



NET MINISTRIES

NETWORKS

SPRING 2016
THE EVANGELIZATION ISSUE

Challenging young Catholics to love Christ and embrace the life of the Church

WHAT'S INSIDE: NET'S FOUNDER / ALUMNI EVANGELIZATION AWARD / MISSIONARY OF MERCY / CATHOLIC KIDS / ALUMNI UPDATE



SECOND NET ALUMNUS APPOINTED AS BISHOP

On April 8, Pope Francis appointed Fr. Scott McCaig, NET alumnus 1987-88, as Bishop of the Military Ordinariate of Canada. Bishop-elect McCaig traces the beginning of his priestly vocation to a chance glimpse of a sign on the side of the road. He was then 13 and traveling by car on vacation with his parents. He glanced up and saw a sign showing a picture of the crucified Christ with the caption, "*Dare to be a priest like me.*"

"It pierced me to the heart in a way I could not explain," he said.

(continued on page 3)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIRMAN:

Bishop Andrew Cozzens, S.T.D., D.D.

VICE CHAIR:

Mr. Gerald Brennan, CIMA

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT:

Mr. Mark Berchem, M.S.W., M.T.S.

TREASURER:

Mr. Edward Kocourek

Mr. Jack Cozzens
Mr. Gordon DeMarais, M.A.T.
Mrs. Mary Fafinski
Mr. Thomas Flynn
Mr. Thomas Grundhoefer, J.D.
Mr. Daniel Hagen, CFA
Mrs. Helen Healy
Mrs. Patricia Huber
Dr. James Kolar, D.MIN.
Rev. John Montejano, J.C.L.
Mr. Patrick Regan

EPISCOPAL ADVISORY BOARD:

Archbishop José H. Gomez, D.D.
Archbishop Robert J. Carlson, D.D.
Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr, D.D.
Bishop Frederick F. Campbell, D.D.
Bishop Sam G. Jacobs, D.D.

NET is under the ecclesiastical vigilance of the Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. It is governed by a national board of directors, is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and has been audited by Lewis, Kisch and Associates, Ltd.

A WORD FROM NET'S FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

In the weeks leading up to Pentecost, the Church had us reading and reflecting upon the Acts of the Apostles. Throughout, we read of the missionary adventures of both Peter and Paul. There was one particular line that caught my attention this year. In Acts 26, Paul is presenting his case before King Agrippa. As he finishes, King Agrippa states, "A little more, Paul, and you will make a Christian out of me!"

I wonder if anyone would ever say that of me? Is there "a little more" that I could've said to someone that would've made the difference in their life? What if I had prayed for someone just a little more, would they have come to faith? When I give of my time or treasure, should I have given a little more? What could God do in the hearts of men and women, if each of us gave a little more? Whether more prayer, or more conversation, or more time, or more money, is God inviting you and me to do a little more?

The NET teams have just finished their year of mission. They have met and shared with and prayed with tens of thousands of young people. Collectively, they have traveled hundreds of thousands of miles for the sake of the Gospel. They have lived out of a suitcase and on a hundred bucks a month. They have made great sacrifices for the sake of the Gospel. They put up with difficult travel, long hours, sickness, hard work and yet, with all of that, one young man sat my office and described his year as "the most worthwhile thing I've ever done!"

Their commitment to the Gospel and serving others inspires me. I hope it inspires you. Let us both, inspired by the NET missionaries, ask God what is the "little more" that we can do to help impact the faith of those who live and work with us.

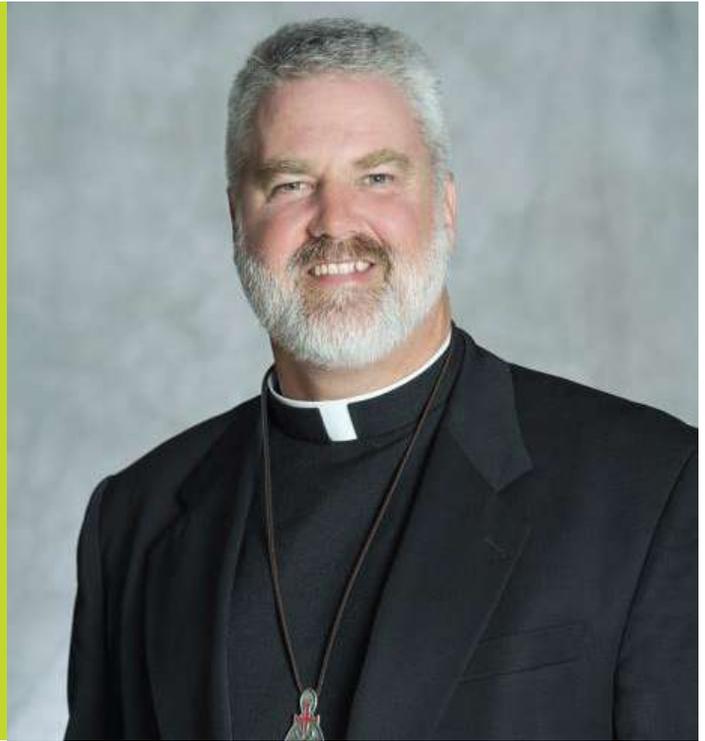
Thank you for your support of the NET missionaries.



Mark Berchem
Founder and President



SECOND NET ALUMNUS APPOINTED AS BISHOP



(continued from cover)

As a young adult, he served with NET USA and says his experience with NET grounded him in faith, prayer, service, and outreach. He said he fully expected to return to British Columbia to finish his studies and marry the devoutly Catholic woman he had been dating once the NET Ministries year was up. "But God had different plans," he said.

The turning point in answering the call to the priesthood came while he was in St. Andrew's Cathedral in Victoria, B.C., praying in front of the tabernacle and acknowledging the Lord might be calling him.

"If you really, really want me to be a priest, then I need you to speak to me in a way I will really understand," he said. "And I left it there. I got up, walked to the back of church, flipped open a copy of the B.C. Catholic newspaper and there right in front of me, a full page spread of that same campaign I'd seen 10 years earlier (on the road sign). There was the crucified Christ and the words '*Dare to be a priest like me.*'"

Ordained to the priesthood in 1995, McCaig has served as an associate pastor, a hospital chaplain, a parish administrator and director of formation for the Companions of the Cross, a community of priests and seminarians in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. In 2006, he was elected General Superior and re-elected in 2012.

Bishop-elect McCaig serves on the Board of Renewal Ministries Canada and has participated in missionary outreach to over 15 countries in Africa, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia. He also serves on the Board of Catholic Christian Outreach and is involved in the spiritual formation of the members of the movement. He regularly assists with training of missionaries with NET Ministries of Canada and is a co-Chaplain to the Spiritual Motherhood of Priests Apostolate in Ottawa.

McCaig will be consecrated to the episcopacy at Notre Dame Cathedral on May 31, on the Feast of the Visitation. He is the second NET alumnus to be appointed bishop (the first was Bishop Andrew Cozzens, alumnus 1991-92).



ALUMNI EVANGELIZATION AWARD RECIPIENTS: DOUG & MARCELLA WEISBRUCH



NET Ministries awards alumni couple Doug and Marcella (Hildebrand) Weisbruch with the Alumni Evangelization Award 2016.

Doug served with NET in 1988-89 and Marcella, from 1991-92. Together they are the parents of six children ranging in age from 20 to 12. Marcella has homeschooled, teaching all six children to read, while Doug's claim to fame regarding his children is teaching them the "more important things," like dribbling a basketball and making left-handed lay-ups.

The couple has been involved for 25 years in full-time youth ministry in Texas, ministering to approximately 1,500 teenagers through the years. Doug began his career leading the first Life Teen program in the Diocese of Dallas for five years at St. Mark's in Plano. He has spent the remainder of his years at St. Luke's in Temple, where he has been the Director of Youth Evangelization and Discipleship, and Marcella as a member of the Evangelization Leadership Team, leading various workshops on building intentional disciples.

Doug felt a need for a Catholic high school youth ministry program that went deeper, and so he created "Keysis" along with an accompanying youth ministry curriculum based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. He has also developed training programs for youth ministers, small group leaders, praise and worship teams, peer ministry teams, liturgical ministries, service and outreach groups, parent ministry, intercessory prayer teams, men's ministry, and retreat teams. He also constructed multiple thematic retreats for both youth and adults.

After NET, Marcella worked as a Middle School Youth Minister at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Plano before staying home to raise a family. Over the years she has led various women's retreats, Bible studies, has been a faithful "Keysis" small group leader, has facilitated numerous parish workshops and events, and continues to give powerful talks at NET's Discipleship Week in Victoria, Texas.

Together, they've catechized over 500 confirmation students, 16 NET team members, 3 religious, 1 priest, and 1 transitional deacon.

In addition to all of this, Doug has written, recorded, and produced four original Christian albums. He's also ministered in music, liturgy, and evangelization at diocesan conferences, workshops, and retreats.

When asked what they are most proud of in ministry, they responded, "Raising up six disciples of our own, forming and building up a culture of youth evangelization and discipleship in our parish, training and sustaining a generation to seek the Lord in praise and worship, and through it all, having a healthy home life, a joyful marriage, and well-balanced children with a good sense of humor and deep love for Christ and His Church."

The icing on the cake for Doug is winning the girl of his dreams. Doug says the best thing he ever accomplished was "getting Marcella to marry me."

Thank you, Doug and Marcella, for your steadfast work in bringing young people to the Lord! Congratulations on being the recipients of the NET Ministries Alumni Evangelization Award 2016.

"Through it all, [we have] a healthy home life, a joyful marriage, and well-balanced children with a good sense of humor and deep love for Christ and His Church."



COMMISSIONED BY THE POPE: MISSIONARY OF MERCY

NET alumnus priest commissioned by Pope Francis as a missionary of mercy for the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy

On Ash Wednesday 2016, Pope Francis commissioned 125 priests from the United States (and 1,142 from around the world) as "missionaries of mercy," sending them forth in the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. Among them was NET alumnus Mark Wiesner (87-88).

Throughout the year, the missionaries of mercy will be available for bishops to summon to their dioceses to preach about mercy and hear confessions. The priests will have the authority to forgive sins reserved to the Vatican, such as an attempt against the life of the pope or a priest who violates the seal of the confessional.

According to the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, the office organizing events for the Holy Year of Mercy, the missionaries are to be "a living sign of the Father's welcome to all those in search of his forgiveness."

They should be inspiring preachers of mercy; heralds of the joy of forgiveness; welcoming, loving and compassionate confessors, who are most especially attentive to the difficult situations of each person.

A friend of Father Wiesner sent him an email late last summer: "They're looking for guys who can preach well, celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation well. You might want to think about it."

Think about it he did, at a weekend retreat he was leading for a men's group. "I took that thought with me: Maybe this was something I could apply for. Over the course of the weekend retreat — I kept it to myself — that was my prayer intention.

"When I came off that retreat, the feeling I had was very much the feeling I had half a lifetime ago when I applied to be a missionary on the National Evangelization Teams (NET Ministries). At that time I didn't know what it meant, it felt like something I was being called to, and it was the same sense here. I realized the bishop could say no, and The Vatican could say no, but I had to take the next step."

With the approval of the bishop, he submitted his application on the day Pope Francis landed in the United States. He now finds himself, he said, with "this opportunity to pick up and do the work that first led me to priesthood."

Reconciliation is at the heart of the work of Missionaries of Mercy. "I truly believe the sacrament really flows from the heart of God and is at the heart of what Jesus came to do, which is to reconcile humanity with God," Father Wiesner said.

"When people come to confession, no matter what they're talking about, by their very presence, the first thing they're confessing is that they do believe in a God who forgives. They do believe in a God who loves them." The confessor's

presence represents "God confessing that He believes in us and that we can do better, and that we can grow in holiness.

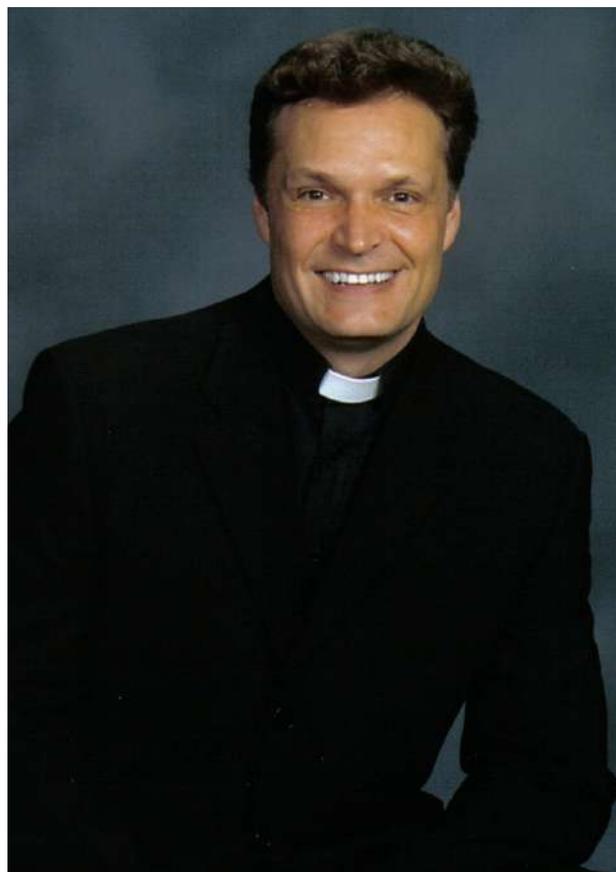
"I think Pope Francis' focus on mercy is a beautiful one to have because so many people, in one way or another, fear God or are afraid of confession, or afraid of owning up to the things they've done that they know they shouldn't do. We can help people realize, as an entry point, that confession is not about your sin; it's about God's love for you. Why would you not celebrate that reality? It's a grace-filled moment; it's a joy-filled moment.

It is a special moment for the confessor. "It can be a very humbling experience to be the confessor," he said. "You hear people whose holiness is probably greater than yours, struggling with issues you're struggling with, and that can be very powerful. So often in people's confessions, in their desire for forgiveness, to live more the life they're called to, it inspires me to double my efforts to live better what I am called to do."

Whatever he is called to do in the Year of Mercy, Father Wiesner is ready to answer.

"There are moments when it's completely overwhelming," he said. "But this truly is ministry I am passionate about and thoroughly enjoy doing. I will gladly exhaust myself over it."

This article originally appeared in The Catholic Voice in Oakland, California.



FR. MARK WIESNER, NET ALUMNUS 87-88

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR LEGACY TO INCLUDE? How about strengthening the future of the Church by revitalizing it with lots of young people?

One of the best ways you can help young people remain engaged in their Catholic faith is by ensuring that NET teams will always be available to awaken faith in them. By deciding to dedicate a portion of your personal estate in support of NET Ministries, you can help ensure that, each year, faith-filled NET team members continue to encourage 100,000 Catholic youth to respond to a dynamic proclamation of the Gospel.

It is amazing how powerful a legacy gift can be. For example, naming NET Ministries as the beneficiary on a \$40,000 IRA or life insurance policy will, after its reception, generate approximately \$1,600 a year for ministry expenses – forever! That is the equivalent of perpetually covering the cost of two NET retreats and providing countless youth with the opportunity to love God and embrace their Catholic faith. Now that's an impact!

Contact JimH@netusa.org for more information.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN CATHOLIC KIDS HELP CATHOLIC KIDS?

a perspective by Tod Worner, after attending NET's Benefit Banquet

“To convert somebody, take them by the hand and guide them.”

- St. Thomas Aquinas (attrib.)

What happens when Catholic kids help Catholic kids?

Let me tell you.

The other night I was invited by a colleague and friend to attend the annual NET Ministries Annual Catholic Youth Benefit Banquet. NET Ministries, which I was only loosely familiar with, is a thirty-five year old endeavor that originated with a visionary young man named Mark Berchem. In 1980, Mark and eleven other young adults were asked to jump in a van, head to southern Minnesota and bring the Catholic faith on the road to teenagers and young adults. In the span of three weeks, this tireless band of evangelists offered eighteen retreats in as many parishes. The impact these young adults had on their younger audiences was profound...and word traveled fast.

By the following year, requests began pouring in to offer similar retreats in Fargo, ND, Sioux Falls, SD and Winona, MN. There was a clear need to awaken the passion for Christ in the hearts of Catholic middle and high school students. So, in short order, twelve young adults with convicted hearts (and a van) soon headed to those three cities. And within a year, a movement was born.

They take very seriously their Scriptural inspiration (and NET namesake) from Mark and Luke, respectively:

“Come after me, I will make you fishers of men,” (Mark 1:17)

“Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch,” (Luke 5:4)

And their sole purpose is to reach just one more young person on behalf of Christ. Their call is to be Agents of Grace in an often grace-less world.

To see young people on fire for their faith is exhilarating. To encounter visionaries like Mark Berchem growing a movement from the first ragtag, but exuberant cadre of traveling Catholic kids into an organized movement that recruits, trains, and sends off teams to far-flung regions within (and outside of) the United States is inspiring.

But let me tell you what truly jarred me at this benefit banquet.

A young man, a NET team member, told a story of darkness. A junior in high school at a private Twin Cities school, he found himself lost, isolated, and increasingly hopeless in the wake of his mother's death from breast cancer. Ostensibly Christian, he nonetheless found himself inconsolable and dislocated from family, friends and God. Increasingly, he found himself descending deeper and deeper into the black belly of sin. His was nothing less than a dark night of the soul.

That is, until he met one of the members of NET Ministries. A young team member found this suffering high school student. And listened. This suffering student recalled, "He listened to me. He was the only one who listened to me. And then he helped me."

Before long, their discussions moved from the angst to answers. Conversations led to Prayer. Mass. The Eucharist. Peace began to break in on this student. And his life was changed forever. He converted to Catholicism. Now, he enthusiastically serves as a NET team member. Now, he does for others what was first done for him.

Unquestionably, this story was compelling... But this is the jarring part:

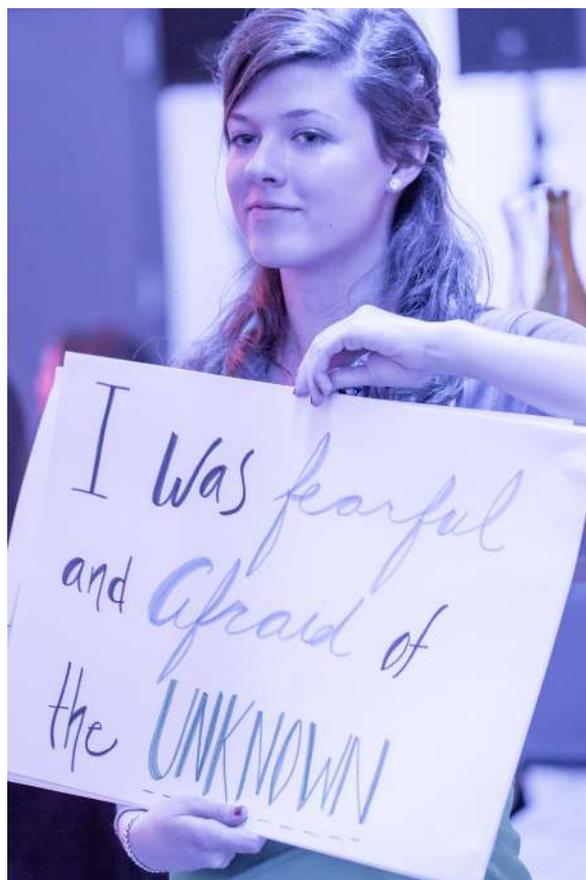
At the conclusion of this testimonial, something happened. All around this packed banquet hall, NET team members – young adults with blue NET polo shirts – positioned themselves at various points between our tables. They each held a stack of white tagboards with the first one showing in large writing their own name and age. And then, as the sweetly haunting piano of Matt Maher's "Empty and Beautiful" began to play, each team member in their various positions began flipping and revealing, in sequence, one tagboard after another. One member's card said, "I felt I needed to live up to my siblings." Another's said, "I was wounded by my mom's death." Yet another's revealed, "I felt abandoned by God."

All around the room, each table was witness to a pain, a doubt, a deeply personal suffering shared by the young adult standing in front of them. Not a sound could be heard outside of music and the shuffling tagboard. But then, after this initial tagboard revealed an anguished time in their lives, the tagboard that followed in each stack showed the letters "BTP" ("But Through Prayer") followed by statements like, "I found God loved me as I am" or "I found my mom is still here" or "I felt accepted in spite of my sins." As the song moved along and the tagboards advanced, we were witness to the deeply personal struggles in these team members' lives, and also the extraordinary graces that came through prayer, the sacraments, and the faithful companionship these NET team members received from team members who helped them in their youth.

It was jarring. And extraordinary. It was one of the most poignant and transformative experiences I have had in recent memory.

What happens when Catholic kids help Catholic kids? I just witnessed it.

It was extraordinary. And beautiful.



ALUMNI UPDATE

WEDDINGS



KEVIN MOULES (11-12) married his wife, Andrea, on May 2, 2015 at Our Lady of Miracles in Gustine, CA.

ELLIOT BAGGETT (10-11) married his wife, Emily, on January 2, 2016 at St. Catherine of Siena in Wake Forest, NC.



KAYLA AVILA (11-12, 12-13, staff 13-present) and **KIERAN DRIVER (10-11)** were married on January 16, 2016 at Our Lady of the Assumption in Turlock, CA.

ABBY EVANS (12-13) was married to Matt Porter on April 15, 2016 at St. Catherine of Siena in Columbus, OH.

KEVIN CURE (03-04) and his wife Megan were married on April 16, 2016 at St. Charles Borromeo in Stratton America, CO.

ABBY (LANTZKY) KYLE (11-12) married her husband Zachary on April 16, 2016 at Saint Stanislaus Catholic Church in South Bend, IN.

BIRTHS



BRIAN SUELLENTROP (93-94) and his wife Sarah welcomed their seventh child, Brantley James Suellentrop, on July 23, 2015.



KEVIN MOULES (11-12) and his wife Andrea are proud to announce the birth of Wade Ferreira on January 17, 2016.



TRACIE (PETITTI) (10-11) and **BOBBY MOREN (10-11)** welcomed daughter Sadie Clare on January 13, 2016.



DIANA (RESENDIZ) CANTÚ (2001-2002, 2002-2003) and her husband Walther welcomed Oliver Ambrose on February 11, 2016.



KRISTEN (MIRANDA) (10-11, 12-13) and **CLINTON SHIELDS (12-13)** welcomed son Cohen Mark on January 16, 2016.



ALISON DUFFY (staff 10-present) and her husband Eric welcomed Chiara Joy on February 19, 2016. She joins siblings Maebel and Myles.

LUCAS KINZEL (04-05, staff 05-08) and his wife Christine are proud to announce the birth of Mary Helen on March 28, 2016. She joins big brother Henry.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

GRACE MAIERS (12-13) entered the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara in Upper Marlboro, MD on January 23, 2016.



BISHOP-ELECT SCOTT MCCAIG (87-88) was appointed Bishop of the Military Ordinariate of Canada on April 8, 2016.



DEACON CHAD VANHOSE (05-06, staff 06-11) was ordained a transitional deacon for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN on May 14, 2016.



DEACON TIM SANDQUIST (12-13) was ordained a transitional deacon for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN on May 14, 2016.



JADE (UEBELHOR) BLANKENBERGER (10-11) and her husband Nicholas welcomed baby Louis Alexander on March 29, 2016.

AMBER (YAKKEL) (10-11, staff 11-12) and **CAMERON O'HEARN (10-11, 11-12, staff 12-13)** had their second child, Peter Julian ("PJ"), on April 20, 2016.

KRISTIN (TICHENOR) DORTH (04-05) and her husband Kevin welcomed Lillian Rose on April 21, 2016.

JAZMIN (CHAPARRO) CARRILLO (04-05) and her husband Roger welcomed Isabella Marie on April 22, 2016. She joins siblings Michael and Lily.

LAURA (MADLINGER) (07-08, staff 08-09) and **MATT LEWIS (06-07)** had their second child, Christine Clare on April 24, 2016.

CHARLES SCHEERBAUM (04-05) and his wife Kristi welcomed their second child, Anna Marie, on April 26, 2016.



ANNE (HARIG) SAYRE (96-97) and her husband Jay welcomed Allison Paula on April 28, 2016.



FR. JOSEPH ZABINSKI (11-12, 12-13) was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN on May 28, 2016.



FR. KYLE KOWALCZYK (05-06, staff 06-08) was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN on May 28, 2016.

SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!

We'd love to share in your excitement! Submit your news to alison@netusa.org to keep us updated.





CATHOLIC YOUTH BENEFIT BANQUET

On April 26, NET Ministries held its annual Catholic Youth Benefit Banquet. Bishop Cozzens was the keynote speaker of the evening.

Our banquet goal of \$250,000 was exceeded by \$15,000. Thank you to our donors for your generosity and faithfulness!



NET MINISTRIES

110 Crusader Avenue West
West St. Paul, MN 55118-4427

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
US Postage
PAID
Twin Cities, MN
Permit No. 469

Address changed?

Receiving multiple copies?

Want to unsubscribe or switch to an e-newsletter?

If so, contact us:

Phone: 651.450.6833 | Fax: 651.450.9984

www.netusa.org | E-mail: alison@netusa.org



www.netusa.org



fb.com/netministriesusa



[@netministries](https://twitter.com/netministries)



[@netministries](https://instagram.com/netministries)



youtube.com/netministriesusa



LAST CHANCE TO APPLY: MEN ONLY!

If you know someone who would be a good fit to serve with NET, please encourage them to apply! Visit www.netusa.org/apply for more information.

OUR SUMMER INTERVIEW RETREAT SCHEDULE:

Cincinnati, OH: June 10-11

St. Paul, MN: July 15-16

Plano, TX: TBA

Alhambra, CA: July 15-16