

Most Reverend John Noonan to Ordain First Priest as New Bishop of Orlando

WHO: Bishop John Noonan, priests and Catholic faithful from the Diocese of Orlando

WHAT: Nicholas Tocco's Ordination to Priesthood

WHEN: Saturday, May 28, at 10:00 a.m.

WHERE: St. James Cathedral in downtown Orlando
215 North Orange Avenue

OTHER INFORMATION:

Deacon Nicholas Tocco, 26, will begin his first assignment as a priest at St. James Cathedral starting July 1.

Deacon Tocco was born in New York and at the age of four his family moved to Florida and they joined Annunciation Catholic Church in Altamonte Springs. Deacon Tocco graduated from Lake Brantley High School in 2002 and entered the University of Florida, but he soon began to question the direction his life was taking.

"I was born and raised Catholic but then I left the Church in high school," said Deacon Tocco. "Basically I had a big conversion in college. It was my first year at University of Florida and I was doing a pre-med program and I fell in love with the Lord. Reading the words of Christ struck me in such a way that I knew if anything was true—this was true."

By 2003 Deacon Tocco left UF and enrolled at St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami, where he graduated in 2006. On May 12, Deacon Tocco graduated from St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach.

"Every day is such a precious gift. I'm constantly being overwhelmed by the beauty and glory of God every day," said Deacon Tocco. "I cannot wait to really give myself in love as a priest."

As a Roman Catholic priest, Deacon Tocco will be immersed in a life of service to God's people, delivering homilies, performing baptisms, presiding at marriages, hearing confessions, granting absolutions, anointing the sick, and celebrating the Mass as part of his regular ministry.

Deacon Tocco's ordination in his mid-20s reflects a larger national trend in which the average age of men ordained to the priesthood is getting younger. According to *The Class of 2011: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood*, conducted by the Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), the average age of men ordained to the priesthood this year is 34, with more than half of the ordinands between the ages of 25 and 34.

The survey found that the new priests cited their own parish priests, Catholic education, service as altar boys and the overall church environment as some of the most important factors that influenced them to become a priest.

To watch an videotaped interview with Nicholas Tocco, click [here](#).