

Father Rafal Duda

Ordained May 14, 2011



Name:
Rafal Duda

Date of birth:
January 2, 1979

Hobbies and interest:
swimming, fishing, playing soccer and tennis, watching basketball, philosophy, dogmatic theology

Favorite saints: St. John Bosco

I was born on January 2, 1979 in Mielec, Poland. I come from a big family. I have the 5 siblings: 2 brothers and 3 sisters. I am the eldest child in my family.

God always leads us straight during our winding paths. Priesthood is a tremendous responsibility and I often feel not worthy to be called to such an immense task. I never imagined that I would be in the seminary in the USA. I first heard the call to the priesthood when I was a child. In primary school I was a member of the swim team. Because I received some awards for competition in swimming at the end of primary school the trainers encouraged me to enroll in a sports school, but I knew that I wanted to be a priest and a lector at church.

Poland is a Catholic country and there are many vocations, especially in the south of Poland. I am part of the John Paul II generation. The priests working at my parish contributed the most to my vocation. In Poland priests teach religious education both at Catholic and public schools. Together with my brother I was an altar server and lector at my parish. In Poland most of the vocations to the priesthood come from altars servers.

In 1998 I graduated from high school. After that I studied at the Seminary in Tarnow, Poland and completed my courses in Philosophy and one year of Theology. From 2003-2007 I was a member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit in Bydgoszcz. It was a missionary seminary. I came from Poland to the United States on August 20, 2007. At the beginning I was at the Polish seminary in Orchard Lake, Michigan. I became interested in the Diocese of Oakland, so I transferred from Orchard Lake to St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park in order to be close to the diocese and know it better. Why did I choose the USA and the diocese of Oakland? My decision to transfer from the seminary in Bydgoszcz to Orchard Lake was motivated by a desire to serve the Church in the United States, which is experiencing a shortage of priestly vocations. The Oakland diocese is a small diocese in terms of geography and there is a lot of diversity there, something I like.