



**ARCHDIOCESE OF SANTA FE
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News Release

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**Archbishop John C. Wester to Celebrate Ordinations of
The Priesthood**

Saturday, May 21, 2016 10:00 A.M. Mass
Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Santa Fe, NM
All are welcome!

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Friday, May 20, 2016— IMMEDIATE RELEASE— Archbishop John C. Wester will ordination five seminarians to the priesthood on Saturday, May 21, 2016 at the 10:00 A.M. Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Santa Fe, NM. The archdiocese currently has 35 seminarians preparing for the priesthood.

The five men who will become Roman Catholic priests represent the great universality that is the Church. The men to be ordained are: **Deacon JohnPaul Afuecheta**; **Deacon Ted Butler**; **Deacon Angelo Marquez**; **Deacon Michael Niemczak**; and **Deacon Leon Vigil**.

This special day is a cause of great joy for all Catholics in the archdiocese as we have been blessed not with a shortage but with an increase of seminarians in recent years. Brief biographies of the seminarians to be ordained follow.

Brief Biographies of the Priestly Class of 2016 *provided by the ASF Office of Vocations*

Deacon JohnPaul Oluchi Afuecheta is 32 years old and is from Obeagu Village located in Nigeria, South Africa. He has one sister and one brother. He has always felt called to the priesthood. He started seminary studies at St. Dominic Savio seminary in 1996 and then went to St. John Bosco Seminary in 1999. From 2003 to 2005 he served various parishes seeking to be admitted into his diocese – he was rejected (there are so many vocations there they simply cannot take everyone). Soon after he met the Pallottine and through the advice of his good friend Fr. Vitus Ezeiruaku, he applied for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe where he received a good response from Archbishop Emeritus Michael J. Sheehan. He started studies at Holy Apostles Seminary in August of 2013. He has served in various parishes including: Sacred Heart Parish in Española and Holy Ghost Parish in Albuquerque.

Deacon Ted Butler is 56 years old. He is the youngest of seven children – three brothers and three sisters. Both of his parents have passed away. He was raised in Arch, NM and Portales, NM on a farm. When Ted was 18, he received his GED and joined the Navy. He was an Advanced Electronics Field as a Submarine Sonar Technician for six years. Later in his life he moved to Portales, NM and joined St. Helen Catholic Church. Soon after, he was baptized and confirmed a brand new Catholic. He started attending daily Mass and became more involved in this parish. He developed a strong interest in the priesthood. With the archbishop's blessing, he studied at Holy Apostles Seminary. He has served in various parishes around the dioceses including: Annunciation Parish and San Miguel in Socorro.

Deacon Angelo Marquez is 25 years old. He comes from a very supportive family. He has one sister. He was born in Gallup, NM but moved to Las Vegas, NV when he was five. His family then moved to Rio Rancho, NM. While living in Rio Rancho he has called the Church of the Incarnation his home parish. He was part of Life Teen. While attending college at the University of New Mexico he started having thoughts of the priesthood. He attended the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio where he received a bachelor's degree in Philosophy. Angelo has served in various parishes around the archdiocese including: Our Lady of Guadalupe in Taos and Aquinas Newman Center.

Deacon Michael Niemczak is 25 years old. He was born in Alamosa, CO to newly immigrated parents from Poland a year prior. He has lived in New York and then in Poland before finally moving to Rio Rancho, NM. Michael comes from a very strong Catholic family and fell in love with the Mass. While in high school, Michael was very much involved in his parish of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rio Rancho. He has two older brothers and one younger sister. After graduating from Cibola High School, Michael went to the Josephinum for Philosophy and then went to Pontifical North American College in Rome to study Theology. Michael has always felt called to the priesthood. He has served in various parishes around the archdiocese including: Aquinas Newman Center and St. John Vianney.

Deacon Leon Vigil is 30 years old. Leon was born in Santa Fe but raised in Pecos, NM. He is the youngest of four children – two older brothers and one older sister. He has felt the call to the priesthood since he can remember. He contacted his former pastor from Our Lady of the Annunciation, Msgr. Bennett J. Voorhies who encouraged him to apply to the seminary. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in political science and Spanish from UNM he went on to Mt. Angel Seminary. He has served in various parishes around the archdiocese including: St. Patrick's in Chama and St. Thomas Aquinas in Rio Rancho.--END