

SAINT CLARE PARISH PROFILE

ETHAN MEULEMANS



Ethan Meulemans is wholeheartedly embracing his return to St. Clare Catholic Parish.

As a baby, Ethan was baptized at St. Paul Church in Wrightstown, where he was born and raised. But his family eventually transitioned to a Unitarian Universalist church in Appleton.

Ethan, a senior at Wrightstown High School, began exploring Christianity while attending middle school.

“I heard my friends and classmates talk about going to religion classes on Wednesdays and the things they were learning, and I was curious wondering what they were talking about,” he said.

“One day I was playing a football game and after the game we got to talking and religion came up. Somebody asked me if I believed in God and I didn’t really have an answer. So I thought I’d explore that further and see if I did. That’s kind of what got me on that path.”

Ethan proceeded to receive First Communion at St. Paul Church at the age of 13, and for the

next two years he contributed to St. Clare Catholic Parish as an altar server.

“Then, a couple years ago, I thought of doing something else, exploring other parts of the parish,” he said. “So I talked to Fr. Brian (Wideman) about being a Sacristan. And at some of the Masses we were short on Eucharistic Ministers, so I was asked to help.

“So up until the pandemic hit last March I was mostly helping as an altar server and Sacristan but also helping as a Eucharistic minister. And I’ve helped as an usher too.”

Ethan noted that he’s so involved with the parish “because I value my faith. My faith is important to me, and I like being involved with it and actively participating.

“I like that I get to be a part of the Liturgy when it happens. I also like that since we are a small town, everybody knows everybody. And many of family members still live here so I get to see them at the Mass and parish picnic. We have a nice community feel here in the parish where everyone feels close.”

During the 2020 Lenten season, Ethan spoke with fellow parishioners about his faith journey.

“I talked about how at our church it feels like a family, and how I felt really accepted when I came into the church,” he said, adding that his grandparents are St. Clare parishioners as well.

Although Ethan’s immediate family members still attend Unitarian Universalist, “they’re 100 percent supportive of me,” he said.

Ethan is the great-nephew of Fr. Carl Meulemans, who is a retired Maryknoll priest and helps at the parish.

Ethan plans to attend the University of Kansas and pursue a degree in architectural engineering.

“Last year, I took an architecture class at my school and I really liked it, so I started to research being an architect and going to college for that,” he said.

Ethan is a member of the Wrightstown varsity basketball team. He also enjoys venturing outdoors and going for bicycle rides and long runs.