

Father Hubert Jurjewicz's Biography

PART 3 – EDUCATION AND MINISTRY

My life has been one blessing after another. Thanks to the grace of God, I had many successes and accomplishments that any student would want. I was the President of my High School Student Council for many years, which gave me amazing opportunities to interact with my classmates, to engage them in interesting discussions about life and faith topics, and more important to encourage them to participate in parish related activities. During this time I also became the leader of the altar servers at my parish and was the main contributor to bring an organization called "Mission's Friends" to my parish. We were a group of young people who would pray and raise money for the Catholic missions in Africa, following the message given to the Church by Pope Saint John Paul II and the Vatican II documents.

All of this was not easy, but with the grace of God I was able to combine my high school activities with parish activities. In my free time, I liked to organize prayer and bible groups and participate at the Church. To connect myself with nature I would go rowing on a lake near my house. even becoming a member of the Polish Rowing Association and Polish Fishing Association .

During Seminary, I was grateful to have the opportunity to earn, in addition to a degree in theology, a masters degree in psychology. These studies gave me a great love for being a spiritual director, which has become a central, life-giving ministry of my Priesthood. My psychology background has helped me to do counseling work with the youth, in some of the parishes that I have worked at.

I was ordained as a deacon by His Excellency, Bishop Paweł Cieřlik in Poland. Throughout the years I have been blessed to be assigned to many different parishes, helping others encounter the compassionate God that I have known and loved. In Poland, I was assigned to work in the parishes of Holy Spirit in Koszalin, Saint Michael Archangel in Podczele, and Saint Nicholas in Walcz. While working in these parishes, I also worked as a teacher in their respective high schools and junior high schools. Without question, serving in the privileged position of teacher and helping in all these parishes, helped keep the flame alive within my own heart and grew my desire to become a priest, continuing this work in God's name.

In May 2008 I went on retreat at Our Lady Shrine in Czestochowa, Poland to reflect and ask God in prayer for guidance. I wanted to make sure coming to the United States was His call for me. While I was there I attended a number of masses, which of course were celebrated in Polish. However, on the last day of my retreat, I went to Mass at the Our Lady's Chapel and to my surprise, as I opened my breviary to pray, I heard a priest celebrating Mass in English! I felt that this was the sign I had asked for, my journey to Priesthood would continue in the United States. My discernment was a gradual process of opening myself to God's will and paying attention to those nudges and whispers that God was using to talk to me.

St. Rose became my first home as a priest since this was my first parish. It became a special place where I was able to open my heart, and was received with open arms. However, a few months after starting as the Vicar, the pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in Chatham was tragically killed. (October 22, 2009) I was asked to take responsibility for the Church in Chatham until the assignment of the new pastor. This was in addition to the work at St. Rose.

A year later, on July 3, 2010, the Bishop appointed me the Director of Catholic Campus Ministry at William Paterson University, as well as the Jesus Christ Prince of Peace Chapel. At the same time, I also began my doctoral studies in social sciences at Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski University in Warsaw, Poland.

After a year and a half of campus ministry, the Bishop asked me to become the Director of Discernment House for Seminarians in Boonton, where I worked with seminarians preparing for ordinations. This assignment also entailed starting, March 19, 2011, as the Vice-Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Paterson. And only three months later on June 24th, the Bishop asked me to step up and be the new Vocation Director.

In 2013, I successfully defended my Ph.D. dissertation from the Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski University in Warsaw with the concentration area in social science. However, due to my passion, love, and for studying, in the fall of 2014 I began another doctoral program, this time in Counseling psychology (PsyD) at the College of St. Elizabeth. In the summer of 2017, I completed all required coursework and began the internship stage of the degree.

On June 21, 2017, I furthermore defended my "Doktor Habilitowany" thesis, a special European post-doctorate degree, and was granted a Docent of Religious Studies degree from the Greek-Catholic University in Presov, Slovakia.

Now, my journey continues as I leave the Vocation Office and Bartimaeus House. Bishop Arthur J. Serratelli graciously appointed me the administrator of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Hewitt, NJ. I found this assignment to be providential since I was given the assignment on May 13th, which is not only the 100th anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima, to whom I have a special devotion to, but it is also the anniversary of my First Holy Communion.

As the Second Vatican Council taught, "A man cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself," so I strive to give everything in myself to God, and in service to His children on earth as a spiritual father. As priests, we belong to Christ so deeply. I just cannot imagine myself not having that depth of relationship with God. My heart is His forever!