



## **Max Behna**

**Sophomore – St. John Vianney College Seminary**

**Parish: Ss. Peter & Paul, Naperville**

**Birthday: January 23, 1992**

I was born on January 23, 1992 in Elmhurst, Illinois. When I was about four years old my family moved to Naperville, Illinois, where we joined Sts. Peter and Paul Parish. I have two loving parents, Sheriff and Carol, an older brother, Mitchell (20), and three younger siblings, Mallory (17), Michael (13), and Mark (11).

Growing up, the Catholic faith had always been very special to me. I remember in my earliest childhood memories having such a deep love for Jesus and always wanting to know more about Him. At some point this love for Jesus naturally carried over into love for the priesthood and by the age of four or five I had wanted to be a priest. However, by the time I reached the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, I began to realize that most children at my public elementary school cared very little about the priesthood, let alone knew what it was. I felt like I was all alone in wanting to be a Priest and therefore left the idea in the back of my mind.

After going to a public junior high I attended Naperville North High School. During my freshman year, my mother had me attend the confirmation program at St. John Vianney Parish in Northlake. Shortly after receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation the thought of becoming a priest returned. Initially, it was an occasional thought, but by the start of my junior year of high school it intensified. As a child, I openly welcomed the thought of becoming a priest but at this point I was deeply afraid of the call and would constantly worry about my future in life. Finally, in the spring of my junior year, after chatting with our pastor Fr. Milota after mass one morning, my mother mentioned to him that I had been thinking about the call to the priesthood. The next day I received a phone call with information about an Operation Andrew Dinner that would occur within the next few days. Bishop Peter Sartain and Fr. Burke Masters hosted the dinner meant for young men with any interest about the priesthood. Many of my questions about the priesthood were answered that evening but it was witnessing the real joy of the priestly life that truly changed my heart in the way I viewed the calling. I witnessed this joy in the loving and inspiring example of Bishop Sartain and in the words of Fr. Burke. At one point in the dinner he said “God doesn’t call His children to a life they won’t be happy in.” This hit me at the core of my heart and began to tear away at the fear that had prevented me from truly discerning the priesthood. From that night on I became devoted in trying to understand what the Lord was calling me to do in this life. It was during this time that I began to develop a deeper, more personal relationship with God. After staying close to our Lord in the Eucharist over the summer it was in late July of 2009 that I decided to apply for seminary. I was accepted as a seminarian for our Diocese on April 19, 2010.

This past summer I was involved in Totus Tuus in our Diocese. Totus Tuus is a Catholic youth program dedicated to sharing the Gospel and promoting the Catholic faith through catechesis, evangelization, Christian witness, and Eucharistic worship. I taught with three other team members at a new parish each week and was blessed in getting to meet many priests and parishioners across the diocese. I’ve learned and grown a lot this summer and am very grateful for having had the opportunity to teach the faith. I am sincerely thankful for all of your prayers and ask that you please continue to keep me in your prayers as I begin my second year of college seminary at St. John Vianney Seminary. I will certainly keep you in mine. May God bless you!