



MATTHEW SCHUMACHER

Seminary

St. John Vianney College Seminary
2115 Summit Avenue
Mail #5024
St. Paul, MN 55105-1048

Year

Discipleship IV

Parish

St. Matthew Parish,
Allouez

Birthday

February 11

Contact

schu8138@stthomas.edu

What is the best type of ice cream?

Chocolate is the best flavor of ice cream because it is a simple flavor that is not overpowering, yet it never fails to satisfy your sweet tooth.

What do you consider to be your greatest personal victory?

When I was about ten years old, I won a goldfish named Jim from the Brown County Fair and somehow managed to keep it alive for five plus years. The average lifespan of previous goldfish was one to two weeks.

What was the first thing that you learned about Jesus?

It is difficult to remember a time when I did not know something about Jesus. The first thing I recall learning about Him, however, was that He is someone who loves us very much and is someone whom we should love very much. I also remember playing a shepherd in our pre-school Christmas play which taught me that shepherds came to His birthday.

How have you celebrated this Jubilee Year?

I have celebrated by going to the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion several times as it is one of the official pilgrimage sites of the Jubilee Year. Because the Shrine is so close, it is easy to take for granted. It is always a humbling experience to meet people who have traveled across the world to visit the Shrine while for us it is right in our backyard! What better way to grow in hope than to spend time resting in the arms of Our Lady?

What is your favorite verse from St. Paul's writings?

Lately, 2 Corinthians 3:18 has struck me: "All of us, gazing with unveiled faces on the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Lord who is the Spirit." Every heart desires union and intimacy with God. When we look for this fulfillment in the wrong places and are ultimately left unsatisfied, the question remains: How do we grow closer to Him? How do we attain this union our hearts long for? St. Paul essentially answers, "Look at Jesus and let Him transform you." When we "gaze with unveiled

faces," we are looking at God without a facade. If we go outside on a sunny day with bare faces, we are bound to get tan (or sunburned). How much more will we be transformed into the very image of Jesus when we gaze upon Him and let Him gaze upon us without hiding our wounds or weaknesses? St. Paul's advice to us is simple: Keep your eyes on Him and all will be well.

Which virtue exemplified by St. Paul do you most aspire to?

St. Paul exemplifies the virtue of gratitude in a remarkable way which I hope to imitate. In his First Letter to the Thessalonians, he commands them to "give thanks in all circumstances," which seems like an unfair demand. Life is full of painful experiences, so how is it right to be grateful in those difficult times? St. Paul (who is very well acquainted with suffering) says it is fitting because God is still loving him perfectly, holding nothing back in every circumstance. If there were a different set of circumstances in which God could love him more, He would do it! This applies to us just as much as St. Paul. In any given moment, the Lord is pouring Himself out to us without reserve. That means that nothing can change how loved we are, and nothing can take away our identity as beloved sons and daughters of the Father. We deserve 0% of this love, yet He freely gives 100% of it. Gratitude is always a fitting response to such a gift. This gratitude is the gateway to St. Paul's constant joy. God's love is the most real thing there is and receiving that love is a cause for joy. In the high and low moments of life, we can still choose peace and joy because the infinite God of the universe is loving us perfectly.

Which saint should people invoke for your vocation?

St. Therese of Lisieux. She lived her life with eyes fixed on the Lord and allowed Him to transform her into His image.