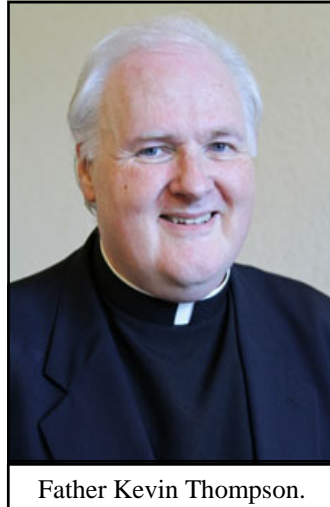


IN THE PARISH SPOTLIGHT

By *Bernie Beglane*

“This is a great blessing for all of us and I know you will welcome him warmly into both St. Rosalie’s Parish and our community.” The Rev. Edward M. Sheridan, our beloved pastor, was speaking about Father Kevin Thompson, who, along with three classmates, was ordained to the priesthood on June 25.



Father Kevin Thompson.

Bishop William Murphy presided at those ceremonies in St. Agnes Cathedral, Rockville Centre. Shortly after that, the bishop also announced their initial appointments, including Father Thompson being sent to our parish.

Father Thompson took the longest road of the four to enter religious life, explaining, “I was not consciously thinking of the priesthood when, after completing high school, I entered St. Johns University and studied philosophy.

“However, those credits came in handy when I applied to Immaculate Conception Seminary some 30 years later. I left St. John’s to work in the financial industry and later completed studies at Adelphi University that gave me an under-graduate business management degree.”

As a singer, actor, writer and magician, Father Thompson spent his free time performing on local stages. He got involved with the New York City Fellows which helps people changing careers to become teachers, and in early 2000, found himself more spiritually involved. “So much so,” he continued, “that I looked into joining the Third Order Franciscans or the permanent diaconate program.

“One day my Uncle Alan asked me if I ever thought about becoming a priest. That question did not shock me which in itself told me something. I met with Monsignor Thomas Coogan (then the vocation director of the diocese) and because of my father being deceased, I told him I worried about my mother who was in her eighties.”

It did not take long for the priest-to-be to realize that there was no ‘perfect’ time but that this was the



Father Kevin with siblings Anita and Billy.

‘right’ time. “God calls you when He wants you,” is the way he explained it. “My family was very supportive, but about the time I was about to enter the seminary, the opportunity to run an after-school science program arose. No doubt about it, I was very tempted, but it was a blessing that I had a choice between something really, really good and something eternally good.”



Father Kevin chats with Enid Cervino before offering her a first blessing. *Photo: Gregory A. Shemitz, The Long Island Catholic.*