

‘They loved the truth and taught it by word and example’

Meet Our Priests

This week’s featured priest:

Father
Rene Guesnier, OSB



YEAR FOR PRIESTS

“One of the highlights of my life was being present in Rome when Pope John Paul I was elected. To see the white smoke come out of the chimney at St. Peter’s and to receive his first blessing from the veranda was very stirring for me.”

What was it that made you want to be a priest?

Honestly, I don’t know for sure what made me want to be a priest. It just kind of happened. I sometimes have a hard time believing that God somehow chose me to be His priest and commissioned me to do this.

Who were people who encouraged you in your vocation?

I had beautiful Catholic parents who loved God and His Church and their family beyond measure. The Great Bend Dominican Sisters who taught me were so good and holy. They loved the truth and taught it by word and example.

Was there a particular individual who inspired you to become a priest?

I had wonderful pastors and Father Leonard Torline was the one who inspired me to enter the seminary. He was such a humble holy priest. I wanted to be like him. I entered the seminary as a freshman in high school when he was pastor. After college I entered the Benedictine Abbey at Conception, Missouri.

What has been one of the greatest challenges you face in your ministry?

The greatest challenge that I face is in overcoming sin in my own life, especially

the sin of pride. I have come to realize that I can’t do this without God. Yet I keep trying to do it by myself and keep failing. I find much consolation in “looking to the East” and believing that the “Son of Justice comes with His healing power” and will set all things aright. I am blessed to have a holy confessor who helps me.

What has been one of the highlights, so far, of your priesthood?

One of the highlights of my life was being present in Rome when Pope John Paul I was elected. To see the white smoke come out of the chimney at St. Peter’s and to receive his first blessing from the veranda was very stirring for me. I have been privileged to have traveled to many lands through out my time in the Army as chaplain.

What do you like most about being a priest?

I love being a priest especially now that I can offer the Holy Sacrifice at the Altar with priest and people praying in the same direction, facing the Lord. It always bothered me to be looking at the people when I was talking to the Father. The traditional Latin Mass has allowed me to feel once again connected to my roots. To know that I now can offer the Mass in the same

words and gestures as Father Torline and St. John Vianney, is beyond comprehension. There is no act so beautiful on all the earth as the “Mass of the Ages.”

What do you like to do in your free time?

My greatest regret is that I wasted so much of my life in trivial pursuits. I could have done so much and just threw the time away. I feel this much more deeply as I have come to realize that there isn’t much time left for me on this earth. I hope and call upon God’s mercy.

If you could take a vacation anywhere in the world, where would you go?

I probably won’t be going on any vacations of any length anymore. I would kind of like to visit St. John Vianney’s little village of Ars.

What are your hobbies?

I do love to read. Recently I just read two novels by Michael O’Brien. O’Brien is doing what he can to try to restore Catholic Culture in our world. I was deeply moved by one of his most recent novels: *The Island of the World*. *Sophia House* was the other one. I also read papal encyclicals and Church happenings on the web.