

## **Fr. Pawel Stawarczyk**

### **Why are you Catholic / Christian?**

As for Catholic, I cannot imagine being anything else – I love the fact that we have a 2000-year-old tradition, that we have the sacraments – especially Mass and Confession. I can regularly witness the miracles that God can perform through Confession. Our tradition means so many religious orders and movements – each with their own contribution to prayer and understanding of Jesus, countless saints to learn from, so many different tried-and-true ways of experiencing God. Since I love travelling, it is always an amazing experience for me to enter a Catholic church in Estonia or Macedonia or Chile – and to feel at home.

As for Christian, I am so grateful to God that I could receive His message regarding what is the most important – to love God, others and myself. This way to happiness and to heaven is the most democratic – anyone who wants can do it. I greatly value the practical wisdom of Christianity, but even more – the experience of how God can fill regular people with joy and peace.

### **Why do you have your job?**

As pastor, I have a front-row seat to all the amazing things God does in human lives. I can share in wonderful or painful life experiences of people: starting with pregnancies and baptisms following across all age groups until final funeral masses. It is very interesting and rewarding.

### **What is it that people don't know about you?**

I have been to 46 US states and to over 30 US National Parks. It is impossible to pick just one as my favorite. But if I really had to, I would go with the Redwood NP. There is something really special about hiking under the enormous trees in an almost perfect silence – I could do it every day for years.