

Benedictine monk ordained at Subiaco

written by Maryanne Meyerriecks |



Brother Patrick Boland, OSB, lies prostrate before Bishop Anthony B. Taylor during the ordination rite June 20 at Subiaco. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Bishop Anthony B. Taylor ordains Benedictine Patrick Boland to the priesthood by laying on of hands June 20 at St. Benedict Church at Subiaco Abbey. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Brother Mel Stinson, OSB (left) and Father Mark Stengel, OSB, assist Father Patrick Boland with his vestments June 20 at Subiaco. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Bishop Anthony B. Taylor anoints the hands of Father Patrick Boland, OSB, during his ordination to the priesthood June 20 at Subiaco Abbey. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Abbot Leonard Wangler, OSB, abbot of Subiaco Abbey, moves to embrace newly-ordained Benedictine priest Father Patrick Boland during the sign of peace June 20. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Father Patrick Boland, OSB, concelebrates Mass for the first time June 20 in St. Benedict Church at Subiaco Abbey. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Newly ordained Father Patrick Boland gives Communion to his mother, Catherine Boland, during Mass June 20 at Subiaco. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Father Patrick Boland, OSB, blesses his Abbot Leonard Wangler after the ordination Mass June 20 at Subiaco Abbey. (Karen Schwartz photo)



Newly ordained Father Patrick Boland, OSB, blesses his father, James Boland, after the ordination Mass June 20 in St. Benedict Church at Subiaco Abbey. (Karen Schwartz photo)

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SUBIACO — Subiaco Abbey was bursting with new life June 20 — a new dormitory under construction and, inside the abbey church, the celebration of an ordination.

Father Patrick Boland, OSB, is the first Benedictine monk at the abbey to be ordained a priest in 30 years.

“While I was completely happy being a brother in community, helping on farm, in vocations, teaching and giving retreats, I always wanted to bring the sacraments to people.”

Father Patrick Boland, OSB

Among those who gathered for the ordination were Father Patrick’s parents, James and Catherine Boland, five of his seven siblings, diocesan priests, the Benedictine sisters of Holy Angels Convent and St. Scholastica Monastery, oblates and his Benedictine community.

Bishop Anthony B. Taylor was the ordaining bishop and celebrant in a Mass concelebrated by Abbot Leonard Wangler, OSB; Very Rev. Tim Whalen; and Father Isaac Haywiser, OSB.

In his homily, Bishop Taylor said, “Careers are jobs that we choose for our own reasons. Vocations are chosen for us by God for his reasons.”

Although Father Boland had experienced success in the working world, he did not realize what God had chosen for him until, at age 43, he went on a retreat at Subiaco Abbey.

“You were not wowed by how impressive the monks were,” Bishop Taylor said, “although they were impressive. Instead you saw how ordinary, how sincere the monks are. They’re the real thing and that touched your heart ... how much it seemed like home from the beginning ... what a good fit it is, and in that way you discovered what God had chosen for you.”

Father Boland’s older brother, Jim Boland, visiting Arkansas from Pennsylvania for the first time, felt Bishop Taylor’s words described his brother well.

“Greg (Father Boland’s given name) was a regular kid, an altar boy, a Boy Scout, but he showed an interest in God even when he was young,” he said.

After pledging obedience to Bishop Taylor and Abbot Leonard, Father Boland prostrated himself before the altar as the congregation sang the Litany of the Saints.

Bishop Taylor laid hands on Father Boland and prayed over him. Father Mark Stengel, OSB, invested him with the stole and chasuble, and Bishop Taylor anointed his hands with sacred chrism. The rite ended with Bishop Taylor presenting the gifts of bread and wine, brought to the altar by his parents, to Father Boland.

As the new priest concelebrated his first Mass and recited the Eucharistic prayer, his voice trembled with emotion.

“I’m very proud and amazed,” Catherine Boland said of her son’s ordination. “I have to thank Father (formerly Abbot) Jerome for giving him lots of help along the way.”

Following the ordination, Father Boland thanked everyone for their prayer and support.

“While I was completely happy being a brother in community, helping on farm, in vocations, teaching and giving retreats, I always wanted to bring the sacraments to people. ... Being ordained will enable me to actually bring the sacraments to those I meet. I am most grateful for the wisdom of spiritual director 13 years ago, my abbot, my parents, family and friends that have all supported me throughout my discernment and have prayed for me, unceasingly.”

The abbey now has 40 monks: 23 brothers and 17 priests. Brothers Cassian Elkins and Reginald Udouj, OSB, are also studying for the priesthood. There are two novices and one candidate currently in formation.