

## **James (JT) Kennelly**

St. John Vianney Theological Seminary, Denver, CO

Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Fargo

I was born and raised in Fargo where I attended the Fargo Catholic Schools. Upon graduating from Shanley High School in 2002, I began studies at the University of Dallas where I earned a B. A. in Theology in 2006. After college, I entered seminary formation at Cardinal Muench Seminary where I studied philosophy. After one year there, and a summer at the Institute for Priestly Formation in Omaha, Nebraska, I decided to leave the seminary. Shortly after leaving, I found myself with a one year job working for the University of Dallas campus just south of Rome, Italy doing odds jobs, and helping with student life. When I returned to the US, I moved to Washington, DC where I worked for a drywall company for three years, until I began working in the Liturgy Office at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. After one year there, I re-entered seminary formation.

**Do your family and friends think it is a good idea that you're becoming a priest?** *While my sister initially expressed some concern, she and the rest of my family and friends are all very supportive.*

**Do you ever have any fun? What do you do in your free time?** *Sure! In my free time, I like playing basketball or just hanging out with the guys at the seminary. I also enjoy playing music, watching movies, and skiing.*

**If you were not a priest, what do you think you would be?** *That's a good question. Before returning to the seminary, I thought about studying Canon Law. Perhaps I'd do that.*

**How many brothers and sisters do you have?** *I have an older sister and a younger brother.*

**What is your favorite TV program?** *I recently finished watching Lost, which I enjoyed.*

**Who is your favorite singer or music group?** *I really enjoy listening to English, Irish, Scottish and American folk music, as well as old time and country music.*

**Do you ever get bored while studying to be a priest?** *Sometimes I get tired of studying, but there is almost always something going on around the seminary to keep me from getting too bored!*

**How is a seminary different than a regular school?** *Seminary is different from regular school in a number of ways. One way that this year (the Spirituality Year) is particularly different is that I do not have any papers or tests in any of my classes. Seminary formation not only focuses on intellectual formation, like a "regular" school, but it also focuses on human, pastoral, and spiritual formation, too. This means that on top of studying for classes, you meet with a spiritual director, and various formators to help you develop and grow in all of these areas.*

**How often do you see your family?** *There are a number of breaks throughout the year which afford plenty of opportunities to visit family. There was also a parent's weekend at the seminary in the fall.*

**What do you enjoy most while studying to be a priest?** *I love the fraternity among the guys at the seminary. It's great living with normal guys who are all trying to become holy!*

**Who helped you decide to become a priest?** *I was inspired by a number of the priests I knew growing up, as well as many of the good priests I've come to know as an adult. Bishop Aquila has also been a big help in my discernment.*

**What do you think the best thing will be about being a priest?** *Celebrating the sacraments! Over the years, beginning with my time as an altar boy, I have developed a great love for the liturgy.*

**What is your favorite quote or saying?** *I've always liked this one by Hilaire Belloc: "Wherever the Catholic sun doth shine, there's always laughter and good red wine. At least I've always found it so. Benedicamus Domino!"*