

## BR. JAMES-PETER TRARES, O.P. APPRECIATIVE



The theme song from the TV show *Cheers* said, "Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came." These words came to me as I reflected on this past weekend. In coming home to the parish where I grew up and in receiving the love, prayers, and support of so many as I continue my journey as a Dominican Friar, I was reminded of how marvelous a grace it is to be a parish family. In a world where people are so mobile and disconnected, how important it is come together and share our lives and common faith, whether it is at the table of the Eucharist or at the table of cookies and punch! No matter how long you're gone or where you've been, home is always home. Thank you for your fidelity and commitment to living out your faith together.

In last weekend's celebrations of my recent Solemn Vows, I was surprised to hear from several people, "I'm so happy for you, even though I had little to do with it." Just the opposite is true. None of us

can live out our vocations alone, whether we are single, married, religious, or ordained. I know that in my case, it was the parish community of St. Joseph's that laid the foundation for my vocation and which continues to be a source of prayer and support. It was so moving to see everyone who came out to celebrate with me—some familiar faces, some new. And as I had the blessing of attending the funeral of long-time parishioner Austin Heritage on Monday before I returned to St. Louis, I remembered that when we celebrate as a parish community, we are joined by all the saints who went before us and help us on our way. I pray that St. Joseph's will continue to be a community that calls parishioners to become sisters, brothers, deacons, and priests.



I thank you all for your graciousness and hospitality, as Fr. Stafford modeled so beautifully. I am especially grateful to the Knights of Columbus Women's Auxiliary who provided the beautiful receptions. Finally, thanks to those who gave cards and gifts. Your generosity allowed me to purchase an alb and some clerical shirts which I will use in ministry after my ordination to the diaconate in the spring. The remaining money will be used to pay for some of my ongoing educational expenses as I continue my last 18 months of initial formation and studies. God willing, the next time you see me I will be a deacon!

Please continue to pray for me and I promise to do the same for you.

—Br. James-Peter Trares, O.P.