

Interviewer – Would you share a bit about your background: family childhood, early education etc.?

Bro. Ryan – I was born in Colorado but later our family moved to Chicagoland where I attended a Lutheran primary school. After high school I attended the University of Illinois and studied Economics and German. Following this experience, I enrolled as a seminarian at Concordia Lutheran Seminary in St. Louis. However, after a deeper study of Luther's teachings, I realized that I had a different view of theology. However, it was several years later while teaching English in Ukraine, I encountered the Catholic Church through a friend. I immediately began reading about the Church and started meeting with a priest in Kyiv. Shortly thereafter, I was received into the Church on Easter 2009. Several months after that, I moved to Worcester from Kyiv in order to spend a year living with the Assumptionists.

– **Where and how did you meet the Assumptionists?**

– My relationship with the Assumptionists began in 2009 when I did volunteer work in Worcester while living with them. It also gave me the opportunity to experience religious life and learn to love chanting the Divine Office. I also profited from living with members of the congregation who influenced me significantly. In particular, Fr. Richard Lamoureux, A.A. our novice master, has been an inspiring example for me.

– **Would you share some of your later education and formation memories and any favorite scripture passages?**

– I have fond memories of the Novitiate including the classes we had and the trips we took. For example, we hiked to the top of Mount Monadnock and together prayer the Rosary at the summit. After profession and the first year of theological studies, I was fortunate to spend a summer in Romania and Bulgaria attending an Assumptionist conference on the Eastern Mission. This is of special interest for me and seeing the life and work of the communities there was a valuable experience for me. My main focus right now is studying at the Theological Institute for the New Evangelization at St. John's Seminary in Brighton, MA. This institute offers graduate studies " from within the heart of the Church" with a view to evangelizing the culture – a most d'Alzonian project!

My favorite scripture is from Deuteronomy 31:8, "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." I chose this passage as my confirmation verse.

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

– Community life has taught me to be more considerate, loving and accepting of others. The Assumptionists' tradition of study has shown me the power of ideas to move people in profound ways.

– **Would you share happy memories/stories?**

– One of my fondest memories was that hike up Mount Monadnock that I mentioned. We stayed overnight in a guesthouse run by a congregation of sisters. While we spent time hiking and appreciating nature, we also had time for prayer and reflection together.

- **What hobbies or other interests do you have?**

– Music is one of my favorite hobbies. Now I am taking organ lessons and learning more about music theory. For me, it is enriching in both mind and heart. I also enjoy chess, reading and backpacking . Having spent some years in Ukraine, I am also interested in that part of the world.

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

– My hope for the future of the congregation is that we would continue to draw people to love Jesus Christ, the Church and His mother and that we would view all the teachings of the Church as light upon that path. I also hope that we would continue to combine study and simplicity of life in our efforts to extend God's Kingdom in our hearts and in the hearts of others. And that through study according to the spirit of d'Alzon we would be prepared to give a robust and intellectually satisfying account of today's crisis of ideas and in doing so bear witness to truth and love in Jesus Christ.