



**Our
Men
in
Black**

Favorite prayer

The Memorare. While in the process of becoming Catholic, and at the same time making weekly visits to the most holy Eucharist, I had an obstacle with a devotion to Our Lady. The real struggle was not in *who* Our Lady was as a woman, and my submission, but it was more of my real comprehension of *who* she was and tying this to contemplation to the life of her son, Jesus Christ.

My spiritual director at the time, a Father Jerome Frey, spoke to me about St. Bernard de Clairvaux, and explained to me how he explained Our Lady's role in the mystical body: Our Lord is the head; we (the Church), the members of the body, all life (grace) flows through the neck (the Blessed Virgin Mary).

He then gave me a handwritten note card with the Memorare prayer on it and told me to take that to my holy hours.

It endeared my soul to Our Lady of Merciful Love ever since.

What has been a holy moment for you in your priesthood?

One? Wow, I would say the first time Msgr. Joseph Linster, my first pastor, had me go to anoint someone my first week in my first assignment as a priest.

I went to a nursing home to anoint a man who was 35-years-old and dying. I was also able to give him the Apostolic pardon.

As I was finishing the prayers, and weeping, he

Father Carl Beekman

**Pastor, St. Patrick,
Amboy, Maytown;
St. Flannen, Harmon;
St. Mary, Walton**

Ordained 2000



died. I finished, knelt down in thanksgiving, looked up and there were three nurses in the hallway crying, also holding hands in prayer.

It was an amazing, yet truly holy, experience. The Lord and His mother gave me a great soul for my first anointing.

They knew how nervous I would be, and the consolations heaven provided through this young man who had no one in his final hour, helped me realize the poverty of fatherhood, not his, but what mine would be, and what joy it would bring.

What priest has taught you something important, and what was it?

Msgr. Linster taught me how essential it is to do the little things well, to be respectful and loving, like a father. Listen, listen and listen. He taught me priestly friendship and how important it is to continue to build fraternity as well as be a well-rounded priest. Most of these things, he did without speaking, because he continually lived charity in our rectory, and helped me with patience when I needed it most.

Advice for young people

Begin living a life for Christ! Pray everyday, what your vocation should be.

If you are to be married, ask the Lord to send you the one that He chooses because so many people choose on a whim today, via their passions.

If one really delves into studying their faith, practicing their faith (frequent confession, daily Mass, spiritual direction, etc.) he or she will begin to desire a deeper communion with God and

generosity.

Oftentimes, I think, some young people confuse the call to holiness — religious feelings and graces that come with the beginning stages of conversions — with a particular call to a religious vocation.

Finding a spiritual director and good confessor is so important. Our young people really want to do something great for the Lord and the Church, but it is difficult these days for them to find a priest who will help them discern their vocation first to holiness and then to narrow the lens and direct them to what the Lord wants for them.

So many need to have the maturity — emotional and spiritual — to take on a religious vocation, because as the world gets tougher to live the faith, our priests and religious need a firm foundation to work from in their human nature prior to entering any and all vocations: whether they be marriage, priesthood, or religious life.

Something about you that few would know

That I am shy, especially in crowds.

Favorite hobby or pastime

Playing golf.

Favorite saint

St. Paul (because of) his zeal for souls and in his responding to the graces received in his sufferings for the Church.

Favorite temporal things

My ordination chalice, the Chicago Whitesox, and the movie, "The Searchers."