

Immediate Release

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Four Ordained as Deacons for the Diocese of Harrisburg

HARRISBURG, Pa. – Today, Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Harrisburg, ordained four seminarians as transitional deacons at Saint Patrick Cathedral in Harrisburg. These seminarians are entering their final year of formation for the priesthood. As transitional deacons, they will proclaim the Gospel, preach, and assist the priest at Mass. They can celebrate baptisms, witness marriages, and officiate at funeral rites. In June 2024, it is anticipated they will be ordained priests for the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Deacon Thomas Michael Kappes, 31, is a member of Saint Margaret Mary Parish in Harrisburg. He is the son of Thomas Kappes and Donna Kappes and attends Mount Saint Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md. for his formation. Prior to entering seminary, Deacon Kappes earned a bachelors degree in Public Health and Occupational Safety from Indiana University, Indiana. Deacon Kappes will serve at Saint Joan of Arc Parish in Hershey for the next year.

Deacon Richard Joseph McAlister, 32, is a member of the Cathedral Parish of Saint Patrick in Harrisburg. He is the son of Howard and Tina McAlister and attends Mount Saint Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md. for his formation. Prior to entering seminary, he worked on a dairy farm, as a bookkeeper, and for the United States Postal Service. Deacon McAlister will serve at Saint Joseph Parish, Mechanicsburg, for the next year.

Deacon Michael Patrick Pray, 38, is a member of Saint Bernard Parish in New Bloomfield. He is the son of Patrick and Gwen Pray and attends Mount Saint Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md. for his formation. Prior to entering seminary, Deacon Pray worked in education for 10 years while also coaching football, basketball, and track. Deacon Pray will serve at Saint Francis Xavier Parish in Gettysburg for the next year.

Deacon Drew Elliott Tanguay, 25, is a member of Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Middletown. He is the son of Stephanie Watts and attends Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia for his formation. Deacon Tanguay enter seminary directly after high school, where he was active in choir, band and theater. Deacon Tanguay will serve at Saint John Neumann Parish in Lancaster for the next year.

The Diocese of Harrisburg was established on March 3, 1868. It has 97 parishes and missions, 35 Catholic schools, and is home to approximately 201,000 registered Catholics throughout its 15 counties. To learn more about the Diocese and its ministries, visit www.hbgdiocese.org.

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Photo Caption: Newly ordained deacons, from left, Rev. Mr. Drew Tanguay, Rev. Mr. Richard McAlister, Rev. Mr. Thomas Kappes and Rev. Mr. Michael Pray are pictured with the Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Harrisburg, after their ordination Mass on Saturday, May 20 at Saint Patrick Cathedral, Harrisburg.