

Zachary D. Brown

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What are your hobbies? What are your favorite sporting teams? College? Professional? Making knotted cord rosaries. I also like being outside working on the landscape around my family's house. I like to spend time with family and friends.

What are the popular spiritual writings that you would recommend to other men and women discerning their life vocations? "Discerning the Will of God", "Spiritual Consolation", "The Examen Prayer", and "The Discernment of Spirits" all by Timothy Gallagher; "Priests for the Third Millennium" by Cardinal Timothy Dolan; "To Save a Thousand Souls" by Brett Brannen; "The Joy of the Priesthood" by Stephen Rossetti.

Who are your favorite saints? Why are they your favorite saints? St. Isidore who I took as my Confirmation name. He is the patron of farmers and that is what I thought I was going to do before I entered seminary. St. John Paul II is another one. His writings are easy to read but also full of information.

Who are the people (priests, religious and laity) that have influenced your vocational discernment to this point in your journey? The longer I am in seminary the longer this list gets. A very big influence to me was my pastor when I was growing up, Reverend Joseph Szybka. My grandparents on my mom's side also have influenced my discernment.

What are your hopes for the future of the Catholic Church? My hope is that the young remain active in the church and continue to grow and develop their faith for the rest of their lives.

What advice would you offer young people about discerning a vocation to the priesthood and religious life? Talking to your pastor is a good way to start. He can help you discern and get you in contact with the right people. No harm comes from entering the seminary. You either find it is not for you and go on to get married and have kids or you stay in and get ordained. The seminary makes you a better Catholic no matter which path you take.