

Interviewer – Fr. Jerome, would you share with us a bit about your background: family, childhood, early education etc.?

Fr. Jerome – I am from Heath, MA and one of eight children. My family's strong Catholic roots stemmed from their English and French Canadian background. My father was a dairy farmer. Growing up we belonged to St. Joseph's Parish in Shelburne Falls, MA where I attended CCD during my formative years. I have an uncle, Fr. Joseph Lively who is a diocesan priest in Vermont and an aunt who was a Sister of Mercy. Both parents have since died.

– **How did you come to discern your vocation as a priest?**

– As early as eight years of age, I had an inkling about a vocation to the priesthood. I enjoyed reading scripture stories and saw them as 'my stories' with God as a very significant person in my life. As I said, I had wonderful role models in my life but it was not until I was a sophomore in high school that I began visiting my parish rectory. The pastor in Shelburne Falls was a dear friend of my family. In 1983 I graduated from a private school and inquired about diocesan priesthood through the vocation director for the diocese of Springfield. I then became a candidate. In 1989 I graduated from St. John's Seminary in Brighton, MA. However I needed more time to discern so I worked in a book bindery for two years. During that time I looked at several religious communities, especially the Dominicans and Jesuits, as I had an interest in Catholic higher education. Scripture continued to be my primary passion.

- **How did you come to meet the Assumptionists?**

– It was through my pastor who had gone to Assumption prep, that I heard about the Assumptionists. In the early 90's I was put in touch with Fr. Edgar Bourque, A.A. who became a great influence in my life along with Bro. Robert Francis Beaulac, A.A. In 1993 I became a postulant at Barry Rd. and then in the fall I began my novitiate at Emmanuel House with Fr. Dennis Gallagher, A.A. who was the novice master at that time. In March of 1995 I was professed and moved to Columb House in Brighton to study for my Master of Divinity degree at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge. After completing that program, I began my studies for an STL. In the fall of 1999 I made my final profession and in 2000 I did diaconate ministry in Worcester. In May of 2002 I was ordained a priest. From 2006–2012 I was stationed in Rome at our General House to do a Doctorate in Biblical Theology. It was a wonderful international experience getting to know Assumptionists from around the world. I am now teaching scripture at Assumption College and living at Emmanuel House.

– **How have you experienced growth in living your Assumptionist charism?**

– I have learned that on this journey toward holiness how important it is to support one another in community, to be comfortable human and spiritual witnesses to God's people. It is also important to be patient with oneself, others and God, totally dependent on God's grace and not get in the way of his daily invitations to growth.

– **Do you have any hobbies or other special interests?**

– Yes, I enjoy sports, walking, classical music and deeply appreciate rare books.

– **What is your vision or hope for the future of the congregation?**

– I hope that we continue to be 'men of our times,' making understood the language of the kingdom. I would also like to see the continuation of our houses of internationality.

– **Any final words?**

– I enjoy very much the work I do here at Assumption College. I also hope to be involved again, in some form, with prison ministry. The future, as always, is in God’s hands.