



AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

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American National Catholics Incardinate Fr. Jonathan Gray

The Most Reverend George R. Lucey, FCM, Presiding Bishop of the American National Catholic Church (ANCC), joyfully welcomes Fr. Jonathan Gray as the newest clergy to join the ANCC.

Fr. Gray, who was raised in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, was received as a Roman Catholic when he was eighteen years old. After spending two and a half years as a Dominican, he left the Order to work for nearly a decade with an HIV/AIDS service agency in Albany, New York.

While serving HIV/AIDS patients, Fr. Gray helped establish the Damien Center, a safe place for persons with HIV/AIDS and their families to 'drop in' and find and give support to persons in similar circumstances. He was also instrumental in the establishment of an ecumenical team that provided full-course, home-cooked dinners once a month for persons accessing the center. Fr. Gray remembers his time with the Damien Center as "holy work" in which he aided people "who felt disenfranchised from their own religious traditions to reconcile with God, find peace in their lives, and end their lives in expectation of the life that is to come."

After leaving the Damien Center, Fr. Gray served for nearly another decade as a member of an Albany-based hospice interdisciplinary team consisting of physicians, nurses, chaplains, and volunteers. While there, he was ordained to the priesthood in an independent Catholic jurisdiction and entered into parish ministry. His decision to join the ANCC is the consequence of a long period of prayerful discernment which, according to Presiding Bishop Lucey, "allows for the candidate and the ANCC to get to know each other better and provides a 'good fit.'"

Fr. Gray, who is an accomplished artist and sculptor, is enthusiastic about incardinating into the ANCC. "I see ministry as a call to service," he said, "to be available to whomever and whenever I am needed, to spend and be spent for the glory of God and the furthestmost of the gospel."

Bishop Lucey expressed delight that “the Spirit has led Fr. Gray to see the ANCC as the place the Spirit intends for him to fulfill his call to Christ’s service. May God who has begun this good work in Fr. Gray bring it to completion. Welcome home, Fr. Gray.”

The American National Catholic Church is an inclusive Catholic community independent of the Roman Catholic Church dedicated to making the world a more caring place. Guided by a presiding bishop, the ANCC celebrates the same sacraments as the Roman Church and follows the spirit of reform initiated by the Second Vatican Council. Although sharing core theological and liturgical practices with Roman Catholicism, the ANCC differs on several major points, such as married clergy, female priests, divorce and re-marriage, same-sex marriage, and lay leadership. The Church has parishes across the U.S. and a host of ministries to the alienated, under-served, and forgotten. For more information, visit www.TheANCC.org.

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