

Comet Alumni Spotlight

Father Stephen Willard
St. Thomas Class of 1981

Educational Background:

Kindergarten - Monroe Peoria Heights
First - 8th Grade - St. Thomas School
Highschool - Academy of Our Lady Spalding Institute - graduated 1985
Minor Seminary - 1985-1989 - St. Mary's College Winona, Minnesota
Major Seminary - 1989-1993 - St. Mary's Seminary Emmittsburg, Maryland

Recent Achievements:

I have been ordained a priest for the Diocese of Peoria for 29 years
At this time I am the Pastor at St. Vincent de Paul Church and School
I am the Vicar of the Peoria Vicariate

Family/Comet Siblings:

Grandparents (Robert and Genevieve Willard) helped start St. Thomas Church
Barbara and John "Jerry" Willard
Siblings: John, Annette, and Matthew



Favorite experience as a St. Thomas Comet:

Singing "Oh Holy Night" at Christmas Midnight Mass during my 8th grade year and playing Jesus during the Live Stations of the Cross in 6th grade

St. Thomas teacher who made an impact on you:

Sister Mary Elizabeth O'Hara - She told me I would become a priest one day. She planted the seed.

Piece of advice for current Comets:

Pray each day and build a close friendship and relationship with Jesus especially in the Most Holy Eucharist.