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Poker-playing priest

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Move over, bingo. Poker is the new way to raise money for your parish. At least that's what Father Andrew Trapp, vicar of St. Michael's Parish in Garden City, N.J., is betting.

The recently ordained Trapp admits to enjoying a friendly game of Texas Hold'em poker with friends and family. So when he heard about Fox TV's "PokerStars.net Million Dollar Challenge," he got his bishop's permission to try to compete and raise money for the parish's building fund.

Not only did Trapp qualify for the show, he won \$100,000 and qualified for the final show--to air December 27--and compete for \$1 million. Although that show has already been taped, Trapp is mum about the outcome.

On his personal website (which also contains reflections such as "Christianity is like the Batmobile" and "Is Ronald McDonald Catholic?") he shares his story and answers FAQs about his appearance, including Catholic teaching on games of chance.

He also hopes his appearances (in Roman collar) will demonstrate that priests are normal people and that "there are still young men choosing to be priests, and that one can be joy-filled and have fun as one serves God," he writes.

Although he forgot his good-luck rosary in the car, I'm sure many a prayer was uttered during his final game. We'll learn the outcome on Dec. 27.

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