

Bishop-elect Thomas Zinkula

**Bishop-elect Thomas Robert Zinkula**, the son of the late Robert and Mary (Volz) Zinkula, grew up on a farm outside of Mt. Vernon, Iowa, with his eight siblings. He earned his high school diploma in 1975 (valedictorian, 4.0 GPA) and was the recipient of the Iowa State Bar Association American Citizenship Award and cited as a State of Iowa Scholar. He was a member of chorus for four years, participating in various musicals. He was a member of two Eastern Iowa Hawkeye Conference championship football teams (1973 & 1974), an Iowa state championship runner-up football team (1973), and a state championship football team (1974). He was named first team all-conference in football (offensive center, 1974). In 2016 he was inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame (achievement award).

Bishop-elect Zinkula attended Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, where he was an outstanding scholar and football player (defensive noseguard). He graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in mathematics and economics/business. In 2009, Bishop-elect Zinkula was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame (football) at Cornell College. As a junior at Cornell, he was named the Rams' most valuable player and as a senior, elected team captain. He was named first-team All-Midwest Conference and first-team Academic All-American, 1976-78, and honorable mention AP College Division All-American, 1978. Years later he was named to Cornell's all-century football team. His college awards include Phi Beta Kappa, Mortar Board, and an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship.

He worked in the insurance industry for a year as an actuary at Life Investors in Cedar Rapids before entering law school at the University of Iowa. He wrote articles for and was the managing editor of the *Iowa Law Review*. After graduating with a juris doctor degree in 1983, he practiced law at the Simmons, Perrine, Albright & Ellwood law firm in Cedar Rapids.

During three years working as an attorney, he felt a strong call to the priesthood. He attended Theological College in Washington, D.C., and received a Master of Arts degree in theology from the Catholic University of America in 1989. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Dubuque on May 26, 1990, by Most Rev. Daniel Kucera, Archbishop of Dubuque, at St. Raphael Cathedral in Dubuque.

Bishop-elect Zinkula was assigned to St. Columbkille Parish, Dubuque, from 1990 – 1993 as associate pastor and also worked in the metropolitan tribunal during that time. He then was assigned to St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Dubuque, from 1993 – 1996 as associate pastor, while continuing to work in the tribunal.

He attended St. Paul University in Ottawa, Canada from 1996 – 1998 and earned a licentiate in canon law (JCL). While serving as a judge in the tribunal, he was also assigned to St. Joseph Parish, Rickardsville, as pastor and as sacramental priest for St. Francis Parish, Balltown, and Ss. Peter & Paul Parish, Sherrill, from 1998 – 2002. In 2000, he was appointed as judicial vicar until 2010, during which time he also was assigned to the St. LaSalle Pastorate in Dubuque County as sacramental priest from 2001 – 2005. He was assigned as pastor of Holy Ghost Parish in Dubuque from 2005 – 2007 and Holy Spirit Pastorate, Dubuque, from 2007 – 2011. After a sabbatical in Rome, he was assigned as episcopal vicar for the Cedar Rapids Region until 2014. He also served on the board of trustees of Clarke University, the Priest Council, the Priests' Pension Board, the Archbishop's Cabinet, the Archdiocesan Consultors, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and various committees.

Bishop-elect Zinkula is currently assigned as rector of St. Pius X Seminary in Dubuque.