



Diocese of Gary Vocation Office Newsletter

April-June 2011

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New Seminarian Accepted for the Diocese of Gary

In February, Bishop Melczek officially accepted Declan McNicholas as a seminarian for the Diocese of Gary. Declan is a parishioner at St. Patrick's Parish in Chesterton.

Declan is the son of Deena and Patrick McNicholas, and the older brother of Jacob, Erin, Elissa, Clare, Aden, Porter, and Timothy. After attending St. Patrick School in Chesterton, he went to Chesterton High School where he performed in many different bands. Declan has also been involved in the Super Mileage Club, a group of students who compete against similar clubs around the state in designing and building cars made to get really good gas mileage. He enjoys being with his family and friends, camping, and being active in his parish as an altar server and in pro-life activities.

Next fall, Declan will be attending Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis where he will spend the next few years working on a bachelor's degree. At the same time, he will be learning more about what it means to be a catholic priest, while discerning the ways that God has called and gifted him.

Please keep Declan in your prayers as he completes his high school education, and prepares to enter college. May God help him know his vocation and accept it with a generous and courageous heart.



Stephen Kolodziej Returns to Seminary

St. John the Evangelist parishioner Stephen Kolodziej has returned to discerning his call to priesthood for the Diocese of Gary and will return to seminary formation in August.

Stephen is the son of Shari and Ken Kolodziej and brother of Karen Kolodziej, all of St. John. After graduating from Andrian High School, Stephen attended Purdue University and then transferred to Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Minnesota in 2008. During these last two years, Stephen continued his education while at the same time he entered into a process of discerning God's gifts to him and how he might best use those gifts. After some discussion with his formators, he decided to step away from the seminary last May.

Over these last months, Stephen has continued discerning while ministering at Queen of All Saints Parish in Michigan City. Happily, he has discerned that God indeed is calling him to return to seminary, discernment, and formation for the priesthood. This fall, Stephen expects to continue his studies at Bishop Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

As he continues his journey of following the Lord, please pray that God grant Stephen clarity in his vocation and a heart after the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Seminarians of the Diocese of Gary

Every Spring, college and graduate students look forward to summer break and, for some, graduation. The seminarians of our diocese have the same two events in mind.

For two of our seminarians, Jordan Fetcko and Roque Meraz, this May will mark the end of their college studies. It also marks a time of decision for them and for the diocese as to whether they will begin studies in theology next fall at a new seminary.

For all our seminarians, the approaching summer means new opportunities for discernment and formation, new experiences, new people and new ministry opportunities. Some will be working in parishes throughout the diocese, some will be travelling to the Holy Land and World Youth Day in Madrid, some will be working in hospitals or in other ministerial settings.

May the Lord help them grow in love through their summer experiences and beyond.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

“Proposing Vocations in the Local Church”

Every year since 1963, the Fourth Sunday of Easter has been designated as Good Shepherd Sunday and the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Pope Paul VI and every pope since has asked us as Catholics to remember our pastors and pray that the “Master of the Harvest to send out laborers for His harvest”. (Mt 9:38)

In his message to Catholics in anticipation of this event, Pope Benedict XVI reminds us of the necessity of prayer for vocations. “Vocations to the ministerial priesthood and to the consecrated life are first and foremost the fruit of constant contact with the living God and insistent prayer lifted up to the “Master of the Harvest”.

This kind of insistent prayer is something that we all must participate in, mothers and fathers, teachers, parishioners, priests and deacons, and children.

“Particularly in these times,” the Holy Father continues, “when the voice of the Lord seems to be drowned out by ‘other voices’ and his invitation to follow him by the gift of one’s own life may seem too difficult, every Christian community, every member of the Church, needs consciously to feel responsibility for promoting vocations.”

Each of us can do our part. Spirituality Commissions can write intercessions and sponsor prayer events. Teachers and catechists can invite a priest, deacon, sister or seminarian to speak about discernment and vocation. Parish Life groups can sponsor a “Meet the Seminarian” event. Children can draw posters. Even shut-ins can offer a novena for vocations. When we all work together to bring about God’s will, our Church and our world more completely reflect His glory.

As we in the local church of the Diocese of Gary keep this year’s World Day of Prayer for Vocations on 15 May, let us all turn to the Lord who loves us and always provides for His flock. Let us together ask God to bring forth priestly and religious vocations by inspiring our daughters and sons, sisters and brothers, friends and fellow parishioners to courageously and generously follow where God is leading.

Vocations Calendar

19-21 March	Immaculate Heart Mary Seminary Seminary Information Weekend
24-27 March	Sacred Heart Seminary Discernment Weekend
25 March	Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary Seminary Information Day
30 March	Mundelein Seminary Admission to Candidacy of Jaime Perea
8-10 April	Mundelein Seminary Exploring Priesthood Weekend
4 June	Holy Angels Cathedral Ordination to Order of Deacon for the Gary Diocese



Support Vocations!

The Easter Season in the Church brings us first Holy Communion, confirmations, graduations, and weddings. As we celebrate God’s presence found in these sacraments and life moments, we can’t help but think of the joy seen in the faces of the people marking these milestones.

The same joy I expect will be present in the hearts and on the faces of the twelve men anticipating ordination in June. They have been praying, talking, reading, studying, writing, presenting, discerning, and praying some more for several years, all to know the will of God unto following it with generosity and courage. Now they’ll stand before the bishop and allow the Spirit of God into their hearts in a new way, in a way that inspires them to serve as deacons, a truly joyful moment.

Please pray for them that God continue to form them after the Heart of Jesus. Please thank them for saying “Yes” to God’s call to serve us, the Church of Gary.