



Mark Bernhard

Pre Theology 1 – St. Meinrad School of Theology

Parish: St. Jude, New Lenox

Birthday: November 26, 1986

My name is Mark Bernhard. I am one of four children of my beautiful parents, Gary and Lisa. I have a twin sister, older brother, and younger sister. I spent my childhood growing up on my father's farm in Elwood, IL. My parents kept the faith a priority in the household while growing up. I recall praying the rosary every night as a family and making frequent visits to perpetual adoration that my mother helped coordinate at the parish we attended. My childhood had a tremendous impact on where I am today.

As the high school years arrived I remained known as the “good kid” but was “going through the motions” with my faith and spiritual life. I often put watching and playing sports above my relationship with Jesus. While attending college at Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais I began to read scripture on a regular basis, which really helped me to grow closer to God. While at school my Protestant friends challenged me in my Catholic faith, so I was forced to pray and study which ultimately led to feeling an even stronger personal relationship with Christ. After obtaining my degree in Accounting and Finance I took a position with FOCUS-The Fellowship of Catholic University Students. FOCUS takes recent college graduates and places them on different Universities across the country where they challenge students to encounter Jesus Christ. It was my time serving at the University of Nebraska with FOCUS where I began feeling the tug to go to seminary. Ministering to college students and seeing lives be forever changed was an amazing experience. Working closely with priests that loved their vocation and loved serving others helped me understand the priesthood.

I look forward to my continual growth in my relationship with Jesus as I begin my first year of seminary in the fall and know that God will guide my discernment. Thank you Serra for your prayers and support!