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## **MEET TYLER**

### **How old are you now?**

I'm sixteen, nearly seventeen. I am going into my Junior year of high school.

### **Are you going back to school virtually or in person?**

We aren't sure yet. The one thing I have learned to appreciate is there is no way you can replicate the school experience in a virtual setting. I have found it very difficult not to have the face-to-face interaction with the teachers to learn the lessons being taught. It has been very difficult.



### **What kind of job do you want when you become an adult?**

I plan to be a priest. It's been really wonderful since I embraced that decision. Before, it was like something was missing but since I made the decision that this is what I wanted to do, everything has been wonderful. I have had a sense of peace and security that I haven't felt before.

### **When did you know you wanted to be a priest?**

For me, I knew when I was around three or four years old. I can't say why I have such an affinity for the church, but I do. After my father died and other close family members died in my family. I was morally wounded. Something called me back to the church to reconcile all of that. I needed that. I was in the state of shock for a very long time until I was called back to the church. Something always pulled me back. As I got more involved it became clear that becoming a priest was my calling. I always had a level of faith and had always had a longing and an appreciation of priests and the church. I spend most of my days thinking about my faith and religion and it's been really wonderful. So, to answer your question, I have known for a really long time.

### **What is the process of becoming a priest?**

I will go to college for four years with a course load mainly consisting Greek, Latin, and philosophy studies. It would be more of a classical education. One would typically pursue a major in theology. After that I will go to seminary for another four years where they teach the processes of how things are done such as serving the mass and delve deeper into history of the church and the church's beliefs. From there I could join any number of orders of the church. That could be in an area of working in an orphanage, missionary work, schools. I could also work in a local diocese. There are a lot of options. The beauty about being a priest is your opportunities are so varied. The first person who came up with the big bang theory was a priest. You can be a teacher, a scientist, you can go anywhere with that. But you still have your core faith. I think that is wonderful.

**Are there college scholarships if you declare you are going to be a priest?**

There are. Scholarships are staggered in terms of the percentage the church will cover. For example, in your freshmen year they may pay for a quarter of the college tuition and could pay all of the tuition in the senior year. Seminary would not cost anything. Some places will pay for the full tuition. I'm not fortunate enough to live in one of those places. It shouldn't be about the money, but it is obviously a very large variable that has to be taken into account. Currently, I am looking to attend Providence College because they have a wonderful history department. I absolutely adore history. That would be interesting for me because I could get another major in studying history or French which I really enjoy. And the church would hopefully help me pay for that. Providence College is looking very nice. Plus, it is very close to home.

**So, I guess your mom's hopes of you having kids so she can have grandbabies are out.**

Yeah... I keep telling her she needs to look to my brother for that. It's not my calling.

**Through this COVID pandemic have you considered how exposure to ill people might affect your ability to be a priest? I assume part of the job would be to go to the hospital to visit people who are sick and dying.**

I most definitely have. I can't say with absolute certainty, but I think, had I been ordained when all of this is happening, I would still have gone out to minister to people because that is a part of the calling. I have thought about it a lot. That is what you are ordained to do. That is what you live to do. The principle of the church is the shepherd lays down his life for the flock. If I were called upon to minister to people during all of this, I believe I would be willing to take that risk. That is the major

role of the priest's life, regardless of the order they choose. The ultimate job is to take care of people. That's what you sign on for.

These have been very trying times for sure. Some of the decisions/opinions that are circulating really cause one to pause and think. For example, it has been said that priests should not be allowed to administer last rites when someone is dying. How can someone deny a person who is of the Catholic faith last rites? It has been interesting, and at times, very disturbing to see how people react during times of very trying circumstances. It has been very enlightening to me.

### **What are some of your other passions and interests?**

I love to bowl. I love to go fishing. Those are probably my two primary hobbies. I enjoy playing video games because I am just bad at sports in general. I think this goes beyond Barth syndrome. I am just bad at sports. I love watching football and baseball but playing it is not my forte. I tried playing sports but that didn't work for me. I am just not good at it. I just don't understand it. I am more than happy to watch people who are good at it. But that is not me. I am more than willing to cheer you on, but I am not going to do it.

### **What kind of music do you like?**

I can't stand whatever it is they call music right now. I abhor rap. I just can't stand it. I listen to the 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's and that's it. To me, that is the four decades when music was good. 80's will pass, there's a lot of synth there but it'll pass. I still listen to the radio. I'm not sure if anyone other than me on the planet still does that but I still do. I absolutely love Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Bobby Darin, Deon and the Belmonts and I love Paul Anka. And if needed anything I would be there. And he is still doing shows! Did you know that? The man is almost eighty and he is still doing shows. That's amazing!

### **Name a song.**

We'll just say at this point in the interview Tyler named more songs than I knew.

### **Is there anything else you would like to add?**

If anyone has a PS4 and would like to play a video game or just want talk to someone, I am always available.