

Hundreds celebrate diaconate ordination of Polish seminarians



By Stephen Kiltonic

SPRINGFIELD – For the first time in the history of the Springfield Diocese, three seminarians from Poland were ordained together to the order of the transitional diaconate.

In a solemn ceremony filled with ritual, Tomasz Jerzy Gorny, Piotr Jacek Pawlus and Tomasz Pawel Parzynski were ordained at St. Michael's Cathedral by Springfield Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell on August 15, a date that also coincided with the feast of the Assumption of Mary.

“It’s a great event for the church of Springfield. These men are incredible young men,” said Father Gary M. Dailey, vocations director for the Springfield Diocese. “They’ve left their native homeland, their family, their friends, their classmates. And they’ve chosen to come here and work in the United States to assist the church here in our country. It’s really selfless on their part.”

“The emotions are huge during the ceremony. Your whole life is flying through your eyes. In your memory are all the people that you left in Poland – my family,” said Deacon Gorny. “But I couldn’t imagine a better day to be ordained.”

For Parzynski, the day took on added significance. “It is a very important date for all Polish people. It was when the Polish Army won in 1920 because the Communists attacked us,” said Deacon Parzynski. “It is a sign that we have a future in this diocese.”

Natives of Poland, Deacons Gorny and Pawlus are third-year seminarians at SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Orchard Park,

Mich., while Deacon Parzynski attends St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Mass.

In his homily, Bishop McDonnell compared the three to Mary who left home to serve Elizabeth. "You've come far from home to be of service of God's people here in western Mass."

"For me, being a priest is not only going through the roses but also going through the hard times. I take it from the bishop that we are to be prepared for any experience," said Deacon Pawlus.

"The transitional diaconate affords them to really focus on the sacraments and service to the church," said Father Dailey.

Deacon Gorny will attempt to incorporate some of his own heritage into his new assignment by introducing people to the history of Poland and its culture.

"I want to be a bridge between the United States and Poland," he said.

(Read more on this story in the Aug. 21 issue of The Catholic Observer, the bi-weekly newspaper for the Diocese of Springfield. Also, coverage of the ordination will be featured on an upcoming edition of the diocesan television newsmagazine "Real to Reel" which airs Saturday evenings at 7 p.m. on WWLP-22 NEWS.)