

An exciting year for Michel Quenneville and for the Archdiocese of Kingston

by Nadia Gundert



What a Spring blessing it is to have an ordination to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Kingston! This May, Michel Quenneville will be ordained a priest, after completing formation at St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto. Anyone who has had the privilege of meeting Michel will know what a wonderful, faith-filled person he is. When I first met this fine man, he was just beginning his studies at the seminary. I could see the joy and peace in his eyes as he discerned a vocation to the priesthood. He is so authentic and constantly shares his faith through words and deeds.

Michel was born in Kingston but grew up in the country just outside Gananoque. He is very athletic and has participated in all kinds of sports, including hockey, soccer, football, rugby, running, and biking. As a teen, Michel -- like most of us -- longed to fit in and belong. He attended Mass with his family on the weekends, but the rest of the week was just like everyone else his age. In his heart, Michel felt a deep desire to live for a greater purpose. He thought that he might find that fulfilment in the military and, so, spent four years as an army reservist. He went on to study Engineering at Queen's University, and, after earning his degree, moved to Alberta to work as a chemical engineer in the oil and gas industry. Michel still felt a restlessness inside him and that there was something missing in his life. In the Summer of 2010, he encountered the mercy and love of God in a powerful way while he was travelling abroad. He felt God calling him to a different vocation: the priesthood. After much prayer and Eucharistic Adoration, Michel gathered his courage and reached out to the Vocations Director of the Archdiocese of Kingston, who set up a meeting with Archbishop O'Brien. After that meeting, he enrolled at St. Augustine's Seminary to deepen his prayer life and discern if the priesthood was indeed the vocation to which God was calling him. Through his discernment, Michel learned that "when we walk this journey with the Lord, we are not alone". To learn more about Michel's vocation story and see his personal testimony, visit the Vocations page of our website at: www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/vocations

Michel helped to launch the Totus Tuus Summer Camp in our Archdiocese and served as a team lead. His leadership, gentle presence, humility, and prayerfulness were so refreshing to see and such a witness to his deep faith, both for the missionaries with whom he served and the young people and volunteers who were part of the camp. The young campers would follow him around and light up in smiles whenever he came into the room. He would sit down with them at lunch, share a story, join in on a soccer game, or even good-naturedly agree to get slimed with chocolate sauce as a human sundae! His grasp of the concept of relational ministry and the value of presence is truly extraordinary and will be such an asset to his priesthood. During his pastoral year, Michel was assigned to St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Kingston, where the community was instantly drawn to him, recognizing his ability to connect with others and articulate his faith. Students in the parish schools were always delighted when he came to visit and talk with them. Last year, Michel also joined the Archdiocesan Duc in Altum leadership team, journeying with young adult participants in this experience of "going into the deep" to discern where God is calling them in their lives. His contributions to Duc in Altum were invaluable, and all those involved were better for knowing him. As he wrapped up his pastoral year and went back to the seminary, he made "Did You Know?" videos that shared aspects of the faith. These were definitely a hit!

In the Spring of 2020, amidst pandemic restrictions, Michel was ordained to the Transitional Diaconate. He is currently finishing up his final year at the seminary as he awaits his ordination to the priesthood. Please pray for him and join me in thanking God that Michel Quenneville answered "yes" to His call. The Archdiocese of Kingston is truly blessed to have him!