

Ewing's June 24 ordination to the priesthood will be bittersweet

Deacon Kevin Ewing's June 24 ordination to the priesthood promises to be bittersweet.

Sweet, in part, because Deacon Ewing will be receiving Bishop William C. Newman's chalice, which he will use as a vessel for the Most Precious Blood. Bitter, because the retired auxiliary bishop of Baltimore, who **died May 20**, will not be at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland to physically pass the chalice from his own hands to Deacon Ewing's.

When he was a youngster at St. John the Evangelist in Hydes, altar-serving and attending the parish school, Bishop Newman was in residence at the parish, assisting the pastor, Father William Franken.

"He and Father Franken kind of opened the door for me to think about the priesthood," Deacon Ewing said. "(They were) the first to invite me along to different gatherings for priests and seminarians or priests and people discerning their vocations."

Deacon Ewing maintained a bond with Bishop Newman, most recently visiting him around Easter 2017, when he was home from his seminary studies in Rome.

The son of Mark and Elizabeth Ewing, Deacon Ewing is the youngest of three siblings. A 2006 graduate of Calvert Hall College High School in Towson, he participated in campus ministry, the Lasallian Youth for Justice, and attended various youth conferences and retreats.

"It was lot of outlets for a lot of good dimensions of the faith, such as service and community," he said.

He went on to the University of Maryland in College Park, where he got

enthusiastically involved with the Catholic Student Center while pursuing a degree in psychology.

"It's a time in a young person's life when they're thinking about what they're being called to," he said. "I always knew that, whatever I did, I wanted to help people."

Deacon Ewing said that the priesthood concept became more of a resolve after "three really distinct experiences" toward the end of his sophomore year.

The first was the April 17, 2008, Mass with Pope Benedict XVI at Nationals Park in Washington, D.C.

"I think about what a holy experience it was, and what an enlivening experience for my faith ... with 75,000 other people," Deacon Ewing said. "I remember the complete silence at the eucharistic prayer. You could hear a pin drop."

He was then invited to the ordination of Father John Rapisarda - now the pastor of Our Lady of Victory in Arbutus - and was struck by the sight of the new priest walking down the aisle.

"He had the look of joy, the look of peace," Deacon Ewing said.

He learned it was no fleeting thing at a celebration for the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Redemptorist Father James O'Blaney, a family friend who had married his parents and baptized their children, and would vest Deacon Ewing at his 2016 ordination to the transitional diaconate.

"I remember seeing the same look of joy on his face," Deacon Ewing said, "and that was kind of the way I felt God calling me to the priesthood."

Deacon Ewing earned a baccalaureate of sacred theology from St. Mary's Seminary and University in Roland Park in 2015. In Rome, where the photo above was taken, he earned a licentiate in sacred theology. His pastoral assignments - Ascension Parish in Halethorpe, St. Mary in Hagerstown and the Catholic Community of South Baltimore, to name a few - punctuated his education.

A nugget of wisdom from Father James Proffitt, pastor of St. John the Evangelist in

Severna Park, where Deacon Ewing spent his pastoral year, particularly resonated with him:

“He talks about how God doesn’t call the perfect; he perfects those he calls,” he said. “I think, more and more, I appreciate the human side of who God calls to be priests.”

Archbishop William E. Lori will ordain Deacon Ewing to the priesthood June 24 at 10 a.m. at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland. The liturgy is open to the public.

Ewing File

Born: December 4, 1987

Home Parish: St. John the Evangelist,Hydes

High School: Calvert Hall College

College: University of Maryland

Seminaries: St. Mary’s Seminary and University, Roland Park; Pontifical North American College, Rome