



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Office of Communications

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

Tel: 516-678-5800, ext. 221 • Fax: 516-594-0984 • www.drvc.org

MEDIA RELEASE

June 14, 2022

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BISHOP BARRES TO ORDAIN THREE MEN TO THE PRIESTHOOD ON JUNE 18, 2022



From left: Rev. Mr. Louis Cona, Rev. Mr. Christopher Heller, Rev. Mr. Stephen Rooney

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY – June 14, 2022 – On Saturday, June 18, 2022 beginning at 11 a.m., the Most Reverend John O. Barres, Bishop of Rockville Centre, will ordain three men to the priesthood for the Diocese of Rockville Centre. 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. Louis Cona, Rev. Mr. Christopher Heller and Rev. Mr. Stephen Rooney. The newly-ordained



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priests will be assigned to parishes in the Diocese of Rockville Centre where each will serve in the role of associate pastor.

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. You may also view CFN on Roku, 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 18, 2022
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 Sacrifice of the Mass, Confession, and the 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 Louis Cona

First Mass: Sunday, June 19, 2022 at 1 p.m.

Church of St. Catherine of Sienna, 33 New Hyde Park Rd, Franklin Sq.

No Streaming of Mass



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Rev. Mr. Louis Cona is from Franklin Square and his home parish is St. Catherine of Sienna in Franklin Square. Rev. Mr. Cona is a graduate from H. Frank Carey High School in Franklin Square. He then attended and graduated from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. At Georgetown, Rev. Mr. Cona studied political philosophy. He was active in Georgetown University Knights of Columbus Council as well as university pro-life activities. He worked for Georgetown's Religious Freedom project and interned on Capitol Hill.

Rev. Mr. Cona attended St. Joseph Seminary, Yonkers, N.Y. and the Pontifical North American College, Rome. Rev. Mr. Cona was also a Savi guide in Rome which is a special tour of the necropolis beneath St. Peter's Basilica that leads pilgrims to the bones of St. Peter. Rev. Mr. Cona has a sister and brother.

"I can't think of a better job as a vocation that God calls us to in prayer than to absolve sins in the name of Jesus in Confession, to celebrate Mass --the Eucharist, the incredible gift that God has given us, the Church," said Deacon Cona.

"I just can't wait to be out there preaching the Gospel in a world wounded by sin, by division; where we can be instruments of God's mercy, of reconciliation," said Deacon Cona.

Deacon Christopher Heller

First Mass: Church of Saint Patrick, 9 North Clinton Ave., Bay Shore at 2 p.m.
Mass livestreamed on parish website. [St. Patrick Parish » Live Stream from St. Pat's \(stpatrickbayshore.org\)](#)



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Rev. Mr. Christopher Heller's hometown is Bay Shore and his home parish is St. Patrick's in Bay Shore. He graduated from Chaminade High School, Mineola and The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. Rev. Mr. Heller attended St. Joseph Seminary, Yonkers, N.Y. Rev. Mr. Heller has a sister and a brother.

"As I approach ordination to the priesthood, the thoughts and feelings in my heart are best expressed by the short passage from Psalm 116, which I chose for my prayer card, said Deacon Heller. *"What shall I render to the Lord for all the great good done for me? I will raise the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of his people."*

"I am filled with overwhelming gratitude to God for his goodness to me and his faithfulness to me all these years. My only response is to raise the cup of salvation—the Eucharist and the preaching of the Word—and to make my life a ceaseless offering of thanksgiving to him. I am excited and prepared to 'pay my vows' on my ordination day before family, friends, and the people of God on Long Island and to remain faithful to him through my ministry to them. In short, my heart has been filled with gratitude these days, looking back at where God has been in my life and where his promise is leading me now. Priesthood has been one of God's greatest gifts to me, and I pray it will be my greatest gift back to Him."

Deacon Stephen Rooney

First Mass: Sunday, June 19, 2022 at 11:30 a.m.

Church of Saint Patrick, 400 Main Street, Huntington

Mass livestreamed on parish website: [Church of St. Patrick - Huntington, NY \(stpathuntington.org\)](http://ChurchofSt.Patrick-Huntington,NY(stpathuntington.org))



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Rev. Mr. Stephen Rooney's hometown is West Hempstead, New York and his home parish is St. Joseph's parish, Garden City. Rev. Mr. Rooney graduated from Holy Trinity Diocesan High School, Hicksville and St. John's University, Queens. Rev. Mr. Rooney attended St. Joseph Seminary, Yonkers, N.Y. Rev. Mr. Rooney is also an avid runner who has bicycled across America for affordable housing. He has two sisters and two brothers.

"I am looking forward to getting to know the families of the parish," said Deacon Rooney. "I look forward to being a full-time evangelizer. Bringing people to God each and every day."

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About The Diocese of Rockville Centre

The Diocese of Rockville Centre (www.drvc.org) was formed in 1957 and covers 1,198 square miles in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The diocese serves approximately 1.4 million baptized Catholics* (total population in both counties is approximately 2.9 million). There are 132 parishes plus 1 campus parish in 115 towns. The diocese is blessed with 336 total priests, 703 religious women, 61 Brothers and 275 permanent deacons. In 2020, 13,526 baptisms, 11,583 confirmations, 11,760 First Holy Communions and 2,169 Catholic marriages took place in the diocese. There are 11,077 students in Catholic elementary schools; 10,407 students in Catholic high schools and 3,409 students in higher institutions. There are 35 Catholic elementary schools (31 parish or regional and 4 private), 9 high schools (2 diocesan, 2 parish and 5 private) and one Catholic college (Molloy College, Rockville Centre) in the diocese. In 2020, there were 66,578 children in parish Faith Formation programs. In 2020, Catholic clergy and community provided consolation to families and loved ones of 9,439 deceased Catholics at 4 diocesan and 20 parish cemeteries. Catholic Health of Long Island is comprised of six hospitals, three health care centers, four homes for the aged, a regional home care and hospice network, and a community-based agency for persons with special needs. More than 17,500 employees and 4,600 credentialed physicians work within the CH system. Catholic Charities provides *Care With Dignity...Life With Hope* to the poor, isolated, vulnerable, and disadvantaged on Long Island. In 2020, more than 600 staff members and 400 volunteers provided over 1.4 million face-to-face services to 45,460 people of all faiths and backgrounds from 60 service sites in Nassau and Suffolk counties. The single largest outreach to the People of God on Long Island is through the diocesan media outlets. The diocese maintains vibrant Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms. Catholic Faith Network broadcasts 24/7/365 to millions of homes; the weekly DRVC E-newsletter is emailed to more than 10,000 recipients. The diocesan website drvc.org averages approximately 18,000 unique visitors each month. *As of 2020