



# Bishop's family shares congratulations, memories

By Kathrine Patton  
Special Edition Editor

While Bishop Paul D. Etienne's family will miss him, they know God is calling him to the Church in Wyoming, and his ministry will be a blessing for the diocese.

His parents, Paul and Kay Etienne, have six children. Bishop Etienne is the second oldest. He has three brothers, two of whom, Bernard and Zachary, are priests for the Diocese of Evansville. His brother, Rick is married and lives in Newburg, Indiana. Bishop Etienne has two sisters, Angie, who is married and lives in Evansville, Indiana and Nicolette, who is a Benedictine Sister at Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, Indiana.

Paul and Kay are proud of their son and know that he will continue to do God's work. "He will be a good bishop. He'll pull everything together and keep the wheels rolling in the right direction," his father said.

Bishop Etienne was pastor of St. Paul in Tell City for only a few months when word came that he had been appointed bishop of Cheyenne. His parents are parishioners in Tell City.

"He is a very prayerful man, and he has taught a lot of us in the parish," Kay said. Thinking about her son being appointed a bishop, Kay still gets choked up. "I told one of my friends I'll never get to heaven because I am too proud," she said, her voice filled with emotion.

Sister Nicolette is happy for her brother. She calls him "a man of prayer" who is "deeply devoted to Our Blessed Mother."

"He strives daily to know, love and serve God and God's people. My hope is that he will be able to touch the hearts of the faithful in Wyoming and that the people of Wyoming will love my brother and be patient with him as he learns just exactly what



Bishop Etienne owns a 145 acre tree farm in southern Indiana with his brother, Father Bernie, who said it was a blessing to have a brother who is also a priest and best friend. Courtesy photos



For more photos of the Etienne family, see page 30

it means to be a bishop," Sister Nicolette said.

Bishop Etienne's brother, Rick, is very excited for him.

"It is a great honor to be asked to serve in this capacity," he said. Rick hopes that Bishop Etienne will be able to stay centered with the great number of demands on his time as bishop.

"I am hopeful that the distance between parishes and the mountains of Wyoming will help him in this quest. Paul was always more introspective than most of the rest of us. Several of us were so extroverted

I guess someone had to be more of a listener," he said.

For Bishop Etienne, it will be most difficult to leave behind his brother, Father Bernie. Growing up, it was always Bernie and Paul, their mother said.

The brothers own a tree farm which is typical southern Indiana rolling hills forest.

"We have 125 of the 145 acres in indigenous timber. We have been managing the forest for hardwood trees such as oak, maple, cherry, walnut and poplar," Father Bernie said.

The farm is where the brothers spend a lot of their free time.

"I have been blessed to have a brother who is a best friend, who is a priest, who shares all the same passions for life. We have spent our days off together, we've wrestled with pastoral questions and we've worked the farm together," Father Bernie said. "Not many people can begin to understand what being a priest is like. Having a best friend who is a priest and having the camaraderie that we have shared is a real blessing." Although it may take

some adjusting to his absence, Father Bernie is happy for his brother and the Church.

"Paul is capable administratively. He has a really good pastoral sense, and it serves the Church well. He will be a good pastoral shepherd for the state of Wyoming," Father Bernie said.

The Etienne children were raised on the edge of the small river town of Tell City.

"We were really neither city nor country. Growing up in Indiana, a typical Sunday included Mass, a big dinner after

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Mass and a long hike at one of the lakes in Perry County," Sister Nicolette said.

The Etiennes were friends with other Catholic families who gathered in the parking lot after Mass making plans with each other for the day. There were often picnics, baseball and other fun activities.

Apart from Mass, faith was central to their daily lives. They had an uncle who was a priest and visited with them regularly, and they have an aunt who is a religious sister.

It was also normal for seminarians from St. Meinrad, just 21 miles away, to visit the house and be with the family. The idea of priesthood or religious life was not foreign to the Etienne children.

"We were encouraged to live a life worthy of the calling God gave us. Our parents never told us what to be when we grew up. They just told us they wanted us to continue to go to church and to serve God anyway we could. Our parents modeled prayer for us and they stayed faithful to their marriage. They always placed God right in the center of everything they did. They encouraged us to do the same thing," Sister Nicolette said.

Bishop Etienne was a senior in high school when Sister Nicolette was a freshman.

"He looked out for me then, and he continues to do the same now," she said. She