



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

**Office of Communications**

P.O. Box 9023, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-9023

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 2, 2023

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**BISHOP BARRES TO ORDAIN THREE MEN TO THE PRIESTHOOD ON JUNE 10, 2023**



From left: Rev. Mr. Steven McClernon, Rev. Mr. Jinwoo (Michael) Nam, M.Id., and Rev. Mr. Ditto Subin Wilson, M.Id. DRVC Office of Communications photo.

**ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY – JUNE 2, 2023** – On Saturday, June 10, 2023 beginning at 11 a.m., the Most Reverend John O. Barres, Bishop of Rockville Centre, will ordain three men to the priesthood—one for the Diocese of Rockville Centre and two for the Idente Missionaries of Christ the Redeemer. The Mass of Priestly Ordination will take place in the Cathedral of Saint Agnes, 29 Quealy Place, Rockville Centre. All are welcome to attend the Mass of Ordination. Those being ordained are: Rev. Mr. Steven McClernon, Rev. Mr. Ditto Subin Wilson, M.Id., and Rev. Mr. Jinwoo (Michael) Nam, M.Id.

Deacon Steven McClernon will serve as a priest in the Diocese of Rockville, and Deacon Ditto Subin Wilson, M.Id., and Deacon Jinwoo (Michael) Nam, M.Id., will both be ordained for the Idente Missionaries and will serve at diocesan parishes administered by the religious institute.

The ordination will air live on Catholic Faith Network (CFN) at 11:00 a.m. It will be replayed later that evening at 8:00 p.m. Catholic Faith Network can be viewed on Optimum channel 29/137, Verizon FiOS TV channel 296, and Spectrum channel 162/471. CFN is also available on select cable and satellite systems and through live stream on [cfntv.org](http://cfntv.org). You may also view CFN on Roku,



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Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android, or by downloading the CFN iOS mobile app at the app store by searching “Catholic Faith Network” or “CFN”.

**Mass of Ordination  
Saturday, June 10, 2023  
11:00 a.m.  
St. Agnes Cathedral  
29 Quealy Place  
Rockville Centre, New York 11571**

These men will stand in Christ’s place and offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Confession, and other Sacraments. “By the anointing of the Holy Spirit, they are signed with a special character and are so configured to Christ the Priest that they have the power to act in the person of Christ the Head” (Presbyterorum Ordinis, no.2). It is this special character and powerful configuration to Christ that sets them apart to do as Christ did.

**Deacon Steven McClernon**

**First Mass: Sunday, June 11, 2023 at Noon**

**Church of the Good Shepherd, 1370 Grundy Ave., Holbrook, NY 11741**

The thought of becoming a priest first occurred to young Steven McClernon when he was a junior in high school. He was getting ready to take the SATs and ACTs and beginning to fill out college applications. He was being asked to consider what he was going to do with the rest of his life. For the first time, the priesthood seemed like a possibility.

His family, led by parents Robert and Diane, attended weekly Mass at Good Shepherd parish in Holbrook, where Steven was involved in a sandwich-making ministry, assisted at the vacation Bible school and worked at the rectory along with his sister.

Still, he wasn’t ready to consider such a big step at the time and tried his best “to brush it off.”

The only problem was that the thought never left him. Not through the rest of high school at Sachem North, or at Suffolk Community College, or at St. Joseph’s College (now University), where he earned a child study degree in anticipation of a career in elementary education.

Nor did it go away as he began his teaching career, in the Connetquot district and at Eastern Suffolk BOCES. His older brother and younger sister are both teachers.

McClernon attended monthly Holy Hours at St. Ignatius Loyola in Hicksville as well as discernment retreats. As he was wrestling with the decision, he came to rely on the counsel of his pastor at Good Shepherd, Msgr. Gerard Ringenback.



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He now uses a piece of discernment advice Msgr. Ringenback gave him in his own vocations talks. It features the image of a tripod where one leg is the discerner's own desire, another is God's desire and the third is what the people of God see in you. "When those three are balanced, that's where your vocation is," Msgr. Ringenback told him.

He also said, "There are indicators you would be a good priest. Why don't you try it? The best thing you can do is try.

"If you don't try, those questions will always be with you," said Msgr. Ringenback, who vested McClernon during the Mass last November at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers in which he was ordained to the transitional diaconate.

Deacon McClernon soon took up Msgr. Ringenback's advice and began his formation for the priesthood with philosophy studies at Cathedral Seminary House of Formation in Douglaston, Queens.

"I loved it. I had some of the best professors," said Deacon McClernon, who persevered through academic challenges at the outset.

"I look back at those two years as a good, growing experience." One of the experiences he most enjoyed was the interaction at lunch with senior priests from the Diocese of Brooklyn who resided at the facility.

When he arrived at St. Joseph's Seminary, he was prepared for the rigors of graduate-level work.

He is active in community life, playing the organ and serving in the schola (choir) and assisting with hospitality during events.

During his seminary years, Deacon McClernon has also gained pastoral experience in the parishes of the Diocese of Rockville Centre. A significant lesson came at St. Martha's parish in Uniondale where he witnessed then St. Martha's pastor, Msgr. Frank Caldwell, extend "the ministry of presence" to parishioners during his visits to their homes, hospitals, nursing homes and parish events.

"He modeled the life of Jesus in the present day," Deacon McClernon said. "When we look at the Gospels, Jesus was constantly visiting and talking with people and allowing them to experience that personal encounter with the Lord."

"Msgr. Caldwell brought that personal connection to all he met, he brought Christ to them, and for me, that is how I would like to minister."



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Looking ahead to his own priesthood, Deacon McClernon, 31, said he plans to spend time meeting with parishioners and has a special interest in young people and hopes to build on his previous experiences as a teacher and religious education instructor.

**Deacon Ditto Subin Wilson, M.Id.**

**First Mass: Sunday, June 11, 2023 at Noon**

**R.C. Church of Santa Maria, 2352 St. Raymond Ave., Bronx, NY 10462**

As a boy in Tamil Nadu in South India, Deacon Ditto Subin Wilson, M.Id., always enjoyed spending time at the church in the village, where he lived with his parents and two siblings. He enjoyed serving at the altar and getting to know the priests of Our Lady of Lourdes parish there.

When a new church was built, it was dedicated to St. John de Britto, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese Jesuit missionary to Tamil Nadu. Young Ditto found himself captivated by the paintings of the saint's life on the church walls and began to think about following his footsteps as a missionary.

He first encountered the Idente Missionaries of Christ the Redeemer when they came to speak to high school students at his home parish, where several other candidates had previously been received. He soon visited the Idente Missionaries for three days to share in their daily prayers and mission work and to share in cooking and eating with the community. After completing high school, he expressed his desire to be an Idente Missionary.

The "family spirit" of the Idente Missionaries stood out to Deacon Wilson. The community's approach joined holiness with humanity, which gave the recruit confidence that the Idente mission wasn't riding on his own greatness. "I can move slowly, denying myself and taking up my cross," Deacon Wilson said. "Let me go and see what I can experience more...Giving more importance to the Heavenly Father and how He loves us."

Deacon Wilson, 32, professed first vows in Kerala in 2011, three years before he came to New York, where he served as youth minister at Santa Maria parish, the Bronx, before beginning philosophy studies at St. John's University.

In 2018 he enrolled for priestly formation at St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, where he earned a master of divinity and bachelor of theology—granted by St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum)—and a master of arts in theology.

Deacon Wilson, who professed final vows in 2021 at Our Lady of Solace Church in the Bronx, said he looks forward to sharing his ordination day with a fellow Idente Missionary and says he and Deacon Nam "helped each other to persevere" in the seminary.



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In recent years, he also served as a catechist in the religious education program at Santa Maria. His first assignment after ordination will be at St. Luke's parish in Brentwood, where he previously served as a catechist and did summer day camp work. He will lead the youth group and supervise religious education.

He will also be involved in an Idente program for young people focused on Eucharistic adoration and artistic sharing known as The Encounter. Deacon Wilson said he wants to be present where parishioners gather. "I like to be around people, talking to them and getting to know them better," he said.

He plans to model his priestly ministry on how Jesus reached out to others. "Not to hold myself back with my own status or understanding. I want to be open to see more people, to get closer to them," he said.

**Deacon Jinwoo Nam, M.Id.**

**First Mass: Sunday, June 11, 2023**

**Church of Saint Luke, 266 Wicks Rd., Brentwood, NY 11717**

Deacon Jinwoo Nam, M.Id., first encountered the Idente Missionaries of Christ the Redeemer as a college student in the Philippines.

At a local Idente-run parish, he met Father Felipe Rufes Vasquez, M.Id., who patiently began to answer his many questions about Catholicism. He encouraged Deacon Nam to read the Bible each day and offered spiritual direction inspired by the Idente Missionaries. "He patiently gave me advice, and I felt hope that I could change my life with the grace of God," said Deacon Nam, 34, one of three children born to devout parents in Seoul, South Korea.

As his personal transformation proceeded, he became comfortable sharing his experiences of God's love with others. Now about to begin his priesthood with the Idente Missionaries, Deacon Nam wants to bring the happiness of living his faith to those facing "similar situations" to the ones he experienced in the past. "I was distant from the Church. I had questions about God's existence," Deacon Nam said. "Now, living the faith, I am very happy. I want to share this joy of following Jesus with others, so they will not suffer. I was suffering in those moments."

Deacon Nam said the authenticity of the Idente Missionaries he encountered made a deep impression on him. "They were enthusiastic about following Jesus, that was very fresh for me. Through them I went back to my faith," he said.

He counts community life as one of the great benefits of serving with the Idente Missionaries. "As a priest, I believe I need the community," he explained. "I cannot live by myself, not just for material needs, but also spiritual needs, to grow in charity."



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He professed vows with the Idente Missionaries in New York in 2015. He studied philosophy at St. John's University before enrolling at St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, in 2018.

He appreciated that seminarians come to St. Joseph's from various dioceses and religious orders. "We all got along with each other," he said. "It's a good idea. We became more united."

Deacon Nam most recently has served at St. Luke's parish in Brentwood. He led catechism classes, directed the altar servers and worked with groups dedicated to youth and Eucharistic adoration. He also was a spiritual adviser to the Catholic Club at Suffolk Community College.

Deacon Nam believes that staying in dialogue "with intellectuals in universities" can offer a good sounding board on the current culture because philosophies "spreading out there are formed" on campus.

His first priestly assignment at Our Lady of Loretto parish in Hempstead will reunite him with the pastor, Father Rufes, who joins his parents as his biggest influence.

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