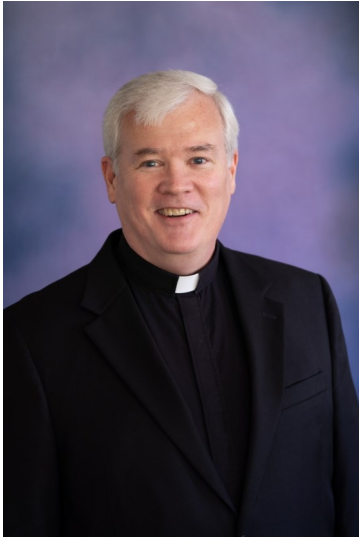


Welcome, Deacon Dan Caughey



Deacon Dan Caughey (kay-hee) is a transitional deacon in his final year at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary in Weston. Since September 2020, he has been spending his weekends serving at Ave Maria Parish.

From the small town of Mexico, New York, in the Diocese of Syracuse, Deacon Dan expends a great deal of energy correcting assumptions that everyone from New York must be city folk. Quite to the contrary, he feels most in his element in rural settings and his last home was a log cabin in the woods. He said, "Adjusting to Boston traffic and local driving styles was a challenge at first. But I learned, and perhaps when I return to my home diocese, the back roads will never be the same."

Dan received his bachelor's degree in geology from Binghamton University and master's degree in education from Oswego College. It is there where he met my wife, Mickey, and found that they shared a dedication for teaching. Mickey taught elementary level, mostly in social studies and with gifted students, while Dan taught middle school science for 31 years.

He and his wife were married for 25 years, until her death in 2013. They didn't have any children, but were foster parents to a total of 18 kids over a 10-year span. Some stayed with them for a few weeks, some for several months, and many still keep in touch.

Although Dan is currently a transitional deacon with the hope of being ordained to the priesthood later this year, he had previously served as a permanent deacon. About a year after Mickey died, Dan's pastor asked him to consider the priesthood. At first, Dan dismissed the idea, but after some time, prayer, inquiry, a couple of philosophy courses at a Catholic college, guidance from vocation and spiritual directors, and a long application process, he entered the seminary in August 2017. His mother, two older brothers, and in-laws are very supportive of his decision, and happy that he is pursuing God's call for the next stage of his life.

Dan seems to find a happy balance and see God's hand in all things – whether they be fine food, fine wine, and fine arts, or the simple beauty and awesome majesty of nature.



Deacon Dan wishes that he was able to work more closely and more personally with the parishioners of Ave Maria Parish during his time here, but even with the current COVID-19 restrictions, he says he has been blessed to have had the opportunity to witness and be inspired by his favorite quote from Saint John the Baptist: "He must increase; I must decrease." (John 3:30).