

Introducing: Fr. Colby John Elbert

**“Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.”
(Isaiah 40:1)**

Dear Parishioners,

Greetings from your new associate pastor! My name is Fr. Colby John Elbert (You are welcome to call me Fr. Colby). I am currently an associate pastor at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church (Springfield), St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church (Nixa), and a Catholic chaplain for the United States Medical Center for Federal Prisoners (Springfield). God and the bishop charge me with the task to bring the comforting words of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all those entrusted to my care.



Since I am a new priest for the diocese, please allow me to share with you a little about myself. I was born and raised in Joplin by my loving parents Robert and Dottie Elbert. I am an only child and grew up with lots of extended family in the area as well as others from California, Indiana, and New Jersey. I received my first Sacraments in Sacred Heart Catholic Church (Webb City). At Sacred Heart, I served as a lector for the parish and was involved in the high school group, Youth of Sacred Heart (YOSH). From preschool to high school, I attended the Joplin Area Catholic Schools (JACS) including St. Mary’s Elementary, St. Peter’s Middle, and McAuley High School. I started my undergraduate studies at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. After completing one year of studies, I chose to move back to Joplin and enroll at Missouri Southern State University (MSSU) and eventually earned my bachelor’s degree in psychology. At MSSU, I was active in Catholic Campus Ministries and started attending St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church (Joplin).

Later, I attended Pittsburg State University (PSU) for the school psychology graduate program. I was one semester away from working in the public schools four-days-a-week when I picked up the call to a more intentional, formal discerning of the priesthood. The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau and St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology accepted me for seminary formation. I had never heard of St. Meinrad and was warmly welcomed by the community there especially the monks and my diocesan seminarian brothers. St. Meinrad was my home, and I had various summer assignments until graduation in May of 2017. On June 2, 2017, at St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church, Bishop Edward M. Rice ordained me a priest for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. The entire weekend was a wonderful celebration and thanksgiving shared by family, friends, and the entire community.

I enjoy a variety of hobbies and activities that include and are not limited to playing soccer, disc golf (aka Frisbee golf), running, biking, and sailing with my family and friends on the lake. Currently, I am taking my time to transition to the priesthood by getting settled into my new living arrangements. I am in residence at SEAS and Fr. Tom is gracious and hospitable. If needed, you can call the SEAS office and reach my desk phone.

I appreciate all of the prayers and support that have led me to this point in my life. I look forward to getting to know, and serve you through my various ministries and hope that we can continue to love and support one another in Christ the Lord, who is God’s Divine Word of Eternal Comfort made flesh.

Sincerely yours,
Fr. Colby