

# LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION:

*For Our Children and the Future*

## TIME, REFLECTION HELP SEMINARIAN RESPOND TO CALLING

For some people, big decisions grow increasingly clear with time and reflection. That maxim is certainly true for Deacon Randy Summers, a fourth-year seminarian at Saint Meinrad School of Theology in southern Indiana.

The Iowa native, who has been preparing for his new life since he responded to God's call five years ago, plans to celebrate his ordination to the priesthood on June 2 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein will ordain Deacon Summers to the priesthood along with two other seminarians, Thomas Kovatch and Rick Nagel.

After Deacon Summers is ordained, he will preside at his first Mass at St. Pius X Church in Indianapolis, and it will mark the beginning of his life as a priest.

Deacon Summers worked for many years in the health care industry before deciding to respond to God's call, although he admits it wasn't always far off in his mind. In fact, he first realized the possibility of a religious vocation to the priesthood when he was a junior in high school.

Wanting to go away to college and be with friends, Deacon Summers avoided responding to those promptings to study for the priesthood. At the same time, however, Deacon Summers did remain open to trying to understand God's call. He received 12 years of Catholic education before attending a Catholic college. At one point Deacon Summers also looked into monastic life at Blue Cloud Abbey in South Dakota, a Benedictine monastery founded from Saint Meinrad Archabbey. It was engaging enough to interest him in entering the Blue Cloud community, but after spending four years in formation, he discerned that God had other plans for him.

That's when Deacon Summers set his sights on health care studies and a master's of business administration degree. The education propelled him to work in health care administration and perform consulting work, a career path that fostered professional success that moved him around the country to Chicago, New York City and southern California. Many



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein ordains Randy Summers to the diaconate in 2006.

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nights as a "road warrior" meant Deacon Summers spent most of his time away from family and friends.

"It kept me busy at the time, so I didn't even think much about my vocation," he said. "But God kept nagging at me. Finally, God wore me down."

Eventually, Deacon Summers admitted, he tired of God pestering him. That's when he returned to exploring a vocation to the priesthood or other religious life.

And as big of a change as a vocation would appear to be, Deacon Summers reflects that the transition from a career to seminary turned out to be quite uneventful. After affiliating with the archdiocese, he reflects, "I needed to decide where I would like to attend seminary; that decision was made easier because of my previous experience with the Benedictines. For a variety of reasons Saint Meinrad seemed to me to be the obvious choice."

Aside from deciding what seminary to attend, a bigger issue that Deacon Summers and other prospective seminarians have to deal with is finances. "Here in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis we are blessed because of the financial support that is provided for us," he said. "All of the costs associated with educating future priests are paid for by the archdiocese."

On that point, Deacon Summers is quick to emphasize how the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign is an integral part of this approach. Without such a fund-raising initiative and a generous response, he thinks the Church could not continue to provide the means for that level of support.

"My response to God's call to the priesthood is very important to both me and the Church, but it isn't any more important than your response to God's call," Deacon Summers said. "We are all called as Catholics to be in a relationship with God and our purpose in this life is to grow in that relationship. We all have been given certain gifts and talents and a part of our building that relationship with God is to offer those gifts and talents back to him through the Church. I do that by offering my life as a priest to God and his Church and I hope in doing so I will help others give back to God their own gifts and talents."

"We shouldn't give our time and talent or write a check because we feel like we have to. We should give because we want to give back to God what he has given to us and at the same time to support our neighbors in their relationships with God."

*Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocesan capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the needs of archdiocesan ministries such as seminarian education. By contributing to the Legacy for Our Mission campaign through your local parish, a portion of your gift will be allocated to future ministry needs and distributed to efforts such as seminarian education.*

Please visit the new online home of the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign. Our campaign Web site is [www.archindy.org/legacy](http://www.archindy.org/legacy). It can also be accessed at [www.LegacyforOurMission.org](http://www.LegacyforOurMission.org).