



**Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church**

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Dear brothers and sisters,

As I mentioned in my letter last week, these weekly letters can be an opportunity for me to begin to introduce myself to you, even before I arrive at Holy Rosary. And so, I'll take the opportunity this week to give a brief summary of how God has led me to this point of my life.

I was born and raised here in the New Orleans area in a strong Catholic family. I am the oldest of four, with three younger sisters; and we grew up way down the road in Violet, LA (in "da Parish"). We attended Mass each week at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, where my mom was in the choir and my sisters and I were altar servers. I went to grammar school at St. Robert Bellarmine in Arabi and to high school at Jesuit. When I graduated from Jesuit in 1999, I entered the seminary at St. Joseph Seminary College in Covington. I was there for two and a half years and decided to leave the seminary, thinking that God was not calling me to be a priest. I finished college at UNO with a degree in psychology and then studied Marriage and Family Counseling for a year at Our Lady of Holy Cross College.

Just as my second year of graduate school was beginning, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and threw all my plans out the window. I moved to the Northshore, which is where all of my family now lives, and eventually got a job working as a brewer for Abita Beer. During that time, I also worked as youth minister at St. John the Baptist Parish in Folsom and directed a group of high school students who led music at Sunday Mass at St. Peter Church in Covington.

At the end of a couple of years at the brewery, I began to hear God calling me to a deeper involvement in Church ministry, so I took a job as a high school religion teacher at Pope John Paul II in Slidell. I found a great love for teaching high schoolers, but I also began to discern once again the possibility of priesthood. At the end of that year of teaching, I was accepted to Notre Dame Seminary to pursue this vocation. After four years of seminary, I was ordained a transitional deacon by Archbishop Aymond, who sent me to St. Pius X for my diaconate internship. Then, at the end of my studies I was ordained a priest of Jesus Christ (Thanks be to God!) on June 1st, 2013; and the archbishop sent me back to St. Pius X as parochial vicar, where I served for my first four years of priesthood.

I am very thankful for the blessings of my life so far and thankful that this path has led me to Holy Rosary parish. I pray that the experiences and lessons of life will help me to be a loving and holy pastor for all of you. Please keep me in your prayers as you are in mine!

To Jesus through Mary,

Fr. Jonathan

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**Painting in the church:** As of this writing (July 12th), we hope that the cleaning and painting of the ceiling at the base of the dome will have been finished by the weekend. We are aware of some minor water damage at the top of the wall behind the high altar. The issue that caused the water leak has been addressed and we will soon receive a quote to repair the small area of plaster and paint. (Thank you especially to Dee and Grace who have been keeping me updated with these situations!)