

Deacon Joseph D. Calvert's Biography



Deacon Joe Calvert was born in Louisville, KY in April of 1960 to James Robert and Jean (Bohannon) Riedel Calvert. He has two older sisters, Savannah and Dee Ann. He lived near Bowman Field and attended Hawthorne Elementary and Bethany Baptist Church and St. Paul Methodist Church until moving to Cherry Hill, NJ in the middle of third grade. There he attended both Methodist and Christian Science churches. In the middle of sixth grade the family moved to Princeton, IL (100 miles west of Chicago) where they stayed until Joe graduated from Princeton High School in 1978...so Joe can say 'he graduated from Princeton :-). In Princeton he was baptized at the First United Methodist church but ended up mostly attending the Christian Science church until graduation. Joe says Princeton was 7,000 people in the middle of a huge cornfield that stretches across Illinois and Iowa. Between growing up in Princeton and half of his relatives living on farms near Springfield in Washington County, Kentucky, Joe has a deep appreciation for small town rural life.

Joe met his wife, Berta Alicia Jeannette (an American citizen born in the city of Panama in the Republic of Panama) in Fort Knox in July of 1986. He earned a BA in English in 1986 and a BS in Mechanical Engineering in 1987, both from the University of Louisville. They were married in 1989 in Louisville. Later that year, Joe legally adopted Berta's daughter, Heather Dawn Calvert, to be his own. After years of the good example of Berta and other close 'cradle catholics', along with an intense study of history and encouragements from the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Teresa of Avila, Joe converted to the Catholic Faith and was confirmed at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church in Louisville on December 23rd, 1995. In 1996 he and Berta joined the Legion of Mary; a fruition of which was the beginning in 1996 of his being on the Board of Right to Life of Louisville. For the next eight years he co-chaired with Mrs. Mary Jo Thompson the Bus Trip to Washington and the Walk for Life in Louisville. He was also state director of the Kentucky Youth for Life during this period and founded Generation JP11 whose members helped chaired many positions of the Ignite Your Torch Catholic Youth Conference in its formative years. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon of the Archdiocese of Louisville in August 2008 by Archbishop Joseph Kurtz and served at St. Christopher Parish in Radcliff, KY. His services included assisting at the altar for the three weekend Masses, assisting with the Truth Ops youth group, leading a Treasures of the Faith study group, celebrating Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and other things, celebrating Baptisms and some wakes and funerals. He was assigned to St. Martin of Tours parish in Flaherty, KY in November of 2015.

Joe is self-employed writing door hardware specifications for many Kentucky architectural firms and some in Atlanta and New York.; that means that he looks at doors on architectural drawings and chooses all of the door hardware for commercial buildings; he also does hardware inspections. His company is Calvert Independent Hardware Specifications, LLC. (Calvert IHS). Berta has a Master of Spanish degree from the University of Panama and a Master of Education from the University of Louisville. She retired from Jefferson County Public Schools after a distinguished career first teaching elementary Spanish and ending up as Coordinator of the English as a Second Language Department. She continues to teach Spanish at the University of Louisville and has taught religious education at St. Christopher.

When they can catch a break from their work schedules Berta and Joe enjoy getting out in our beautiful state to hiking trails, mountains and lakes and going on prayerful pilgrimages visiting religious shrines in the US and other countries. Berta would like to do more of seeing movies, painting, sewing and reading fiction. Joe would like to do more of target shooting, shooting pool, playing guitar and banjo, and reading about religion, history and classic fiction. They have lived in Vine Grove, KY since December of 2005.