



Michael McMahon

Sophomore – St. John Vianney College Seminary

Parish: St. Bernard, Homer Glen

Birthday: November 1, 1991

I was born on All Saints Day, 1991 at Silver Cross Hospital in Joliet, Illinois to John McMahon and Therese (Flaherty) McMahon. I am the eldest of two children, my younger brother Patrick is 11 years old. My dad is the son of Jeremiah McMahon and Kathleen “Theresa” Corley, and my mother is the daughter of Edward Flaherty and Virginia Carey. Needless to say, the surnames point to a very, very Irish family. I was baptized on November 24 at St. Bernard’s in Homer Glen which has been my family’s home parish since 1978. I started pre-school in 1995 at St. Cyril & Methodius Elementary School in Lemont, and graduated eighth grade in 2006.

My first memory of wanting to be a priest took place shortly before my First Communion in second grade. I remember sitting in Mrs. Ptacek’s class coloring a picture of a chasuble. We were asked to make it the same color corresponding to the part of the liturgical year it was. This assignment, for a second grader, was tricky. It was late January just after Christmas time but before Lent, so most kids colored the chasuble purple or gold/white, but I had colored it green for ordinary time - the right color. My teacher, noticing my work, said to me something along the lines of “Good job Michael. Maybe you will be a priest someday.” I responded in a very nonchalant manner, “Yeah, I think I wanna be a priest.” That moment is where I believe the seed of my vocation was first watered. As other kids around me decided they wanted to become doctors, lawyers, or teachers, I quickly followed suit. I pushed away those “strange ideas” for a few years. Around the sixth grade though, I began to feel God’s call again. At St. Cyril, sixth grade is the year you begin to participate in retreats all of which occurred with Fr. Terry Deffenbaugh. The retreats opened my eyes and they encouraged me to take a stand and ask “How is God calling me?” I recall that sometimes in class or at Mass I would here this voice (though not audible) in my head that said “You should become a priest.” This voice would never stop; sometimes it would not let me settle. I recall that one day in eighth grade I said, “Fine God, I’ll be a priest, but leave me alone till after high school!” Somehow though I managed to kid myself that God would forget that I said that. I attended Lockport Township High School and became very active in the Theatre, Choir, Youth Group and the Boy Scouts. I earned the rank of Eagle Scout in 2009 and I currently serve as Assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 149.

My first year of seminary was truly wonderful. It was a life changing experience, growing in brotherhood and most importantly in the love of Christ through prayer and spiritual direction. I am so grateful to be a seminarian for our diocese and for all the support from my family, my brother seminarians, Fr. Martin Gabel and St. Bernard’s Parish, Fr. Burke, Fr. Milota, Bishop Siegel, and Bishop Conlon.

This summer I was a catechist for the Totus Tuus Program and traveled with our diocese to World Youth Day in Madrid. Thank you for your prayers and support in my formation.