

# hanging church

e, I seek to share in the divine

of others who aspire to priest-  
-vented because of marital sta-  
-friend of mine recently relayed  
-flection after leaving the semi-  
-g. The son told his mother that  
-arry, he would certainly be the  
-ch a vocation.

ocks the future. But having had  
r to this young man's, I can ex-

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cent part  
tion —  
ars — much has changed in my  
of those around me. My daugh-  
nto a young girl from infancy.  
rents died. The world shifted  
n these changes, I contend that

little could be considered "instant" about  
priesthood.

I don't expect people to swoon over my ac-  
-complishment. But I pray that critics will be  
-sensitive to the experience of the seminarian as  
-he searches within the church's changing  
-milieu.

Ordination offers no long-term refreshment,  
but only a place to take a cool drink before con-  
-tinuing onward.

## Looking back and ahead

My journey to  
priesthood links me with  
history. As a young  
high-school seminarian,  
and even now, I find my-  
self wanting what others  
in earlier centuries pos-  
sessed — ordination.

Ordination connects  
me with the past. Soon,  
I will join in faith with  
those deceased ministers  
who aspired to priestly  
service. I will also join  
in a particular way the  
priests in the Diocese of  
Rochester, to whom I  
extend my respect and  
admiration for years of  
faithful service.

Serving people is  
what unites us as priests;  
it is what I am drawn to  
in the final analysis.  
Priesthood provides a  
point of entry into peo-  
ple's lives, and an invita-  
tion to people to share  
my life based upon my  
public vows.

Priesthood is also a  
way to share Christ with  
others in the Eucharist  
and the other sacraments  
— a way to become and  
help others become ves-  
sels of the Lord. It is a  
way to empower Christi-  
ans to fulfill their own  
personal vocations.

Though the church is  
changing at an incredi-  
ble pace, I intend to con-  
-tinue working with a  
-personal formula. I will  
-strive to learn about my  
-powerlessness, my per-  
-sonal addictions, and my  
-prejudices. I will strive  
-to ask God for the  
-strength to change.  
Daily, I will attempt to  
-deepen my relationship  
-with Jesus in prayer. In  
-short, I intend through

the grace Jesus gives me, to become the best  
father for my daughter and the best priest I can  
be.

May Jesus continue to bring to perfection in  
all of us the good work that He has begun.



**Daily prayer, the Eu-  
-charist, and the pray-  
-ers of others exist as  
-an essential part of my  
-life. By taking advan-  
-tage of the grace  
-given to me, I seek  
-to share in  
-the divine life.**



Bartolotta believes debate and controversy over the ministerial priesthood cannot be resolved unless priests and those unable to fulfill an aspiration to priesthood come to understand one another.

Insight photos by Babette G. Augustin

## A note about the author



Bishop Matthew H. Clark ordained Bar-  
tolotta a deacon in a ceremony June 2.

Victor Bartolotta Jr., 39, will be or-  
-dained to priesthood Saturday, June 30, at  
-Sacred Heart Cathedral. For the past  
-year-and-a-half, he has served as a sem-  
-inarian intern at St. Pius X Parish in Nor-  
-th Chili.

During four years as a community de-  
-veloper at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel  
-Parish, Bartolotta oversaw the conversion  
-of the Mt. Carmel School building into  
-housing for low-income residents.  
-Previously, he was a youth minister at St.  
-Stephen's in Geneva.

Along the way, Bartolotta has earned  
-master's degrees in divinity and theology  
-from St. Bernard's Institute.

Insight