

Baltimore behind national ordination average age



Warren Tanghe was ordained a transitional deacon in February by Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien. Photo courtesy Kitt O

According to an April 25 news release from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the average age of men ordained to the priesthood in 2011 is trending younger, with the average age being 34. That has been the case during the last two years in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien will ordain one man to the priesthood, Deacon Warren Tanghe, June 25. He was 62 when he was ordained a transitional deacon back in February. He was formerly an Anglican priest. Archbishop O'Brien ordained one man, Father Gregory Rapisarda, also in his 60s, last year. The archbishop has continually asked the people of the Archdiocese of Baltimore to pray for young men to consider the religious calling. During the Catholic Men's Fellowship of Maryland Conference April 2, the archbishop pointed out both Father Rapisarda's and Deacon Tanghe's ages and referred to other dioceses that have younger men ordained. He asked attendees "What's happening in your parishes about vocations, the priesthood especially?" The archbishop challenged attendees to work for vocations and evangelization. "The future of our diocese depends on it," he said. "The future of the faith of your sons and daughters certainly depends on it." The USSCB release said most of the men being ordained this year are lifelong Catholics. One in ten, like Deacon Tanghe, became Catholic later in life. Four out of five of those ordained had parents who were both Catholic and a third have a relative in the religious life. The numbers were compiled for "The Class of 2011: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood," an annual national survey of this year's class of priests. So, what is happening in your parish on the vocation front?