



**ARCHDIOCESE OF SANTA FE**  
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## **News Release**

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### **Archbishop John C. Wester to Ordain Four Seminarians to the Transitional Diaconate**

**Church of the Incarnation, Rio Rancho**  
**2309 Monterrey Rd NE 87144**  
**Wednesday, May 18, 2016**  
**10:00 A.M. Mass**

ALBUQUERQUE, NM –Monday, May 16, 2016- IMMEDIATE RELEASE-- Archbishop John C. Wester will ordain four seminarians to the transitional diaconate in the Roman Catholic Church, Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. The Rite of Ordination to the Diaconate will take place at the Church of the Incarnation in Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

The seminarians to be ordained to the transitional diaconate are Robert Bustamante, Francisco Carbajal, Christopher Hallada, and Brother Stephen A. Gaertner, O. Praem. The diocesan deacons will be referred to as “Rev. Mr.” because they are transitioning between being a seminarian and a priest. The Norbertine deacon will be referred to as “Rev. Brother”.

Seminarians are first ordained to the transitional diaconate where they will serve as deacons for a short time before being ordained to the priesthood.

These men will be given the authority to baptize, witness marriages and preach the Gospel. They will make the promise of obedience to Archbishop John C. Wester and to his successors. They will be welcomed by their brother deacons during the rite. Upon ordination to the diaconate, the archdiocesan seminarians will serve under Archbishop Wester’s authority, or his successor’s authority; the Norbertine deacon will serve under Abbot Joel Garner, O. Praem’s authority, or his successor’s authority. --END

*Archdiocese of Santa Fe Seminarists - Class of 2016*  
*Brief Biographies provided by the ASF Office of Vocations*

John Paul Afuecheta is 31 years old and is from Obeagu Village in Nigeria. He is the youngest of three children. Since he was six years old, he has always felt the call to give his life to Christ in a priestly vocation. He entered the Pallottine Community in 2007. He studied philosophy and the theology in the Republic of South Africa. However, because of complications and through the advice of his spiritual director, left that religious community in 2012. Through the advice of spiritual advisers and much prayer he decided to apply to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and he was accepted by Archbishop Sheehan. He is devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary and has prayed the rosary daily since he was a young boy. He is a musician. He is able to complete any task given him and fulfill his responsibilities. He will be serving at Holy Ghost Parish and then return to Holy Apostles Seminary to complete his studies.

Ted Butler is 55 years old and grew up in Arch, New Mexico. He has three brothers and three sisters. He lived on a farm and played baseball, basketball and some football. As an adult, he joined the Navy. He became a Catholic as an adult taking classes at St. Helen's Parish in Portales. Later he met Fr. James McGowan who asked him if he felt called to be a priest and after the archbishop validated his vocation, he began his priestly studies at Holy Apostles Seminary. When asked what it means to be a priest he stated: "As a convert I know and understand the need for a priest to open the door and invite the people to have a more personal relationship with Jesus." Ted has served in various parishes including Our Lady of Sorrows in Bernalillo and San Miguel Parish in Socorro. Ted will be serving at Annunciation Parish this summer before returning to seminary to finish his studies and be ordained to the priesthood next year.

Angelo Marquez will be 25 years old this July and though he was born in Gallup, New Mexico, he has lived in Rio Rancho with his family since 1996. He is from Incarnation Parish and was very active there in both Life Teen and served as a Core Team Leader for the youth ministry group. He is a graduate of Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio and in one more year will be graduating from the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. Angelo is a very likeable, personable young man who has the great ability to get along well with everyone of all ages and backgrounds. He completed summer assignments at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Taos and did his Spanish immersion in Costa Rica last summer. This summer he will be helping out with both the parish and the college students at the Aquinas Newman Center at the University of New Mexico. Angelo has stated that since love is at the core of the Gospel, that he would be honored and humbled to take that love of God into his daily ministry as a priest.

Leon Vigil is 29 years old and was born in Santa Fe. He is the youngest of four children. His parents are devoted Catholics. Since he was very young, he has always felt the call to the priesthood. After high school he went to the University of New Mexico thinking maybe the priesthood was not for him. But the call would not leave him. In the fall of 2010, he started his studies at Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon. He has helped out in various parishes during the summer. He studied Spanish in Costa Rica and spent a pastoral year at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Rio Rancho. He will be serving this summer at St. Patrick's in Chama before returning to seminary to finish his studies to be ordained to the priesthood.

*Norbertine Seminarian - Class of 2016*  
*Brief Biography provided by Santa Maria de la Vid Abbey*

Brother Stephen A. Gaertner, O. Praem. Born in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, Stephen received his Norbertine habit on August 27<sup>th</sup> 2009 and professed his solemn vows as a member of the Norbertine Community of Santa Maria de la Vid in Albuquerque, NM on the Solemnity of St. Augustine 2014. Stephen is a magna cum laude graduate in English (1998) from St. Norbert College in DePere, WI. He earned both his MA (2002) and PhD (2015) in English Literature from Michigan State University. In preparation for ordination, Stephen is currently completing his M.Div. at the Catholic Theological Union at Chicago. Stephen has been very involved in ministries through the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe working in refugee resettlement, as well as in RCIA ministries at Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary in Albuquerque. He has also served in prison and ex-offender ministries in Michigan and New Mexico, as well as in campus ministry at the University of Chicago. Stephen is the son of Robert C. Gaertner of Midland, Michigan. --END