

The Ascension of the Lord

May 28, 2017

From the Pastor

For this bulletin, I am sharing the *Catholic Standard* article printed about Fr. Rob Maro in 2015 just before his priesthood ordination two years ago. Fr. Rob arrives at SFX on July 12th.

God bless, Fr. Dan

2015 Article on Fr. Rob Maro:

Directing religious education at Blessed Sacrament inspired man to seek priesthood

By Mark Zimmermann, Catholic Standard, Tuesday, June 16, 2015 3:49 PM

As he sat in the rectory at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament for an interview before his upcoming June 20 ordination to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Washington, Deacon Rob Maro seemed right at home. “This is where it all began,” he said of his call to the priesthood.

While serving as the director of religious education at Blessed Sacrament from 2002-10, Maro worked with about 70 volunteer While serving as the director of religious education at Blessed Sacrament from 2002-10, Maro worked with about 70 volunteer catechists each year, helping them prepare parents for their babies’ Baptisms, children for First Holy Communion, teens for Confirmation, and adults for receiving the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Communion at the Easter Vigil. Along the way, he felt drawn to experiencing another sacrament himself: Holy Orders, the priesthood. His work in sacramental preparation for people of all ages at Blessed Sacrament “was a foretaste of what it’s like to be a spiritual father,” he said. “Those were the seeds God used to grow that desire that I have for the priesthood.” During his years working at the parish, he said, “There was a restlessness inside of me. I felt God was calling me to do more with my life, but I wasn’t sure what that was. I realized my faith was no longer just about me. The Lord was entrusting me to help form other people. I realized I had a responsibility to pass on the faith...”

As he was about to step into the rectory for the interview, a woman said hello, and told him that her family was delaying their vacation for a day so they could attend his ordination at the National Shrine. The

woman, who had become Catholic during the Easter Vigil at Blessed Sacrament when Deacon Maro served there, thanked him, congratulated him and gave him a hug.

Moments later, he said, “I really loved working with the RCIA (program), just to accompany people on their journey of faith was a profound experience, to answer their questions, just to walk with them, teach them. You can’t help but be changed by that in some way.” Those experiences of helping to bring Christ to people, helped inspire him to become a priest. “Being with those people lifted my faith up,” he said.

Deacon Maro will return “home” to Blessed Sacrament to celebrate his first Mass as a priest, on Father’s Day, Sunday June 21, at 12:30 p.m. A week later, he will celebrate another special first Mass, on Sunday June 28 at the Church of St. Patrick in Huntington, New York, where he grew up and served as an altar boy and was inspired by his parents’ example of faith. “It was instilled in everything we did at home,” he said of his devout Catholic family, where Sunday Mass, nighttime prayers and Bible stories were part of the fabric of his childhood.

His father Bob served as a deacon after earlier working as a purchasing agent for the New York and New Jersey Port Authority on the 82nd floor at the World Trade Center, and he survived the earlier bombing there in 1993. He died in 2002, and was no longer working at the World Trade Center when it was destroyed in the terrorist attack there one year earlier. His father was a secular Franciscan before becoming a deacon in the Catholic Church. “I saw my dad’s faith journey grow,” said the younger Deacon Maro, who was an altar server at his father’s first Mass as a deacon.

Deacon Rob Maro, who is the oldest of four children, described his mother Annette “as a prayer warrior, persevering. No matter how things were, in good times and in challenging times, she always holds on to her prayer life.”

Another formative experience for him was attending the Franciscan University of Steubenville, where he earned a bachelor’s degree and later a master’s in theology. “Those were great years. I saw the faith lived by young people my own age. I saw a vibrant Catholic culture

alive and well there. I had peers that supported me in the faith given me by my parents.” At Franciscan University, he said he was also inspired by the example of its longtime president, Father Michael Scanlan, by “his prayer life and his wanting to make Christ the center of campus.”

Then after Rob Maro was hired as the director of religious education at Blessed Sacrament parish in Washington, his call to the priesthood was shaped by his two pastors there: Msgr. Thomas Duffy and then Msgr. John Enzler. The future priest said Msgr. Duffy “is a kind, gentle soul. You can see he loves the Lord in everything he does.” Just months after Maro began working at Blessed Sacrament, his father died of cancer of the larynx. Msgr. Duffy supported the future priest as he grieved the loss of his dad. “You never forget those moments, when they’re there for you like that,” Deacon Maro said. Last year, when Deacon Maro was ordained to the transitional diaconate, Msgr. Duffy “gave me his chalice, as a sign of his support and friendship,” the future priest said. Deacon Maro’s next pastor at Blessed Sacrament, Msgr. John Enzler, also inspired his call to the priesthood. “He always puts others first. He always says ‘yes’ if he can say ‘yes,’ and he only says ‘no’ if he absolutely can’t... He shows me that priests are ordained to live generously for others,” Deacon Maro said of Msgr. Enzler, who now serves as the president and CEO of Catholic Charities for the Archdiocese of Washington. Msgr. Enzler will vest Father Maro at his ordination. Describing the influence of his two pastors at Blessed Sacrament, Deacon Maro said, “They really both witnessed Christ to me. Their priesthood is not about them. It’s about serving others. That’s what they taught me.”

At Mount St. Mary’s Seminary, Deacon Maro said his devotion to Mary grew, as he studied near the mountain where her gleaming statue is a landmark, and he said the fellow priests and seminarians there “helped make me who I am...They’re the second oldest seminary in the country, and they know how to prepare good parish priests.”

His goal as a priest, he said, will be “to really just bring Jesus to people, to serve people with a spirit of joy and faithfulness, to teach them the truth with a spirit of love.” At his ordination, Father Rob Maro will be 43.

“It’s been a long journey to get there, but so worth the wait,” he said. “I’m very excited about what lies ahead.”

MASS INTENTIONS & SCHEDULE

Saturday – May 27th

St. Augustine of Canterbury
4:00 p.m. – Aggie Farrell+
Confessions @ 3:15 p.m.

Sunday – May 28th

The Ascension of the Lord
8:00 a.m. – George B. Matisick+
11:00 a.m. – SFX Parishioners

Monday – May 29th

Memorial Day
9:00 a.m.



Tuesday – May 30th

No Mass

Wednesday – May 31st

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
9:00 a.m.

Thursday – June 1st

St. Justin
9:00 a.m.

Friday – June 2nd

Sts. Marcellinus and Peter
9:00 a.m.

Saturday – June 3rd

St. Charles Lwanga and Companions
4:00 p.m.
Confessions at 3:15 p.m.

Sunday – June 4th

Pentecost Sunday
8:00 a.m. – SFX Parishioners
11:00 a.m.