



Paul Solomon

First Theology – Pontifical North American College, Rome

Parish: Ss. Peter & Paul, Naperville

Birthday: October 10, 1988

My name is Paul Solomon. I am a parishioner at Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Naperville. I am entering my 1st year of theology at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy. I am the son of Scott and Ann Solomon and I have a twin sister named Kate who recently graduated from Illinois State University.

I first felt called to priesthood when I was twelve years old. At the time I was enrolled at Ss. Peter and Paul school and I was serving at a daily Mass and looking at the stained glass window of Christ the King when, in the silence, I felt a movement in my heart and a voice speak to me softly, “Come, follow me” and I interpreted this voice as the Lord calling me to priesthood. Throughout the rest of my time at Ss. Peter and Paul school, I was convinced that I was called to priesthood. When I was in 7th grade, I made a trip to Mundelein Seminary to see what seminary is all about and what I found was that it is all about Jesus Christ and knowing, loving, and serving him with your life, in priesthood or another vocation. I was inspired because the seminarians were normal yet holy men and I knew that I wanted to be like them.

High school brought about a big transition. I was going from a class of seventy students to seven hundred and seventy students. As high school began, I was invited to participate in Eucharistic Adoration once a week. After about six months of attending, I began to make sports my priority, investing most of my time in football and baseball. I started living a typical high school lifestyle. During my junior year in high school however, there was something missing in my life and I realized it was a relationship with Christ, so I made a return to Eucharistic Adoration once a week. Right after Adoration, Reconciliation was available. The opportunity to participate in these two practices allowed me to reestablish a prayer life and to confront my sin.

When my senior year began, I was still unsure what I was going to do about college and it was during that time the Lord brought priesthood from the back of my mind to the forefront. In November of my senior year, I made a trip up to St. John Vianney Seminary in St. Paul at the University of St. Thomas. At first, I was overwhelmed, however, by the time the visit was over, I was convinced that I was supposed to go there. I was blown away by how confident and holy the young men were and I wanted that too.

At that same time of the visit, I began dating. My girlfriend and I ended up dating for eight months and we fell in love. However, I felt this call to seminary and knew I couldn’t truly love her if I didn’t answer God’s call. After a difficult breakup, I arrived in Minnesota in August and was weighed down with homesickness, missing my family, friends, ex-girlfriend, and Naperville, but the Lord had a plan. When I was on retreat shortly after arriving at seminary, I was praying after Mass and I heard the same voice which I had heard seven years before that said, “Come, follow me” and a peace came over that led me to believe that I was in the right place.

The last four years of seminary have been the best four years of my life. Some of the big highlights include freshman year when I was able to play baseball for the University of St. Thomas. Second year, I was able to serve in a leadership position in which I was able to help teach the new seminarians the way of life of the seminary. My junior year during the first semester, I served as the head of campus outreach at the seminary, reaching out to the other students on campus inviting them to Bible studies, Men’s groups, and Mass. During second semester, I was in Rome. I was participating in the University of St. Thomas’ Catholic Studies program in Rome. I spent four months praying, studying, and sharing in rich Christian fellowship while over there. This past summer, I spent a few weeks at home preparing for the big return to Rome for major seminary at the Pontifical North American College. Once I arrived, I went to Assisi for four weeks to study Italian before beginning school in a few weeks at the beginning of October.

Thank you for all of your prayers and support and please be assured of mine while I am at the heart of the Church in Rome.