

THE MAGAZINE  
OF THE CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
SPRINGFIELD

# The Catholic mirror

thecatholicmirror.org  
July / August 2014



## ready to serve

Springfield Diocese  
celebrates ordination of two  
new 'priests of our people'

### SPECIAL INTERVIEW

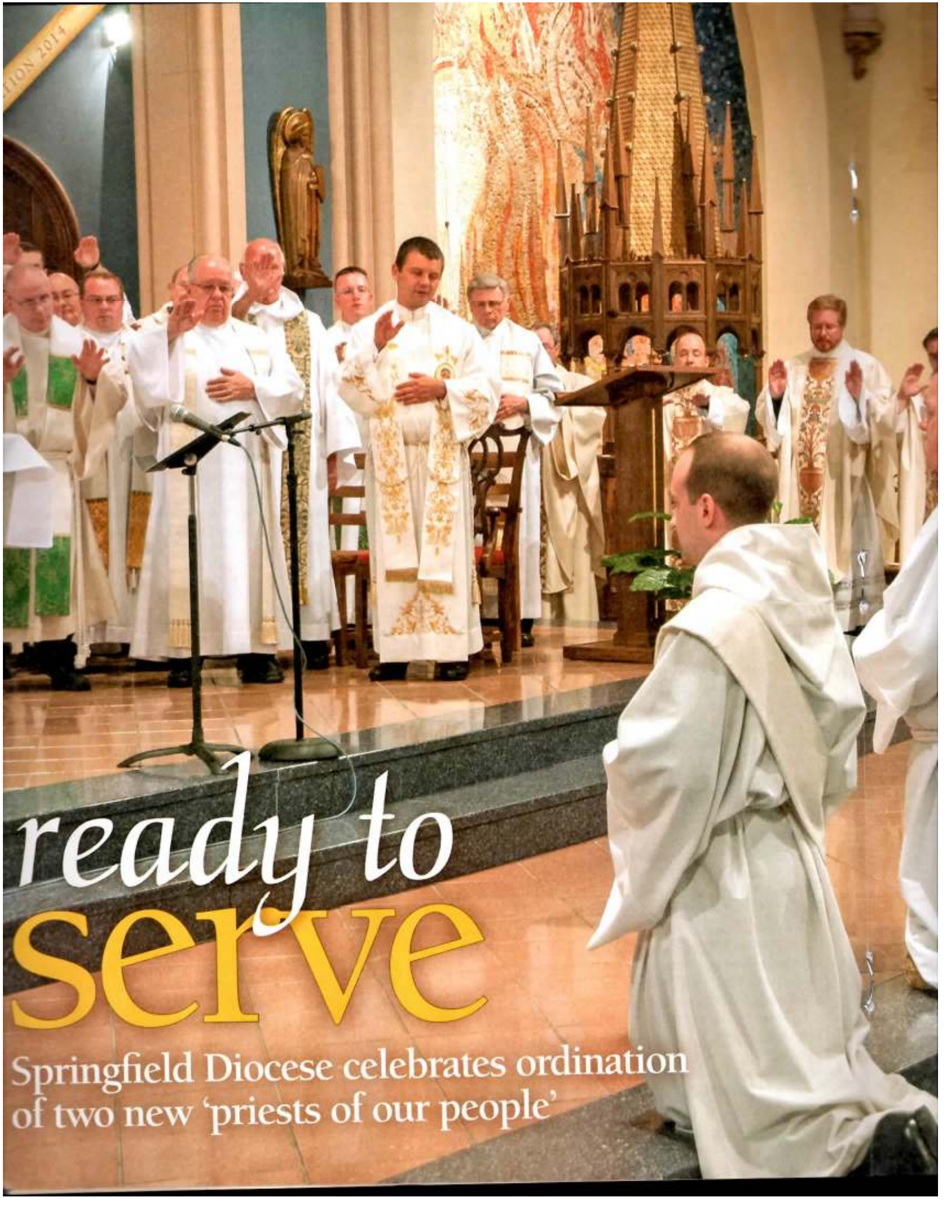
Bishop McDonnell reflects on his 10  
years of service as bishop of Springfield

### FEATURE STORY

Catholic Grandparents'  
founder visits diocese



A new bishop for the  
Springfield Diocese PAGES 6-9



ready to  
**serve**

Springfield Diocese celebrates ordination  
of two new 'priests of our people'

Written by Peggy Weber | Photo by Fred LeBlanc

**SPRINGFIELD** Springfield Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell ordained two new priests for the Diocese of Springfield on June 7 at an 11 a.m. Mass at St. Michael's Cathedral, here. Father Christopher Andrew Fedoryshyn, 29, of Pittsfield and Father Francis (Frank) Jeffrey Lawlor, 57, a native of New Haven, Conn., became the two newest priests for the diocese.

In a moving liturgy, the two men promised obedience and "expressed resolve to consecrate their lives to God and for the salvation of his people and to unite themselves more closely every day to Christ the High Priest."

Following the ordination Mass, which was attended by about 500 people, the priests expressed their thoughts on the eventful day. "I feel incredibly uplifted and joyful and eager to serve the people of God," said Father Fedoryshyn.

Father Lawlor said, "It's a pretty special day. It's a miraculous kind of day. I'm very thankful. It's taken a long time and a circuitous route but it's been fun. And I'm very happy to be here." (Profiles of the two new priests follow this article on pages 18 and 19.)

Bishop McDonnell said that he had not expected to be the ordaining prelate this year. He noted that 17 months ago he turned 75 and submitted his resignation to the Vatican, but so far his resignation has not been accepted.

"I am delighted to have this opportunity to welcome you into the priesthood of Jesus Christ," he said. "It's a priesthood that has changed and developed. It calls us to be true priests of our people, in our people and among our people. We can be the sign and symbol of Jesus Christ," he said.

He added, "Each of you will do it in a different way with all your uniqueness."

Father Fedoryshyn was assigned to St. Mary Parish in Westfield. Father Lawlor will be the parochial vicar at St. Anne Parish in Chicopee.

Father Gary M. Dailey, director of vocations for the Diocese of Springfield, said the ordination day is special.

"Today is a great day for the church of Springfield. I always say it is great when we gather for a priestly ordination because we have ordained two more men for service in the diocese," said Father Dailey. "We have two more men who can celebrate the Eucharist, who can absolve sins. We have two men who can anoint the sick and heal them.

"So this is a great day for the church. And I know that both Father Frank and Father Chris will bring to the Diocese of Springfield tremendous gifts and the people that they serve will find in them great priests," he said.

Father Dailey said that one ordination is scheduled for next year and none for 2016. But there are presently six men studying to be priests and 12 men in the application process for the fall.

Still, these newest priests bring the Springfield Diocese to a total of 26 newly ordained priests in the 10 years since Bishop McDonnell arrived in the diocese and appointed Father Dailey as vocations director. That total, based on diocesan population, puts it among the leaders in ordinations among all United States Catholic dioceses.

But Father Dailey is not resting on these accomplishments.

"Still, we need to continue prayers for an increase in vocations," he said.



# Calculating a vocation: A love of math and God adds up to a commitment to priesthood

By Sharon Roulier

**EASTHAMPTON** Father Christopher Fedoryshyn grew up in Pittsfield, the only child of Peter and Marie Fedoryshyn. He was a parishioner of the former Notre Dame Parish in Pittsfield, and, at a young age, he says both priests and laity would suggest he would one day become a priest.

But young Chris did not seriously consider the idea back then, choosing instead to focus on playing tennis or spending time with his father, who, sadly, passed away unexpectedly in 2008.

"Growing up, whether it was going for hikes with him, or he taught me all kinds of things like carpentry and how to put a roof on a house," recalls Father Chris. "He was a teacher and he'd have summers off. So he taught me more or less everything he knew. And I thank God for that."

Father Chris says he always excelled in school. Graduating from Taconic High School in Pittsfield, he especially loved math, as his father taught high school algebra and geometry.

"Especially when I got to college, I really liked calculus and math problems. There's always one answer, so no debating," he says. "That's why I studied economics; a lot of math and a lot of stats involved in that."

While receiving his mathematics and carpentry skills from his Ukrainian father, he says it was his mother, who is of French descent, who instilled great faith in him.

"She was the one who would bring me to church and was very involved in my faith formation growing up," says Father Chris. "She is a very faithful Catholic and that's



been an inspiration on its own. She's been a great help to me when I'm in seminary too. And always very supportive, so really I can't thank her enough."

Before his ordination to the priesthood, Father Chris served at Our Lady of the Valley Parish in Easthampton on the weekends while finishing up his studies at St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Mass.

He graduated from Siena College in 2007. While there he learned about Franciscan spirituality, serving the community through volunteer work and, on a global level, through a mission trip to

Bolivia, where he helped to build houses with Habitat for Humanity. After receiving his bachelor's degree, he entered into a doctoral program in economics at American University in Washington, D.C.

Father Chris says that even though at that time he had the promise of a good career, drove a nice car and had a good group of friends, he felt the desire to serve God and others.

"When you're twenty, your whole life is still ahead of you and all these different possibilities. But looking back, I can see God, and through his Holy Spirit (he) kind of led me in the direction that he wanted for my life," he says, noting that he then made the decision to enter the seminary to become a priest.

With a shortage of men entering the priesthood, Father Chris says he takes his new responsibilities seriously. He and fellow classmate, Father Frank Lawlor, are the only two ordained this year. And just one seminarian is scheduled to be ordained in 2015.

"There's a certain urgency to really talk about vocations," he says. "And just by example, by being a happy priest, by enjoying what you're doing and not losing sight of that, and that will inspire more young men to answer God's call."

Father Peter Gregory, pastor of St. Charles Parish in Pittsfield, is among the priests who have inspired Father Chris.

"Father Peter has been really a great help and a great mentor over the past 10 years since I've been at St. Charles, and seeing him, he has a great way with people, and he's able to really bring the community together," he says.

In his spare time, Father Chris says he likes to play tennis and try to keep physically healthy by being outdoors.

And like his father, he still enjoys carpentry and fine woodworking, including building furniture.

