

Biography

The Rev'd Ezgi Saribay will join the family of St. Michael and St. George on June 15th, 2015. Ezgi will be graduating from Nashotah House Theological Seminary on May 21st with her Master of Divinity degree. She is a native of Turkey, and spent the first 17 years of her life in Izmir (formerly known as Smyrna), a Mediterranean city that is located in the western part of Turkey. As a daughter of an secular family who had high appreciation for the arts and classical music, she began her musical training at the age of 5, playing and singing with the piano as she was inspired by her brother, Berk, who later became the head classical ballet dancer in Istanbul State Opera and Ballet Company after having graduated from Ankara State Conservatory. After privately studying musical theory, piano, and voice during her early life, she was accepted to Izmir State Conservatory with honors to major in viola for five years (2000-2005) as part of their junior program.

She came to the U.S. to pursue her American dream as a Rotary Exchange Student in 2006. Ezgi spent her first year in a southern Missouri town, Mountain View, where she learned for the first time how to speak the English language. Upon her graduation from high school, she was accepted to Drury University in Springfield, Missouri to study accounting and finance. During her first year in U.S., she came to know and love Jesus Christ, and was baptized in the Southern Baptist tradition in the cool waters of Jack's Fork River near Mountain View.

During college, she discovered a small parish near Drury, St. John's Episcopal Church, and fell in love with the beauty, music, ancient liturgy, and preaching of the Anglican tradition where she immediately joined the choir to rekindle her love of music through choral singing.

She was appointed by the Bishop of West Missouri in 2008 to serve as a lay Episcopal campus minister for Drury University for four years. She graduated with her Bachelor of Business Administration, *Cum Laude* from the Breech School of Business in 2011. During these years, her small Anglo-Catholic parish discerned her call to the priesthood. Upon graduation, she worked in commercial lending at the headquarters of Great Southern Bank in Springfield for a year. After much discernment and prayer, she completed the discernment process in 2012, and was accepted to Nashotah House Theological Seminary as a postulant for Holy Orders.

Ezgi was ordained as a transitional deacon on March 12th, 2015 at the Chapel of St. Mary, the Virgin at Nashotah House, and is expecting to be priested soon after the beginning of September.

Her seminary years were spent as a parish intern, and choral scholar at All Saints' Cathedral, a member of the Royal School of Church Music, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where she was trained further in the appreciation and deep study of the Anglican choral tradition as well as assisting with liturgy and preaching. In the past year, she started serving as the Director of Youth Ministry at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in Pewaukee, WI.

Besides liturgy and classical music, Asia Minor iconography, opera, fly-fishing, hunting, cigars, and single malt scotch tasting are among her strong interests. She is looking forward to join CSMSG as curate in the next few months.