Phil Guimaraes

Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs Parish, Delhi

Theology I

I started on the path to the seminary early in my life. At the age of 11, I entered the Pre-Seminary of Buarcos, Portugal and was transferred to the main Seminary at Figueira da Foz the following year. It was my intention then to become a priest, however, life changes. Our whole family emigrated to Canada that same year. In Canada, I pursued a degree in French and Spanish literature at Laurentian University, where I met and married my wife – Sigi. It was my intention upon graduation to become a teacher. That too did not work out as my brothers asked me to join them in their swimming pool installation business to start a service division. In 1982, we bought the service company from them and went on our own to establish a very successful business.

My path back to the Church and to the Seminary, started about 21 years ago when I was asked by my sister-in-law to be the baptismal godfather to her son. In conscience, I could not do this and not be a good Christian example to him. Immediately I started practicing our faith and started reading the bible, the catechism and the lives of the saints. This slowly brought me ever closer to God. I attended and led the “*Arise*” program, where we started a St. Vincent de Paul Society in our parish. I was also a group leader of “*Why Catholic*” in our Parish for the last 2 years, as well as a Knights of Columbus member for 36 years.

In 2014 my marriage of 38 years ended when my wife – Sigi, sadly passed away from brain cancer. Her strength, faith and joy were astounding during this time. It helped me greatly. Shortly after, I sold my company to my Service Manager and retired. Throughout my life the idea of becoming a priest never went away. It was at this time that the Good Lord started calling me to Him in earnest. First, I discerned a call to the Permanent Diaconate and completed my first year this spring. However, Our Lord was not yet done with me, and in November 2015, I decided to fulfill my childhood dream of becoming a priest and applied to St. Peter’s Seminary, where I was filled with joy to be accepted. God willing, and with a lot of help and prayers, I look forward to being ordained and doing His will.