

# Viviano, brother walk the faith journey together

Mark Viviano jumped into a rental car outside a St. Louis airport May 28 and sped toward the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Jefferson City, 90 minutes away.

“I don’t even know, to this day, how I got there so fast,” the sports director and anchor of Baltimore’s WJZ-13 said. “I was probably going faster than I even care to recognize.”

Mark dashed into the cathedral’s narthex and looked toward the front of the church. Just then, Bishop John R. Gaydos handed Mark’s brother Tony a dalmatic, a liturgical vestment symbolizing his new status as a transitional deacon.

Tony and Mark locked eyes.

“During the ceremony,” Mark remembered, “he looked out and saw me. He was shocked. He’s always been my big brother, always been a leader. He’s just taking it to another level.”

If everything goes according to plan, he will be a priest next spring.

## **Foundational Days**

Joseph and Patricia Viviano raised their five children outside of St. Louis, sent them to Catholic schools, attended Masses, prayed the rosary and volunteered with charities together.

“My dad and mom were faithful to the core,” Deacon Viviano said. “I always considered my dad the North Star. When I would get off track, I could look at him and see the way.”

Mark says that his 76-year-old father, who owned and operated a fruit and produce business, always signs letters with “Stay close to our Lord.”

The Viviano boys, along with younger brother Joseph, were naturally athletic and

played many sports growing up. To this day, Mark and Deacon Viviano go to the gym together and also play sports when possible. Mark is an avid runner and participates in the annual Baltimore Marathon, among many races.

When Tony and Mark were in their late teens, Patricia suffered from Hodgkin's disease. Mark was home the day his mother was unresponsive.

"There was a priest there before the ambulance," Mark said.

He calls the death of his mother "the most monumental experience of my life. Faith got us through."

Following his mother's death, Deacon Viviano transferred to Benedictine College in Kansas. As he moved into adulthood, he took over the family business.