordained to the priesthood on May 1, 1940. Seated from left are Msgr. Lohse and Fr. Maryland. Standing are Fr. Ed Lohse, nephew of Msgr. Lohse, Bishop Trautman and Msgr. Robert Smith, vicar general.

## St. Michael groundbreaking



Photo by Kelly Thompson

St. Michael Parish, Greenville, recently broke ground on a church building project which involves moving the current sanctuary back 40 feet, creating space to enlarge the seating capacity from 325 to 550. Plans also call for the construction of a new administration building and gathering space. The projects are expected to be completed within a year or less. Above, a worker removes a stained glass window at St. Michael Parish before reconstruction.

## Music ministry holds song fest

The Erie Diocese chapter of the National Pastoral Musicians Association (NPMA) held its annual spring dinner and song fest April 24 in DuBois. A total of 116 people attended the event which is held to show appreciation to the pastoral musicians of the diocese.

The chapter has more than 200 local members.

Choir members from various parishes were invited to sing a selection for the event.

"There are many parishes throughout our diocese that have such wonderful music groups and they make wonderful sounds," says Sr. Lucille DeStefano, an association board member and music teacher at Gannon University.

One of the chapter's goals is to organize music ministry meetings in each deanery of the diocese. So far, meetings have been held in four deaneries with the next scheduled for the Sharon Deanery.

In the fall, the chapter also holds an annual retreat and day of recollection for those involved in music ministry.

## Around the Diocese

## Mary's month marked with May crownings

Parishes throughout the Erie Diocese are marking May as Mary's month, honoring the Blessed Mother with May crownings and Mary's Day celebrations.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Clearfield, held its 28th annual rosary march on May 1 at Clearfield Driving Park. Several hundred people participated in the march and praying of the rosary. Nine-year-old Madison Moore held the honor of placing a crown of flowers atop a statue of the Blessed Mother. Madison made her first Holy Communion just two weeks before.

St. Brigid Parish, Meadville, held its May crowning on May 3 along with a mother-daughter banquet.

Immaculate Conception Parish, Clarion, combined a crowning event along with first Communion on May 1.

The annual Mary's Day at Villa Maria Academy, Erie, is scheduled for May 27. Senior Jessie Badach was chosen by her classmates as Mary's Day Queen; she will be escorted by senior Tage Danielson.



Photo by Sherrie Surkovich

Madison Moore, 9, crowns a statue of the Blessed Mother while assisted by her parents Rick and Linda Moore.

## Catholic Rural Ministry nets \$25,000 grant

Catholic Rural Ministry was recently awarded a \$25,000 grant from the trustees of the A.J. and Sigismunda Palumbo Charitable Trust. The grant will be used to maintain and assure that this ministry for Catholic welfare to the rural population of Potter and McKean counties continues.

According to Sr. Phyllis Schleicher, OSB, the programming offered by Catholic Rural Ministry has been successful for the past six years, and this donation will enable new outreach efforts to become reality.



Trustee John Kowach, left, is shown presenting the check to Sr. Phyllis Schleicher, OSB, Sr. Mary Hoffman, OSB, of Catholic Rural Ministry and Msgr. Charles Kaza, vicar for the Eastern Vicariate of the Diocese of Erie.

## www.erieRCD.org

The website of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie

Read more comments from our conversation with the Men in Black from the May/June issue of Faith magazine. As a Web exclusive, the conversation continues. Visit <http://www.FAITHerie.com> and click on "current issue."

Click on the mural link at [www.erieRCD.org](http://www.erieRCD.org) to see a slideshow of pictures from the mural dedication.

## MARONITE CENSUS

All Catholics of Maronite heritage are cordially invited to participate in the Maronite Census.

The Maronite Church is one of the world's oldest Christian communities, and to this day continues to use some Aramaic, the language of Jesus and the Apostles in its liturgy.

Cardinal Sfeir, the Maronite Patriarch has asked us to compile a census to trace more than 100 years of emigration of so many Christians from Lebanon and the Middle East to other lands. The one-page census, which will take five minutes to complete, will enable us to be aware of Maronites in areas where we have no presence and to better communicate with Maronites living in places where there are Maronite parishes.

Thank you for your participation and may the prayer of Our Lady of Lebanon, Saints Maron and Sharbel and all the saints be with you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Gregory John Mansour  
Bishop of the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn

- Register with the Maronite Census online by logging on to [www.maronitecensus.net](http://www.maronitecensus.net)
- Receive a census by mail or obtain more information by contacting:

**Randa Hakim**  
12300 East 91st Street South  
Broken Arrow, OK 74012  
Phone: 918-688-2161

## Calendar

**Mercyhurst College graduation:** May 22, 2:30 p.m., Tullio Arena

**Mercyhurst Prep High School graduation:** May 27, 7 p.m., Warner Theatre

**Kennedy Catholic High School graduation:** May 27, 7 p.m.

**Elk County High School graduation:** May 29, 12:30 p.m.

**Central Catholic High School graduation:** May 29, 1 p.m.

**Venango Catholic High School graduation:** May 29, 3 p.m.

**Memorial Day Mass:** May 30, Gate of Heaven Cemetery, 11 a.m.

**Villa Maria Academy graduation:** June 2, St. Jude Parish, Erie, 7:30 p.m.

**Cathedral Prep graduation:** June 5, 2 p.m., Warner Theatre

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**Memorial Day Mass**  
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**Memorial Day, May 30, 2005**  
at Gate of Heaven Cemetery  
**5711 West Lake Road**  
Mass will begin at **11:00 a.m.**  
and will be celebrated by  
**Bishop Donald W. Trautman**  
The public is invited to attend.  
Everyone will receive a commemorative pin.  
If you have any questions, please contact the cemetery office at  
**(814) 838-7724**  
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Thank you.

## Pope allows JP II's sainthood cause to open immediately

ROME (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI announced May 13 that he was allowing the immediate opening of Pope John Paul II's cause for sainthood, setting aside the five-year waiting period called for by church law.

Although the process for considering the holiness of Pope John Paul was to begin immediately, it was not expected to conclude quickly.

Even after the normal five-year waiting period, causes for beatification and canonization require years, if not decades of studying the person's life, writings and relationships.

Those who knew the candidate are interviewed, and everything the person wrote must be scrutinized, a process that may take years, especially for a pope who was a prolific writer.

Two years after the 1997 death of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Pope John Paul set aside the five-year waiting period for the opening of her cause, but she was not beatified until 2003.

Jesuit Father Paolo Molinari — who helped prepare her cause and is working on the cause of Pope Paul VI, who died in 1978 — said the process for a pope entails much more work.

Just the interview with the pope's longtime personal secretary,

Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz, "will take days," Father Molinari said.

Then there are hundreds of other people, collaborators in the Roman Curia, longtime friends, bishops and priests, who also must be interviewed. His published work will be examined, but also letters, articles and poems held in archives in Poland and in other parts of the world, Father Molinari said.

The material must be compiled into a multivolume biography, then a "positio" or position paper on how the candidate heroically lived the Christian virtues is written.

Historians and theologians examine the material and make recommendations to members of the Congregation for Saints' Causes, whose opinion is presented to the pope.

After the pope declares a candidate lived a life of heroic virtue, beatification still requires the verification of a miracle attributed to his intercession. Separate boards of theologians and of physicians are called to examine miracles alleged to have occurred after the candidate's death.

During Pope John Paul's April 8 funeral, people held up signs and banners proclaiming the late pope a saint or calling for his canonization.



Pope Benedict XVI has personalized his coat of arms with a miter and pallium. The image also features a shell, a bear and a Moor with red lips, crown and collar. For a story detailing the new pontiff's coat of arms, click on the Catholic News Service link at [www.erieRCD.org](http://www.erieRCD.org).

## Pope names San Francisco archbishop to Vatican's top doctrinal post

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI named Archbishop William J. Levada of San Francisco as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Vatican agency charged with protecting and promoting the church's teachings on faith and morals.

The appointment, announced

May 13, marked the first time a U.S. prelate has headed the congregation. It is the oldest of the Vatican's nine congregations and is considered primary in responsibility and influence.

Pope Benedict, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, was prefect of the doctrinal congregation from 1981 until the death of Pope

John Paul II in April. The appointment of his successor was closely watched, and sources said cardinals and archbishops from Italy, Austria and Spain were also considered as candidates for the position.

In naming Archbishop Levada, 68, the pope chose someone who has worked

closely with the congregation over the last 30 years. He was a congregation staff member from 1976 to 1982 and has been a bishop-member of the congregation since 2000.

Archbishop Levada has served on a number of committees of the U.S. bishops' conference, including doctrine.



Answering  
God's Call

Ordination of  
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to the priesthood set for June 3

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