

Bradley J. McNeal

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What are your hobbies? What are your favorite sporting teams? College?

Professional? I like to read, watch movies, spending time with friends and family and working out. I enjoy sports and my favorite sports are baseball, basketball and college football. My favorite teams are the Detroit Tigers, Toledo Mud Hens, University of Toledo Rockets and the Ohio State University Buckeyes. I have taken up running over the past year.

What are the popular spiritual writings that you would recommend to other men and women discerning their life vocations?

Some popular spiritual writings that I would recommend include "To Save a Thousand Souls" by Father Brett Brannen; "Surrender" and "Be a Man" by Father Larry Richards; "The Imitation of Christ" by Thomas Kempis; "He Leadeth Me" by Walter Ciszek, SJ; "The Story of a Soul" by St. Therese of Lisieux and "Introduction to the Devout Life" by St. Francis de Sales.

Who are your favorite saints? Why are they your favorite saints? One of my favorite saints is St. Therese of Lisieux. Her teaching of the "Little Way" reminds me that all the works we do should be done out of love for God and others. I am also a fan of St. Francis de Sales and his written works because of his ability to write in a way that is easy for all people to understand. I also look up to St. John Paul, II, St. John Vianney, and St. Joseph, who I consider to be my patron saint since my middle name is Joseph.

Who are the people (priests, religious and laity) that have influenced your vocational discernment to this point in your journey?

People that have influenced my vocational discernment at this point include: my parents, Reverend Eric Schild, Reverend Adam Hertzfeld, Monsignor Michael Billian, Reverend Phil Smith, my formation advisor, Reverend Tom McQuillen, my spiritual director Reverend Dave Sunberg and Bishop Daniel Thomas.

What are your hopes for the future of the Catholic Church? My hopes for the Catholic Church are that we grow closer in our relationship with Christ, live our daily lives as true disciples, and that there will be an increase in young men and women being open to God's call to vocations in the priesthood and religious life.

What advice would you offer young people about discerning a vocation to the priesthood and religious life? One piece of advice I would offer to young people is to not allow fear to take over your discernment. There may be many things on our minds, but we must simply put our full trust in God. He will always lead us in the right path. I would also highly recommend meeting with a priest for spiritual direction as well as taking the time to spend time with Our Lord in Eucharistic Adoration.