



## **Michael Williams**

**Pre Theology 1 – St. Meinrad School of Theology**

**Parish: Our Lady of Mercy, Aurora**

**Birthday: February 10, 1971**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1971, I arrived on this side of Heaven and was entrusted to the care of Hugh Oscar and Mary Lou—who already had their hands full with my elder brother Stanley and 3 older sisters Shirley, Debra and Darlene. Hearing how much trouble my siblings were causing my parents and not wanting to miss out on any of the fun, I decided it was time to make my debut. Born nearly 4 months premature, my early arrival was almost a cameo appearance; however, God was not accepting any postage-due packages that day and my return trip to Heaven was postponed.

Growing up in a non-Catholic home, attending non-Catholic schools and surrounded by family and friends who were not members of the Catholic Church, it was more than a little strange when I found myself preparing to join the Church in 1995. As strange as it was, I had an unexplainable certainty that was precisely what Jesus wanted me to do. In 1996, I made my Profession of Faith and received all the Sacraments of Initiations and came into full communion with Christ's Church.

Even before I completed my sacraments, I experienced a strong call from Christ to share in his Royal Priesthood. It was all too much for me to take in at the time—even now. I made the fundamental (and often fatal) error of questioning God's judgment, "No Lord, I'm too new, too ignorant of the Faith to be a priest; No Lord, I'm too sinful and weak; No Lord, you obviously have me confused with someone else."

Questioning God's judgment is always an open invitation for Satan to enter into your life. I can't pinpoint exactly when the shift occurred, but my objections changed from being unworthy to share in the Priesthood of Christ, to the priesthood not being worthy of me, "I have more important things to do with my life. I'm basically a good person—a nice guy, why are you trying to punish me Lord? Lord, I know better than you what will make me happy."

During the past 15 years the call from God to live out the Gospel in a racial way has never abandoned me, in spite of my best efforts to rid myself of it. How I prayed that I would be free of this call to service—at times it was my only prayer, outside of winning the Super Mega Jackpot. Last year the call to serve God and his Church weighed unusually heavy on my mind. All the previous tricks I used to force it back into the corners of my subconscious had failed to work, this time God would require an answer from me.

I cried out to God in a voice distorted by resentment and fear. Then our Lord spoke to me in his voice—one saturated with unimaginable love and endless mercy. At that moment, I realized how much I longed to be with Jesus. God's call to share in his Priesthood was more than a call to service; it was also an awesome invitation to join in an everlasting union with the oneness of God.