



**Deacon Candidate  
Michael A. Meyer**



## Deciding against political career, candidate answers call to diaconal service

**M**ichael A. Meyer thought he was destined for a career of service in politics. Instead he will be serving in the permanent diaconate. "If you asked me 10 years ago today what I would be doing now, I would have said running for political office," Meyer said.

"When my first daughter was born the (discernment) process began," he said. He considered two important points at that time: "Politics is very rough on the family, and am I tough-skinned enough for the environment?"

Meyer described feeling depressed when he realized he no longer wished to work toward a political goal.

Coincidentally, the family moved to New Jersey and Immaculate Conception Parish in Annandale eight years ago. "It was the first parish that I belonged to that had a resident deacon," Meyer said.

"Once I got into the parish, it was a slow process of beginning to see skills that I thought I brought to politics," as being necessary for the diaconate, Meyer

said. "I like people, I'm comfortable with public speaking and I like teaching." When he told his wife Jessica, who is Jewish, "she was initially surprised," he said, but when he explained what he saw in it, it was very obvious to her.

"(My discernment) was a piecing together. It was really kind of dawning on me . . . We may think we are taking the wrong path, but we are going in the right direction all the time," Meyer explained.

The Meyers have been married for 10 years and have two children, Caitlin, 9, and Anna, 7. Meyer holds a bachelor's degree in Japanese from Georgetown University; a law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, and is fluent in French, Spanish and Japanese. He is currently deputy general counsel for UnitedHealth Group. In his parish, where he will be assigned, he is an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, lector, religious education teacher, and has participated in a Cornerstone retreat.

Father Randall J. Vashon, pastor and

diocesan director of the Office of Vocations, will vest Meyer at ordination. "He has been very gracious to me and very good for my formation, and I think it will be a long relationship," Meyer stated.

Meyer's understanding of the diaconate is simple and direct — "to be where you are needed, not necessarily where you want to be. I'm keeping myself very open to whatever the pastor wants. I like learning and teaching, so religious education is what I really enjoy," said Meyer, currently involved in adult faith formation.

His feelings capture his excitement. "I can't wait! I am on the edge of my seat ready to go!" Meyer said.

Jessica Meyer added, "I'm thrilled that Mike can now focus on his 'calling' without the time spent studying. It is great to have his ordination to celebrate . . . It will bring our family and friends together from all parts of the country. I'm hoping that we can give back to our wonderful community and enrich our lives that much more."

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