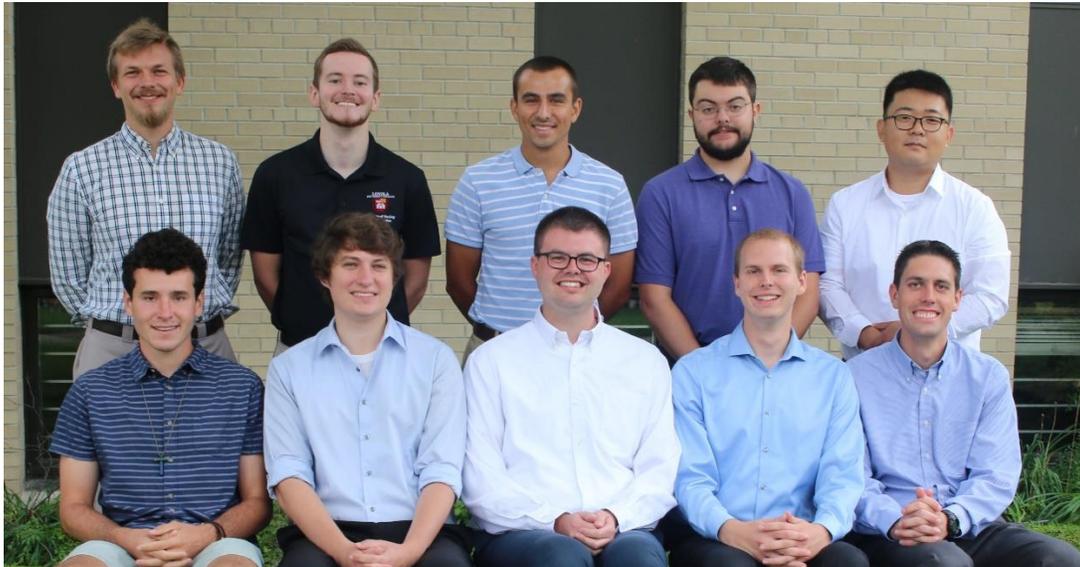


August 21, 2019  
UMI 2019/32  
PLEASE POST

### 2019 New USA Midwest Province Novices



Dear brothers, the Peace of Christ!

It is with great joy that I introduce the 10 men who entered the USA Midwest Province of the Society of Jesus at the novitiate in St. Paul on August 17, 2019: [back row:] David Herr; Noah Banasiewicz; Ryan Serfas; Brian Burtka; Min Keun “Daniel” Park; [front row:] Thomas Doran; Evan Krummel; John Wahlbrink; Nathaniel Cortas; Benjamin Jansen. (Photos and bios of these men can be found below.)

Bill O’Brien, the novitiate staff, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year novices welcomed the new novices and helped them to settle into their new home. I am very grateful for the *cura personalis* given to the novices by Bill and his Socii: Larry Ober (also acting superior of the novitiate and teacher at the novitiate) and Ralph Cordero (also minister of the community).

We would not have any new novices if it were not for God’s grace and the good work of everyone promoting vocations. I want to thank the vocation team for their work: Pat Douglas, provincial assistant for vocations; Dick Baumann, regional vocation director; Jim Stoeger, regional vocation director, Bill Murphy, vocations promoter, and Michael Rossman, vocations promoter. I also want to thank all of you who have prayed for and supported vocation promotion or have asked young men if they are interested in joining the Society. Thank you all for your time and efforts supporting vocation promotion!

Please keep the novices, Bill O’Brien, the novitiate staff, and the novices in your thoughts and prayers.

Peace in Christ,

Brian G. Paulson, S.J.  
Provincial

## The 2019 USA Midwest First-Year Novices



**Noah Banasiewicz**  
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Noah, 21, graduated from the International Baccalaureate Program at Princess Anne High School in Virginia Beach. Noah continued his studies at Loyola University Chicago; he also interned with the fund accounting team at an investment firm in Minneapolis. His first introduction to the Jesuits was during his preparation for Confirmation while his older brother also attended Fordham University; he quickly fell in love with the writings and spirituality of St. Ignatius.

**Brian Burtka**  
Farmington Hills, Michigan

Brian, 21, was raised in Farmington Hills, a suburb in northwest Detroit. He graduated from the University of Detroit Jesuit High School & Academy in 2016. While at U of D Jesuit he began to discern God's call, considering the Jesuits. He attended Michigan Technological University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry in 2018. After graduation, Brian spent a semester as an intern doing research in science and engineering at Argonne National Lab in the Chicago area.



**Nathaniel Cortas**  
Lexington, Kentucky

Nate, 22, is a recent graduate of The University of Kentucky, where he studied as a Gaines Fellow in the Humanities and earned a degree in English and music. While at UK, he worked as an editorial assistant for an academic journal, performed with the university's wind symphony and men's chorus, and was involved in the Newman Center. A native of Louisville, he became attracted to the Society of Jesus through the writings of James Martin, Gerard Manley Hopkins and Daniel Berrigan.

**Thomas Doran**  
Omaha, Nebraska

Thomas, 22, first met the Society of Jesus through Creighton Preparatory School, where he also ran track and cross country. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a major in Theology and minors in Philosophy, Catholic Social Tradition, and Italian. There, he participated in the Rome International Scholars Program which allowed him to: intern with the Commission for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation; study at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies; and conduct independent research on migrants/refugees and Theology. Many conversations with religious and non-religious influenced his decision to enter the Jesuit Novitiate, but the most impactful were while volunteering with homeless, migrants, and refugees in Omaha, at the U.S./Mexico border, and across the Mediterranean Sea Basin.

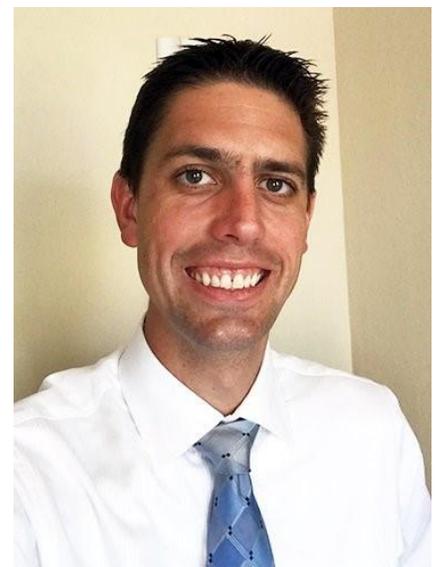


**David Herr**  
Fontanelle, Iowa

David, 25, grew up on a farm outside of Fontanelle, Iowa. He studied psychology at Creighton University where he was introduced to the Society of Jesus and became familiar with Ignatian Spirituality. He studied clinical psychology at Missouri State University, and after graduation worked as a therapist and couples' counselor. David has enjoyed teaching the Catholic faith and spirituality as a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade catechist and adult RCIA instructor.

**Benjamin Jansen**  
Greenwood, Indiana

Ben, 34, grew up in Greenwood, a suburb on the south side of Indianapolis. He studied Japanese at the University of Hawaii and Nanzan University in Nagoya before working in hotel management in Waikiki. He returned to his science roots and worked in a biomedical engineering lab before completing preclinical studies at the IU School of Medicine. Ben spent the past two years working as a medical writer for a healthcare marketing firm while discerning a religious vocation. He first experienced Jesuit history while learning about St. Francis Xavier during his time in Japan and has continued to explore the Society through the works of Walter Ciszek, James Martin, and others.





**Evan Krummel**

De Pere, Wisconsin

Evan, 26, graduated from St. Norbert College in 2015 with a Bachelor's Degree in English. After graduating, Evan worked both in corporate recruiting and the financial services industry. Evan experienced the Jesuits through retreats, classmates, spiritual direction, and the writings of both James Martin and William O'Malley.

**Min Keun Daniel Park**

Northbrook, Illinois

Daniel, 32, was born and raised in South Korea, until his family migrated to the north suburbs of Chicago when Daniel was 12. He attended the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, majoring in World Literature. Since 2010, he has been employed as an associate at a CPA firm and as an assistant manager at MCA Corporation. He began discerning God's call when he felt God's love at his Confirmation retreat and while serving as a Catechist at his home parish of St. Paul Chong Ha Sang in Des Plaines, Illinois. Daniel learned of the Jesuits through CLC and other encounters at his parish.



**Ryan Serfas**

Edwardsville, Illinois

Ryan, 22, was born in Omaha, Nebraska and was raised in Edwardsville, Illinois, a suburb of St. Louis. Ryan graduated from Marquette University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in mechanical engineering. While at Marquette, Ryan participated in the all-male a cappella group, the liturgical choir, various intramural sports, and led a number of retreats. Ryan began discerning his call to the Society of Jesus and the priesthood while at Marquette University.

**John Tyler Wahlbrink**

Cincinnati, Ohio

Ty, 25, is from Cincinnati, Ohio, where he attended the University of Cincinnati for both his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Applied Economics. After graduating, Ty worked as an econometrician in a leadership program at a regional bank. Ty became acquainted with the Jesuits through literature, social media, and *America* online.

