



JESUITS®
West



ORDINATIONS 2021

Xavier Benavides, S.J.
John Guyol, S.J.
Jack Krouse, S.J.
Brad Mills, S.J.
Martin Ngo, S.J.

We thank God for the lives and vocations of these five men from the Jesuits West Province who have answered the call to expand their ministry as Jesuits by saying “yes” to priesthood.

Their witness is a sign of joyful hope and an invitation to all of us to put our faith into action in service to God and our sisters and brothers.

This brochure is just a snapshot into the lives of these men, capturing some highlights from their journeys as Jesuits and providing a glimpse of their unique personalities. As you learn about them, please keep them in your hearts and in your prayers.

Front cover: Fr. Perry Petrich, S.J., was ordained to the priesthood by Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus Kenneth D. Steiner, Archdiocese of Portland, on July 6, 2020, at St. Ignatius Parish, Portland, Oregon.

Xavier Benavides, S.J.



Province: USA West

Birthday: May 26, 1972

Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

Education:

Bachelor's degree, English and philosophy, Texas A&M University; Master of Business Administration, University of Michigan; Master's degree, sociology, Loyola University Chicago; Master of Divinity, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

Highlights of Jesuit Formation:

1. Volunteered for a year at an alternative school, Escuela Espíritu Santo, based at a local parish in Guadalajara, Mexico, whose youngest student was 16 years old and the oldest 72.
2. Worked as the director of campus ministry at Cristo Rey High School in Sacramento, California, and helped found the CR Social Justice Club.
3. Co-led the 19th Annotation of the Spiritual Exercises at St. Ignatius Church in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts.



Xavier with his mother, Mary Esther Benavides, after baptizing his cousin Eli. This was his first baptism.

Post-Ordination:

Will serve at St. Leo Catholic Church in Tacoma, Washington.

What is your favorite book you've encountered since entering the Society?

“Said I Wasn’t Gonna Tell Nobody: The Making of a Black Theologian” by James H. Cone. James Cone helps encapsulate the idea that we each must try to understand God from our own perspectives, looking at our shared history and traditions. He believes that before we can love anyone else we must first learn to love ourselves as God loves us. This love then becomes a bridge for all peoples to come together in unity through the love of the father and the body of Christ.

What was one particularly meaningful experience you had during your formation, and why was it meaningful to you?

Verbum Dei High School is an all-boys school where students work at a local business to help pay for the cost of tuition, making it affordable for families to send their children to a private college preparatory school. Students are required to wear a tie and often the school will distribute donated ones to the students. One morning before school a student who is being raised by his grandmother comes into my classroom asking if I can help him tie his bowtie. His grandmother did not know how to do it and he really wanted to wear it for work. It was a small act but one with so much meaning for me. Tying his tie brings back memories of my own dad teaching me to tie a bowtie, and I felt honored to be able to do this for my student. For me, this memory demonstrates that we are doing more than teaching: We are creating a sacred family at our schools. The traditions that are being passed down not only come through normal family relationships but also through those who see us as part of their family. This is grace in action, sharing our gifts with one another and passing on the care that we have received. “We love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19).



Xavier with Cristo Rey High School in Sacramento student volunteers at the American Heart Association Heart Walk in 2017.

John W. Guyol, S.J.



Province: USA West

Birthday: December 1, 1986

Hometown: St. Louis, Missouri

Education:

Bachelor's degree, theology and religious studies, Villanova University; Master of Divinity, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University

Highlights of Jesuit Formation:

1. Taught theology and coached volleyball and javelin at Jesuit High School in Portland, Oregon.
2. Worked with kids living on the streets and Jesuit Refugee Service in Cameroon.
3. Sang with different choirs throughout formation, including St. Matthew's Choir in St. Louis and Our Lady of Lourdes Choir in Oakland, California.

Post-Ordination:

Will serve at St. Francis Xavier Church and St. Ignatius Mission in Missoula, Montana.



John with some of the children of Le Foyer D'Esperance, a support center for children in Cameroon, where he served during his Jesuit formation.



John distributes the Eucharist to his parents at his diaconate ordination.

Who's your favorite saint, and why?

There are many saints who have inspired me, but one saint that continues to challenge me in the best of ways is St. Peter Faber, S.J., a companion of Ignatius, who loved deeply. Our world is in need of gentleness and reconciliation. I can think of no better example than him. His words impel me to do all I can for all I meet: "Take care, take care, never to close your heart to anyone!"

How has your spirituality changed since entering the Society?

One of the great spiritual lessons I have learned since entering the Society is to allow my spirituality to change. God continues to reveal more and more of who God is through different avenues. I have learned about the creativity of God through music and beauty. I have learned about the love of God through family and strangers. I have learned about the patience of God in prayer. The experiences of my life as a Jesuit have helped me to open myself up to the surprising new ways through which God is trying to teach me. This has granted me a greater sense of freedom, and I await the goodness that is waiting for me wherever I am sent.

Jack M. Krouse, S.J.



Province: USA West

Birthday: February 6, 1982

Hometown: San Jose, California

Education:

Bachelor's degree, history and literature, Harvard University; Master's degree, social philosophy, Loyola University Chicago; Master of Divinity, Centre Sèvres, Paris

Highlights of Jesuit Formation:

1. Taught Catholic ethics and the Old Testament at Loyola High School of Los Angeles and served as campus minister and teacher at Sacred Heart Nativity School in San Jose.
2. Studied theology and shared community life with Jesuits from around the world in Paris, the city where Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Peter Faber and the other first Jesuits studied and made their vows together on Montmartre in 1534.
3. Served with the Jesuits of Colombia and the Missionaries of Charity at their parish and shelter in Cartagena and spent time at the sanctuary and rooms of St. Peter Claver, S.J.

Post-Ordination:

Will return to Centre Sèvres in Paris to complete a Licentiate in Sacred Theology.

Jack (far right) with a class of his freshmen students at Loyola High School of Los Angeles on a field trip.





Jack (back row, far right) with the students of the Catholic chaplaincy to Sciences Po in France and Jack's co-chaplains, Fr. Jacques Enjalbert, S.J. (front row, center), and Sister Sabine Algrin (front row, navy jacket), during a weekend retreat at the birthplace of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat, founder of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

Who is one important mentor who has accompanied you on your journey? What made them a good mentor?

One important mentor for me during my time of formation has been Fr. Jacques Enjalbert, S.J., chaplain to the university students at the Institut d'Études Politiques (known as "Sciences Po"), France's government and diplomacy university where Presidents Macron, Hollande, Chirac and Mitterrand studied. Since arriving in Paris for theology studies, I have served alongside "Père Jacques," as the students call him, and learned so much about joyful priestly ministry from his supervision and his mentorship in a lively, busy university chaplaincy.

Fr. Jacques offers an inspiring example of what a joyful and exuberant but also deeply prayerful, hardworking and good-humored priest can accomplish and help to flourish in a largely secular setting where the role of faith and the church is not always obvious or encouraged. Serving at the weekly student Masses alongside him, I have always been moved by how he takes a quiet moment in personal prayer before the crucifix in the sacristy before the start of Mass and how he turns to face Christ on the Cross when we say the words, "Lord, Have Mercy, Christ, Have Mercy."

Then, right after Mass, Fr. Jacques is the life of the gathering — ready and eager to dive into the conversation with a ready laugh and a word of encouragement as we all sit down to a home-cooked meal and the evening's program for the students. When I finish this ministry here at the chaplaincy, I will miss Jacques' exuberant laugh and fun-loving spirit but will never forget the model he showed me of a smiling, joyful Jesuit priest, ever ready to share the joy that Jesus promises us in a life of discipleship among the good friends he sends us.

Brad Mills, S.J.



Province: USA West

Birthday: October 16, 1983

Hometown: Santa Clara, California

Education:

Bachelor's degrees, psychology and environmental science, Santa Clara University; Master of Social Work, Saint Louis University; Bachelor of Sacred Theology (equivalent), Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá, Colombia

Highlights of Jesuit Formation:

1. Took a migration pilgrimage in 2015, traveling by land from Guatemala to California to learn from the experiences of migrants traveling northward.
2. Collaborated at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in San Diego, teaching catechesis, helping people apply for citizenship and accompanying volunteer groups to Tijuana.
3. While in Bogotá, made weekly visits to a neighborhood on the outskirts of the city to assist with various pastoral activities with a community organization, Codo a Codo.

Post-Ordination:

Will serve as an associate pastor at Most Holy Trinity Church in San Jose, California.

How has your spirituality changed since entering the Society?

Since entering the Society of Jesus my spirituality has become more



Brad at a youth group meeting in Soacha, Colombia, in 2020.



Brad taking part in an Easter Vigil in Soacha, Colombia, in 2019 with Sr. Norma Ines Bernal and community members.

authentic, less rigid and simpler. It has become more authentic in the sense that I bring more of who I am to my prayer: my worries, my concerns, my insecurities, my passions, my deepest desires. I have grown more able to bring all of who I am to my prayer, even if on some days all that I can muster is a dry, heavily distracted attempt to listen to God. I trust that God accepts all my attempts at prayer for what it is, just as God accepts all of who I am.

Imagine you could travel back in time and meet yourself the first day you entered the Society of Jesus. What's one piece of advice you'd give to yourself?

If I could talk to myself on the day I entered the novitiate, I would tell myself to trust in the value of working with individuals in simple ways. The Jesuits are full of members currently, and in the past, who are profoundly charismatic and have created well-known movements and works that have positively affected the lives of thousands of people. Many of these Jesuits are deeply admired, frequently quoted and celebrated. These “giants” of spirituality, pastoral work and academic work are inspiring, yet they can be difficult models if I believe that I need to imitate them. The truth is, few Jesuits are called to be great founders of works, and few become celebrated public figures. Rather, during my time as a Jesuit in the last 10 years, the Jesuits who have become my mentors and models are those men who are known above all by the relatively limited group of individuals with which they have worked in simple ways: as pastors, spiritual directors or friends, often with a sense of humor and unassuming gentleness. I have come to see this as my call: doing small works of love for individuals, on a day-to-day basis. Focusing my life on this mission, I am more able to see clearly how God calls me to love others in the here and now: in hidden, simple, everyday ways that build community and fraternity.

Martin Huynh Ngo, S.J.



Province: USA West

Birthday: July 18, 1982

Hometown: Westminster, California

Education:

Bachelor's degree, computer science, University of California, Irvine; Master's degree, applied philosophy, Loyola University Chicago; Master's degree, digital storytelling, Loyola University Chicago; Master of Divinity, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry; Licentiate in Sacred Theology, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

Highlights of Jesuit Formation:

1. Studied and performed for three years at the Second City Training Center while doing first studies in Chicago.
2. Accompanied young adults for MAGIS and World Youth Day 2013 in Brazil.
3. Interned for a summer for the Jesuit Curia's communication team in Rome just when Pope Francis happened to "drop in" on his fellow Jesuit brothers for an impromptu visit.

Post-Ordination:

Will serve in campus ministry at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.



"Br. Martin," as the kids called him, is relishing the fruits of his digital media senior students at Verbum Dei High School in Los Angeles. Nearing the end of the semester they are ready to show off their digital storytelling skills to the school and their communities.



Martin is acting opposite one of his Jesuit thespian heroes, Fr. George Drance, S.J. This was a comedy sketch written by George called "Unconditional" that was filmed for a class assignment. The location is actually a local metro station near Loyola University Chicago. George and Martin adapted this piece from a Second City open-mic event they had recently done.

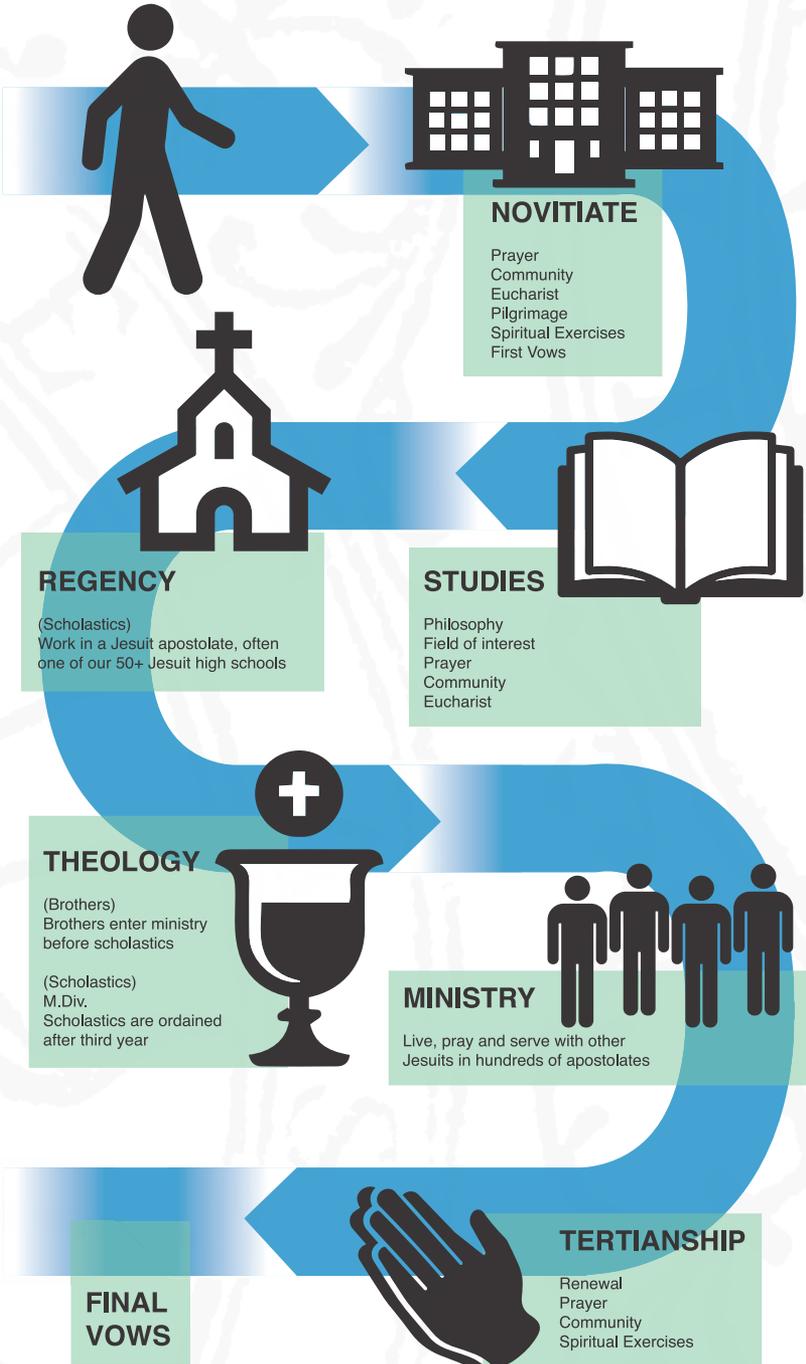
What is one hobby you've cultivated as a Jesuit, and why is it important to you?

Acting. There was a time in formation when I thought that I had to leave the Society of Jesus because I believed that my true calling was to pursue the life of a full-time actor. After three joyful years as a Jesuit, I confessed to a spiritual director saying, "Jerry, I think I have to leave. God is calling me to pursue performing arts." My director asked, "Why not do it as a Jesuit?" "I don't think I will be allowed," I responded. Trying not to sound obvious, he inquired, "Have you tried...asking?" Sometimes the evil spirit wins by scaring us away from bringing deep concerns into the light. There was nothing to fear in this situation in asking. In this case, I was surprised with a "yes" from my superior in Chicago, "As long as you do your homework." "Yes, Mom," I thought, with newfound vocational glee. God wastes nothing.

What's one interesting fact about yourself not everyone would know?

Video games are the reason I am a Jesuit today. Now, not all games are created equal, mind you. There is an array of video game genres, and I loved most of them, but the one that held a special place in my heart was the role-playing game (RPG). The all-time classic RPG to me is Chrono Trigger for the 16-bit Super NES. As per any role-playing game, you command an avatar who ventures out into a massive fantasy world. This gameplay was thoroughly spellbinding to me as a child. It bled out analogously into the way that I would see the world. The call to religious life, for me, somehow captured this sense of grand adventure, only it was real. People you meet are real. The stakes are real. The game, as it were, is not a game at all. A calling to religious life is a fantastical invitation to community and mission for the sake of sharing the Good News. Every stage presents challenges. Every challenge beckons growth. And if only one lesson is remembered, it is that you cannot do it alone, much less without the guidance of the Spirit.

The steps in Jesuit formation



NOVIATE

- Prayer
- Community
- Eucharist
- Pilgrimage
- Spiritual Exercises
- First Vows

REGENCY

(Scholastics)
Work in a Jesuit apostolate, often one of our 50+ Jesuit high schools

STUDIES

- Philosophy
- Field of interest
- Prayer
- Community
- Eucharist

THEOLOGY

(Brothers)
Brothers enter ministry before scholastics

(Scholastics)
M.Div.
Scholastics are ordained after third year

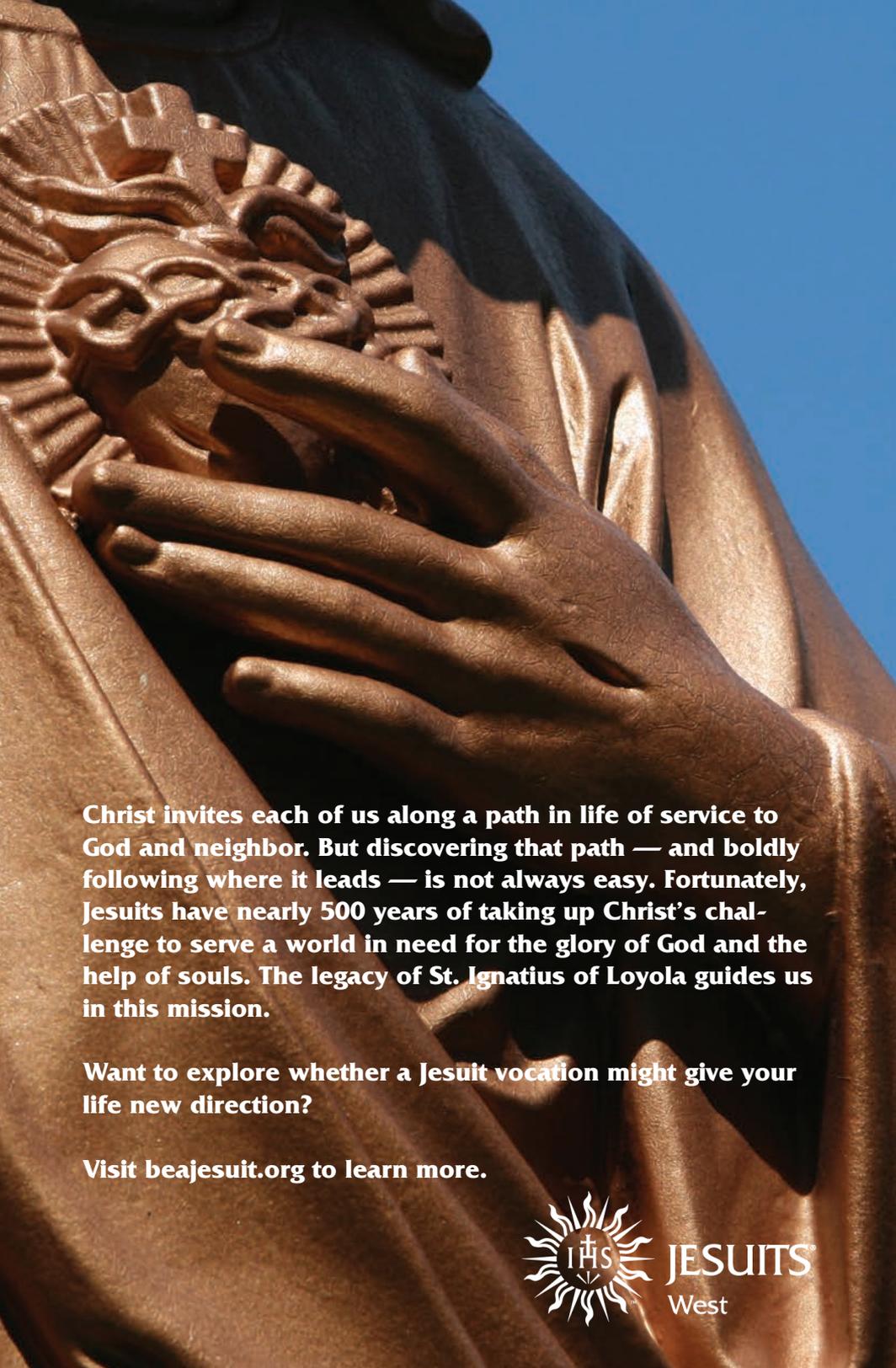
MINISTRY

Live, pray and serve with other Jesuits in hundreds of apostolates

TERTIANSHIP

- Renewal
- Prayer
- Community
- Spiritual Exercises

FINAL VOWS



Christ invites each of us along a path in life of service to God and neighbor. But discovering that path — and boldly following where it leads — is not always easy. Fortunately, Jesuits have nearly 500 years of taking up Christ’s challenge to serve a world in need for the glory of God and the help of souls. The legacy of St. Ignatius of Loyola guides us in this mission.

Want to explore whether a Jesuit vocation might give your life new direction?

Visit beajesuit.org to learn more.



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