

‘Indescribable joy’ as three men ordained to the priesthood in Baltimore

Led by seminarians, deacons and priests, now-Fathers Matthew DeFusco, Matthew Himes and Tyler Kline entered the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland June 22 with visible excitement.

They were greeted with the entrance song, “At the Lamb’s High Feast,” echoing through the cathedral, and hundreds of faithful that had gathered to watch as the three men received the sacrament of holy orders and were ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

From the beginning, it was obvious that these three men were already well-loved throughout the archdiocese.

In his homily, Archbishop William E. Lori said that as priests, the three will accompany the faithful on their journeys through life.

“(Today) you (the ordinands) indicated your radical availability for the set plan and purpose of God, your readiness to engage in the divine mission of spreading the Gospel, your eagerness to serve God’s people ... in a word, your fitness to exercise a particular form of leadership in the church,” the archbishop said. “To be sure, you are being placed at the forefront of the church, not to occupy a place of honor, but rather to lead by serving and to serve by leading.”

Archbishop Lori went on to discuss the types of leadership portrayed in the liturgy’s readings: courageous, humble and confidence-inspiring leadership. He encouraged the three men to be the “kind of priest that inspires others to put their trust in the Lord.”

In the conferral of holy orders, Fathers DeFusco, Himes and Kline expressed their commitment to the role in the promise of the elect. They then prostrated themselves before the altar as the congregation prayed the Litany of Supplication.

The archbishop – along with Bishops Adam J. Parker, Mark E. Brennan and Denis J. Madden, as well as many other concelebrating priests – prayed over the newly ordained.

Those being ordained each chose a priest with whom he has a special bond to vest him with the stole and chasuble. Father Himes was vested by Father William Foley, who works in the office of pastoral service for retired priests. Father Kline was vested by Father Michael Roach, pastor of St. Bartholomew in Manchester.

Father DeFusco's investiture had a family connection – his older brother, Father Andrew DeFusco, associate pastor of St. John in Westminster, did the honors.

"The truth is that I have always looked up to my younger brother," Father Andrew DeFusco said. "Matt has had a priestly heart all his life – a heart of faith, integrity and courage.

"My mentor, Father Marc Montminy, taught me to pray that God call and prepare better men than we ourselves are. I have done that from my seminary days."

Father Andrew DeFusco said that by calling his brother, the Lord has answered his prayer.

"It's very overwhelming to ... enter the brotherhood of the Presbyterate here in Baltimore and I'm just hoping to live up to the office of spiritual fatherhood for the people of God here," said the newly ordained Father Matthew DeFusco.

The investiture was followed by the anointing of hands with Holy Chrism and the handing over of the bread and wine. All of the concelebrating priests welcomed the newly ordained with the fraternal kiss before the Mass moved into the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Each of the newly ordained bestowed his first priestly blessing upon Archbishop Lori. After the conclusion of Mass, family and friends gathered to receive first priestly blessings in the cathedral's three chapels.

"I thought that (Father Himes' ordination to the diaconate) was the happiest moment of his life, but I think today, it really proves that he is happy – he is meant to

do this; he followed his calling to become a priest,” said Rebecca Himes, Father Himes’ younger sister.

“It just shows with all of the people and his family that were here today, too – the support that he gets and the lives that he’s touched so far ... and I can’t wait to see what the future holds and how many people he touches going forward.”

Father Himes called the ordination “an extraordinary encounter with the Lord.”

“(It) has propelled me into the ministry which I believe I am now called to do with humility and joy,” Father Himes said. “Ordination was a true moment when I felt like I was doing what Jesus was calling me to do: follow him with my whole heart.”

Andrew Schade was among those gathered in a front pew to support Father Kline. Schade started seminary with Father Kline, but left and pursued the vocation of marriage.

“I’m overjoyed seeing (Father Kline) finally become a priest,” Schade said. “I think it’s a great day for the church of Baltimore, but really the whole church, because we need so desperately holy priests who can lead people to Jesus.

“I know that Father Kline is going to be able to do that.”

Father Kline felt an “indescribable joy” after the ordination.

“I think gratitude is the only word that accurately describes it,” he said. “This is a gift that (God) has given, but all gifts are to be given away, to be shared. My hope – my prayer – is that some of what I’ve been given ... is shared to lead people to heaven, to lead people to the Lord.”

Father Kline’s first assignment as an associate pastor will be at St. Paul and Church of the Resurrection in Ellicott City. Father DeFusco will serve the same role at St. Margaret in Bel Air, and Father Himes at Our Lady of the Fields in Millersville.

*To view our Smugmug gallery of this event, click **here**.*