



Diocese of Gary Vocation Office Newsletter

October-December 2011

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Seminarians Begin Formation at New Seminaries

Seminarians eventually come to the day when they begin a new seminary. This means learning new faculty and classmates, new ways of doing things, and navigating a new campus. Four seminarians are beginning formation at seminaries new to them, and three of them are doing so at seminaries new to our diocese.

Jordan Fetcko is beginning theology at University of St. Mary of the Lake-Mundelein Seminary. Last May, he graduated from college at St. Mary University-Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary. Jordan and twenty-eight new theology students joined nearly a hundred fifty other seminarians at Mundelein Seminary for a new year of formation.

Roque Meraz also began studying at a new seminary, Seminario Hispano de Santa Maria de Guadalupe in Mexico City. This is the first time a seminarian from our diocese is attending this seminary. Roque and thirty-five other seminarians are studying to be priests for dioceses in the United States. It is also the first time Roque, a native of Mexico, has ever been in Mexico City.

The other seminary receiving seminarians from our diocese for the first time is Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis. Steve Kolodziej and Declan McNicholas have already begun their formation at this seven year-old seminary next to the campus of Marian University.

Please keep these and all our seminarians, and those responsible for their formation in your prayers.



Declan McNicholas and Steve Kolodziej in front of Bishop Brute Seminary in Indianapolis

Seminarians Participate in Formation During Summer

While home this summer, the seminarians participated in formation events intended to help them understand the unique circumstances of serving in the Diocese of Gary.

Various diocesan office directors spoke to the seminarians about Parish Pastoral Councils, Catholic schools, and the Diocesan Tribunal. They were also given a workshop about the history, purpose and application of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

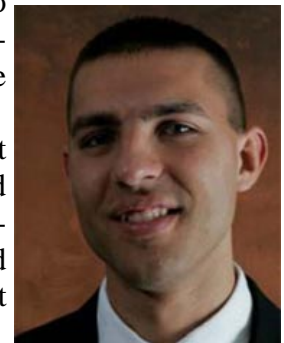
The seminarians also participated in a three-day retreat together. During their retreat, they took some time away from the business of work in their summer assignments to spend time in communication with God, and some time in fraternity with each other.

Chris Stanish Instituted in Ministry of Lector

On September 30, seminarian Chris Stanish of St. Bridget Parish in Hobart was instituted into the ministry of Lector by Bishop Michael Byrnes, Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit.

Lectors are individuals who offer their God-given gifts to proclaim and teach the Word of God. Being instituted in this ministry means Chris has publicly committed himself to engage in this ministry for as long as he is able to do so. At the same time, the Church has solemnly accepted his commitment for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Chris will read at Mass at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit where he studies, and will prepare for summer parish assignments where he will lector at Mass and assist God's people in learning more about God through the Scriptures.



Chris Stanish

Seminarians of the Diocese of Gary

Thanks to God's call, their courage and generosity, and the support of the people of God, ten men are in seminary formation for our diocese.

God willing, in June, our two fourth-year theology students, Deacons Jaime Perea and Ben Ross, will be ordained to the priesthood. For now, Deacon Jaime is at the University of St. Mary of the Lake-Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois. Deacon Jaime will spend this year learning how to preside at Mass and how to hear confessions, and will minister at a parish as a deacon in the late winter-early spring. Deacon Ben Ross has returned to his studies at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. During this year, Deacon Ben will begin studies in canon (Church) law.

Continuing his studies in second-year theology, Chris Stanish is a seminarian at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Michigan. He is joined by college junior Nate Edquist who is studying philosophy.

Seminarians Jordan Fetcko and Roque Meraz have begun their first-year theology studies. Their respective seminary rectors report that both men have begun well and are adjusting to their new surroundings.

College juniors Greg Bim-Merle and Robert Sarwacinski are continuing their college studies in philosophy at St. Mary's University-Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Winona, Minnesota.

Also studying philosophy in college are junior Steven Kolodziej and freshman Declan McNicholas. These seminarians are studying at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.

Regardless of the year of formation or seminary, all our seminarians are seeking to grow through spiritual, academic, human, and pastoral formation. Please hold them and those responsible for their formation in your prayers.



Seminarians of the Diocese of Gary

- Front row: Deacon Ben Ross, Bishop Melczek, Deacon Jaime Perea
- Second Row: Declan McNicholas, Rob Sarwacinski, Greg Bim-Merle, Roque Meraz
- Third Row: Nate Edquist, Jordan Fetcko, Chris Stanish, Steve Kolodziej

Vocations Calendar

- 7-9 October Mundelein Seminary Exploring Priesthood Weekend
- 10 October High School Discernment Visit to Mundelein
- 4-7 November Sacred Heart Seminary Discernment Weekend
- 12-14 November IHM Information Weekend
- TBA (November) 8th Grade Discernment Visit to Bishop Bruté Seminary
- 13-15 January Mundelein Seminary Exploring Priesthood Weekend
- 9-15 January National Vocations Awareness Week
- 27-30 January Sacred Heart Seminary Discernment Weekend

If you would like to participate in any of these events, please contact Fr. Mick for details.

Support Vocations!

Every fall, vocation directors and others in vocation ministry gather from all over the US to be formed in better ways of helping men discern God's call while being formed to be diocesan priests. Each time I return from this convention, I am inspired by all the success stories I hear, and challenged to find ways of helping our seminarians and those God is calling to consider this vocation.

What most struck me this year was the importance of speaking to the men whom God is calling in ways that will help them be open to further investigation of a priestly vocation. Blessed John Paul II's "New Evangelization" speech reminds us all that we are to proclaim God's love and the message of the Resurrection by our words and actions. When we all take our part in that important vocation, hearts will be on fire for love of God and His Church. That is the love that will inspire men to consider the priesthood of Jesus.

May God help us all take our place in proclaiming the joy to be found in living discipleship as God calls us.