



Salt *of* *the* Earth

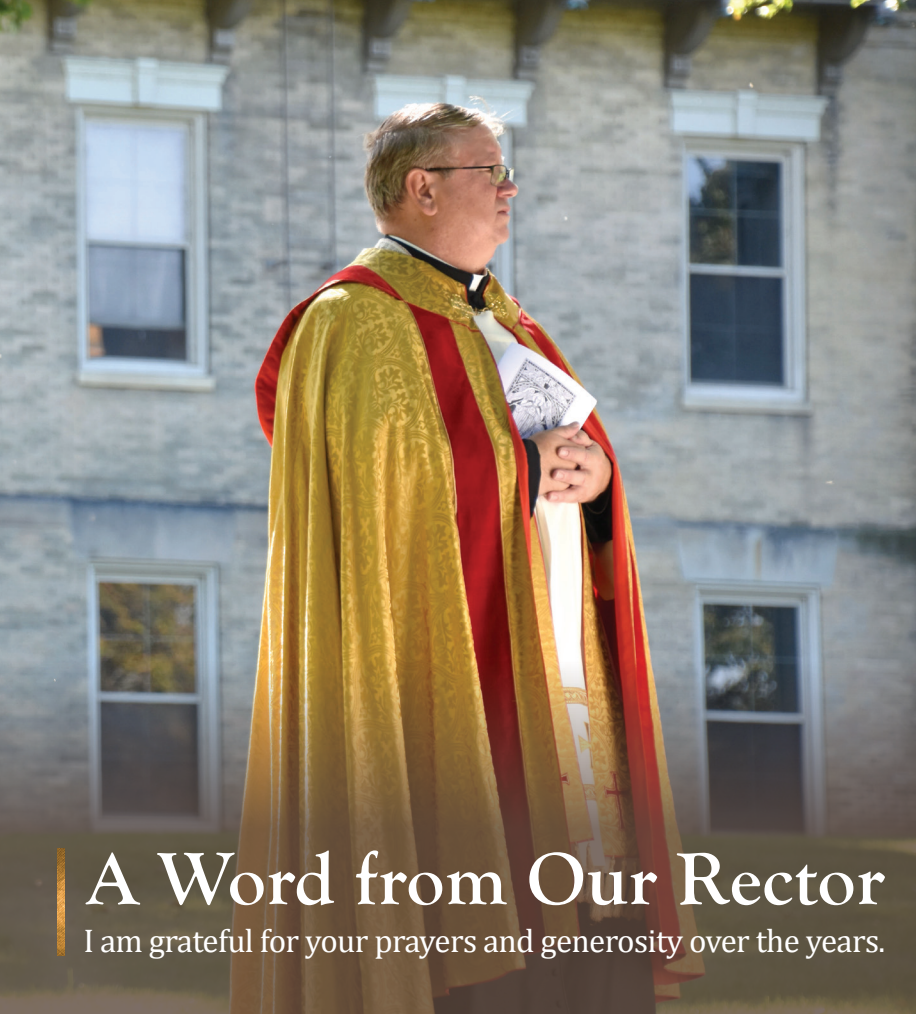
A Saint Francis de Sales Seminary Communication
Spring 2022

A NEW RECTOR FOR THE SALESIANUM

Fr. Hemsing to Pass the Reins to Fr. Strand



Fr. John Hemsing and Fr. Luke Strand congratulate newly ordained priests in May 2021. Fr. Strand will succeed Fr. Hemsing as rector this June. Archbishop Jerome Listecki announced the appointment at Mass on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



A Word from Our Rector

I am grateful for your prayers and generosity over the years.

Dear Friends,

I always wanted to be a parish priest, and for 23 years, I was. When Archbishop ListECKi asked me to become the rector in 2011, I was surprised and humbled. I accepted with the hope that I could help form other parish priests.

Since then, I have presented 62 men for ordination to the priesthood. I thank God for the opportunity to be a part of the lives of these men,

helping to form them in the image of Jesus Christ. It has been an honor to be a part of preserving our faith through the formation of these priests. They will continue to offer the Eucharist – the source and summit of our lives as Catholics – long after I am gone.

Now it is time for me to return to a parish. It is what I was called by Jesus Christ to do. I am excited for what is to come, but I will miss the men. Their commitment and faith, especially during this time in history, is inspiring. I do not worry about the future of the priesthood when I see the caliber of men at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary.

Being the rector is not a solitary endeavor. I owe a debt of gratitude to Archbishop ListECKi and the bishops of our sponsoring dioceses. I also wish to acknowledge the faculty, staff and so many others who help in the formation process.

Most of all, I wish to thank our friends and benefactors. Thank you for your support of the Seminary, which has allowed us to accomplish so much together. Thank you also for your kindness to me personally.

It has been one of the great joys of my priesthood to serve the Church as rector. I am grateful to have a successor who loves the Seminary as much as I do. I know Fr. Luke Strand will lead the Salesianum well.

Grace and Peace,

Fr. John Hemsing, Rector

An Enduring Legacy

Fr. Hemsing has carried on the vision of our founders with distinction.

When Archbishop Jerome ListECKi asked Fr. John Hemsing to become the 19th rector of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, Fr. Hemsing's response was, "But I'm just a parish priest." The archbishop replied, "Exactly. I want a parish priest to form parish priests."

Moving back to the Seminary was a joyful homecoming for Fr. Hemsing, who sincerely loves this institution and its history. His own 12 years of formation here left an indelible mark on his heart.

Thus, it was with mixed feelings that Fr. Hemsing asked the

archbishop if he could return to parish ministry when his term as rector is completed in June. As he begins his 35th year of priesthood, Fr. Hemsing would like to be a pastor journeying with a parish again.

This time, it is Fr. Hemsing who has left an indelible mark on the Seminary. When he arrived in 2011, 28 seminarians greeted him. Today, 73 men are in formation. This includes 44 men studying for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and 29 seminarians from five other dioceses. The fact that Saint Francis de Sales is once again a provincial seminary is a testament to the concerted effort that



Fr. Hensing hosts the unveiling of a portrait of James Cardinal Harvey at a magnificent Annual Dinner held on Seminary grounds in 2013.



His mastery of Seminary history makes him an engaging tour guide during Doors Open Milwaukee in 2014.



Fr. Hensing takes seminarians to the Jordan River during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 2016.



Fr. Hensing inspects progress on the fifth floor construction in 2017.



Fr. Hensing presents the Milwaukee seminarians for ordination to the priesthood in 2019.



Fr. Hensing leads a unique 2020 Annual Dinner livestream event from the front steps during the pandemic.

convinced the bishops of Wisconsin to send their men here.

One of the attributes the bishops appreciate about the Salesianum is its well-organized formation program. Fr. Hensing's tenure saw a reworking of the goals and objectives, which were then laid out in a new catalog. With overarching themes for each year of formation, the classes are designed to build upon themselves with rhyme and reason – and always in accordance with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

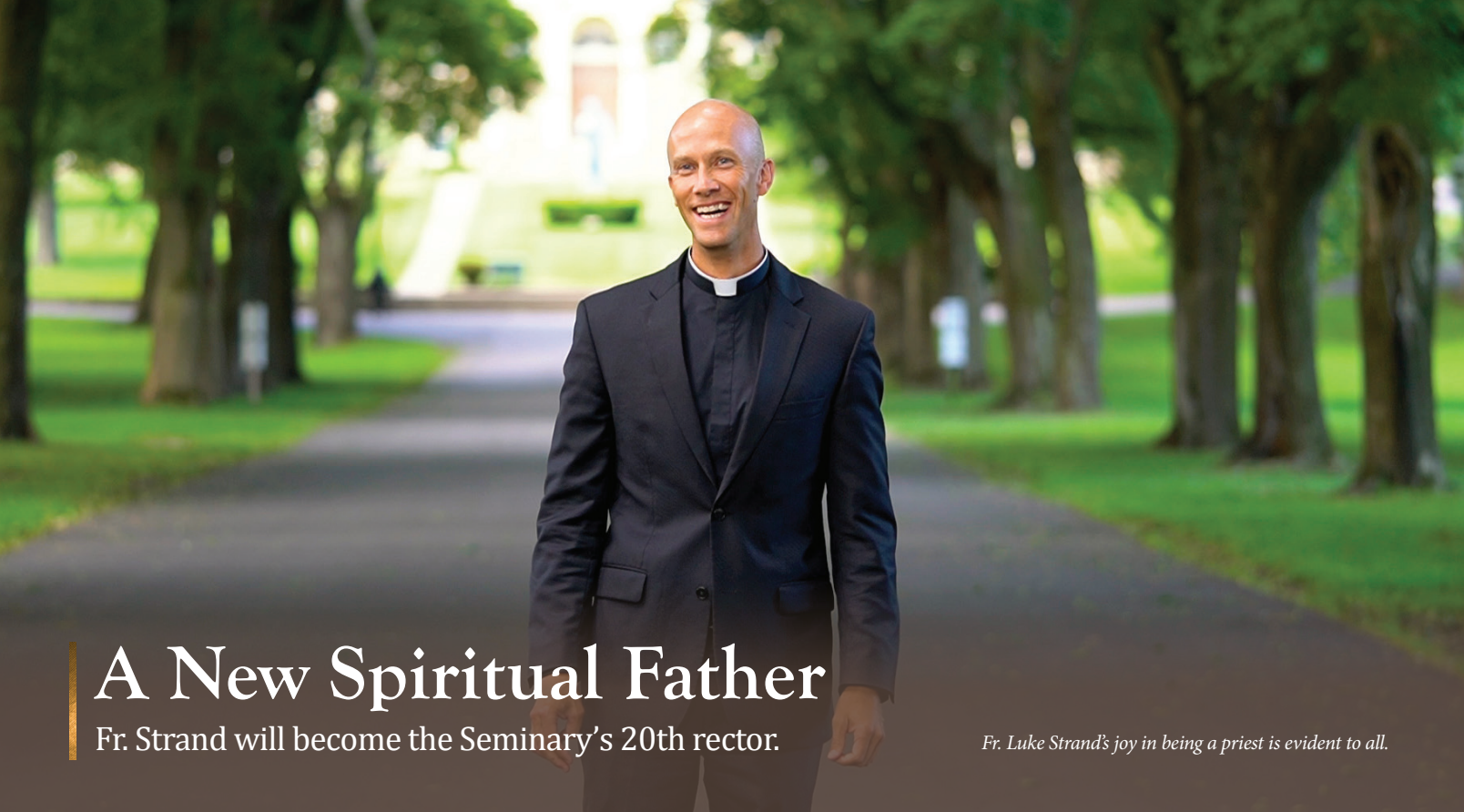
Perhaps the most impressive legacy Fr. Hensing leaves behind is the renovation of our iconic buildings. Under his stewardship, the fifth floor of Henni Hall was transformed from a cluttered attic into 16 new student rooms. He also replaced its front porches, which were rotting after 130 years of exposure to the elements. The gleaming new porches provided a dramatic setting for the

2020 Annual Dinner livestream event.

The beloved Miller Gym was also brought back to life. Much of the work was done by seminarians themselves, making it a camaraderie-building project. This work, too, was fortuitous, as some seminarians can now live in the gym while the restoration of Meyer Hall begins.

Meyer Hall needs renovation because the Seminary has found itself with more seminarians than rooms once again. So the old infirmary and convent will be reconfigured into dozens of new student rooms this summer.

There have been scores of other improvements and successes during Fr. Hensing's time. He is leaving the Seminary in a position of great strength, and his impact will reverberate for generations.



A New Spiritual Father

Fr. Strand will become the Seminary's 20th rector.

Fr. Luke Strand's joy in being a priest is evident to all.

Fr. Luke Strand's business card is getting much simpler. Last year, he was the vocation director for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, vice rector of the Seminary, director of human formation and dean of students. Beginning in June, his new title has one word – rector.

Although only 41, Fr. Strand was given this mission through a remarkably active life dedicated to bringing Christ to others. Born and raised in Dousman with deep ties to St. Bruno Parish, he attended the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. His double major in marketing and human resources cultivated a keen business acumen, but his faith has always been at the forefront.

While in college, Fr. Strand served as president of the Newman Center, and he became involved with Fr. Carr's Place 2B – a homeless shelter, food bank and free healthcare clinic in Oshkosh. Fr. Strand lived at the shelter during his senior year. He found Fr. Marty Carr's example of spiritual fatherhood something he desired to emulate.

In 2002, Fr. Strand co-founded Catholic Youth Expeditions – a youth apostolate in Door County. He poured himself into its mission for 10 years, even as he entered Saint Francis de Sales Seminary to study for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Fr. Strand was ordained to the priesthood in 2009 by Bishop William P. Callahan, now bishop of La Crosse. He served three years at Holy Family Parish in Fond du Lac where he immersed himself in parish life. In 2012, he was named vocation director.

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The success of the Seminary
is about cultivating saints.

To help men considering entering seminary, he started the innovative Saint John Paul II House of Discernment at St. Robert Parish in Shorewood. Its success has provided a model which many dioceses around the country have followed. Most of Milwaukee's seminarians have lived there.

During Fr. Strand's 10 years as vocation director, the number of Milwaukee seminarians went from 17 to 44, an increase of more than 150%. And yet, Fr. Strand has never concerned himself with numbers. "Persevering and faithful seminarians and priests are more important than large numbers of mediocre men," he said. "The 'success' of the Seminary is not about numbers as much as it is about cultivating saints."

Fr. Strand believes that each man must grow in greater freedom before God through his years of formation. The vocation of each seminarian is sacred and must be nurtured by Jesus, who is the primary formator. He believes that each man is unique and brings his own experience and gifts. "By growing in a virtuous life of love and generosity, the Lord will multiply the little gifts a man brings in order to accomplish his will," he stated.

These are not just platitudes from a formation advisor. They reveal the wisdom of a man who survived stage 3 colorectal cancer in his thirties and knows what relinquishing control to Christ is all about. He is also broadening his knowledge by completing a Doctor of Ministry degree through the University of Saint Mary of the Lake in Mundelein.

Becoming rector means that Fr. Strand will not be going back to parish life any time soon. Although this is saddening, he takes consolation in the knowledge that the work of seminary formation will strengthen our parishes with priests who have a deep love of the Lord and are committed to faithfully serving their flocks.

Fr. Strand is excited to work with the seminary faculty and staff, priests, deacons, consecrated, donors, supporters and our prayer warriors who truly make the work of formation a reality in this great archdiocese and throughout the province of Wisconsin.



Fr. Strand has a deep love for the liturgy, the Holy Mass and Divine Office, as well as a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady.



Fr. Strand has initiated many youth and young adult apostolates like Cor Jesu over the years.



Fr. Strand blesses participants in the inaugural de Sales Invitational Basketball Tournament in 2020.



The three brothers – Fr. Vincent Strand, S.J., Fr. Jacob Strand, and Fr. Luke Strand – support each other in their very different priestly ministries.



Fr. Strand listens to the young men at a middle school vocation camp in 2017.



A Resounding Success

The 2021 Annual Dinner exceeded all expectations.

Fr. Strand and Fr. Hemsing ask the 1,500 Annual Dinner guests to provide the means to increase housing for seminarians.

It has been five months since Fr. John Hemsing and Fr. Luke Strand asked the guests at our Annual Seminary Dinner to help us house more seminarians. Money was needed quickly to renovate Meyer Hall in order to accommodate our growing numbers. The priests boldly stated a wish to raise one million dollars at the Wisconsin Center that evening. It was a very ambitious goal.

To the amazement and delight of Fr. Hemsing and Fr. Strand, the Seminary raised more than a million dollars at the event. It took all weekend just to open the hundreds and hundreds of envelopes! But God was not done blessing the Seminary.

Donations for the renovation continued to pour in from dinner attendees after the event. Wonderful, amazing benefactors responded with such magnanimity that we have now raised over \$1.7 million for Meyer Hall. Given the current estimate that the construction project will cost \$1.8 million, the Seminary is simply in awe of God's providence and our benefactors' generosity.

To ensure Meyer Hall is ready for new seminarians in August, construction will begin in March. The eight men who live there now are currently scouting the best places on campus to set up temporary housing. They selflessly agreed to be displaced for the rest of this school year for the sake of the project.

Fr. Hemsing is grateful this undertaking is coming together so quickly. He said, "Thank you to everyone who made the Annual Dinner such a resounding success. May God bless you as abundantly as you have blessed us."

Save the date for this year's Annual Dinner – Friday, Oct. 7, 2022.

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Thank you to everyone who made the Annual Dinner such a resounding success. May God bless you as abundantly as you have blessed us.



Meyer Hall was built as an infirmary for seminarians and a convent for the sisters who worked at the Seminary.



Dcn. Kevin Harmon (Milwaukee) and the men in Pre Theology II will move out of Meyer Hall so that construction can begin immediately.



Things Worth Dying For

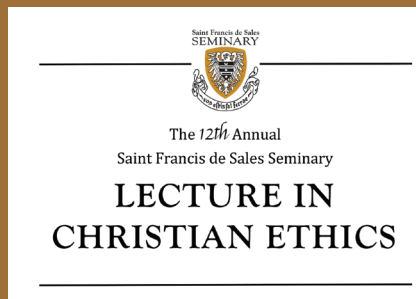
The Lecture in Christian Ethics to feature Archbishop Chaput.

The 12th annual Lecture in Christian Ethics will be held at the Seminary Monday, April 4. This year's presenter is the esteemed Archbishop Emeritus Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., of Philadelphia. The archbishop's lecture takes its name from his latest book, *Things Worth Dying*

For: *Thoughts on a Life Worth Living*. The archbishop explains,

"God creates each of us for a purpose. Every life is an unrepeatable, precious gift, too valuable to squander, which means that very few things are actually worth dying for. But those few things make life worth living. They give our lives meaning. And they're worth defending no matter the cost. What those things are, why they're important, and how to pursue them in a rapidly changing and increasingly unfriendly world: these are the questions at the heart of today's Christian life, and the substance of this lecture and discussion."

The evening will begin with vespers in Christ King Chapel at 6 p.m. A reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres will follow in the outer commons. The lecture will take place back in Christ King



Chapel at 7 p.m. Reservations are required by emailing lbrielmaier@sfs.edu or calling 414-747-6463.

Plans are being made to post the lecture on the Seminary website at www.sfs.edu. Please visit the site for more information.

Archbishop Chaput is originally from Kansas and is a member of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin. He was ordained Bishop of Rapid City, South Dakota in 1988. Pope John Paul II appointed him Archbishop of Denver in 1997, and Pope Benedict XVI named him Archbishop of Philadelphia in 2011. As a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribe, he was the second Native American to be ordained a bishop in the United States and is the first Native American archbishop.

In 2020, Archbishop Chaput became Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia upon Pope Francis' acceptance of his letter of resignation, written when he reached the age of 75.

His other books include *Living the Catholic Faith: Rediscovering the Basics*, *Render Unto Caesar: Serving the Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life* and *Strangers in a Strange Land: Living the Catholic Faith in a Post-Christian World*.

The Lecture in Christian Ethics is supported by the Father Andrew Nelson Fund.



Scenes from the Salesianum

Twelve men are instituted into the Ministry of Acolyte Oct. 13. Front row: Denny Jacob (Milw), David Drefcinski (Madison), Dennis Beltre (Milw), Kevin Durand (Milw), Anthony Kersting (Madison), Timothy Sanchez (Milw). Back row: Oliver Niles (Milw), Dominic Lazzaroni (Milw), Juan Altamirano (Green Bay), Fr. John Hemsing, Bishop James Schuerman, David Sweeney (Milw), Craig Richter (Milw), Charles Luke (Milw).



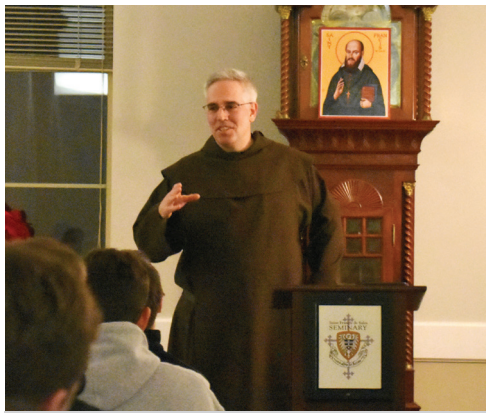
Seminarians and faculty process to the cemetery in our woods on All Souls Day.



The men pray for all those who have gone before, especially our cherished benefactors.



Our incredibly talented Schola Cantorum offers a Festival of Lessons and Carols in December.



Fr. Michael Berry, O.C.D. leads a five-day silent retreat at the start of the new term in January. Fr. Ken Omernick led a separate retreat for the men who will be ordained to the diaconate this year, and Bishop Donald Hying directed the men who will be ordained to the priesthood.



The Shoremen scrimmage against a local team to prepare for the second annual de Sales Invitational Basketball Tournament.



Archbishop Jerome ListECKI leads an ovation for Fr. John Hemsing Dec. 8 as the archbishop announces that Fr. Hemsing will be returning to parish life.



The Feast of St. Francis de Sales

Festivities celebrated our beloved patron saint.

Concelebrating priests join Archbishop ListECKi in the beautiful sanctuary of Christ King Chapel.

The Seminary was pleased to resume traditional celebrations for our patron saint's feast day this year. The Salesianum welcomed priests to a Mass and luncheon Friday, Jan. 21. The four bishops and 60 priests enjoyed reminiscing about their Seminary days with the men in

formation now.

Sunday, Jan. 23, over 100 benefactors gathered for Mass and a luncheon with the Seminary community. Both events are an opportunity to honor St. Francis de Sales and to thank our remarkable supporters.



Fr. Luke Strand greets Dan and Cindy Schmidt after Mass.



Fr. Joseph Haas regales Nicholas Vande Hey (Green Bay) during the priest celebration.



Benefactors pray with the Seminary community at a beautiful Mass.



Frank and Krishna Smith enjoy catching up with their Teaching Parish seminarian, Julian Druffner (Superior).



New Director, Same Mission

Fr. John LoCoco celebrates the St. Andrew Dinner Mass with concelebrants on Dec. 28, 2021. Many young men interested in discerning the priesthood attended and heard from our priests and seminarians.

The Vocation Office continues to invite young men to prayerfully discern the priesthood as Fr. John LoCoco begins serving as the new vocation director.

Please invite young men who may be called to the priesthood to any of these events.

Cor Jesu

Every Wednesday at St. Robert Parish, Shorewood Adoration and Confession, 7 p.m. and Mass, 8 p.m.

Come and See – Spring 2022

Friday, March 25 – Sunday, March 27

Men discerning the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and the other sending dioceses are invited to spend a weekend encountering the life of the Seminary.

Camp De Sales – Summer 2022

High School Camp

Sunday, June 19 – Wednesday, June 22

Middle School Camps

Saturday, June 18

Thursday, July 21

Tuesday, August 9

St. Andrew Dinner 2022 – Save the Date!

Tuesday, December 27

This significant event is for young men who are invited by their parish priest to learn more about priestly vocations.

Visit www.thinkpriest.org for more information and to register.

Contact the Vocation Office at vocationoffice@sfs.edu or 414-747-6437 with any questions.

2022 Events



Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, Inc.
3257 South Lake Drive
St. Francis, WI 53235

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Pallium Scholarship Benefit Monday, June 13 Wisconsin Country Club

Last year's golf outing was a swinging success as a sold-out field of golfers teed it up in support of the Seminary. After the final hole, others joined the fun at a lively outdoor reception.

This year's event promises more excitement than ever. The golf will be fabulous, and the friends will be fine. We plan to host the reception on the Wisconsin Club's elegant patio again, but if the weather is not up to par, we will move indoors.

Watch for more information on our website and in your mailbox!



Annual Seminary Dinner Friday, October 7 • Wisconsin Center

We are planning a very special Annual Dinner this year. We want each dinner to have your favorite touches but to be unique in its own way too. Our goal is always to invite everyone into the mission of the Seminary. We hope the evening will inspire you in your faith as well.

Save the date now, and tell your friends to mark their calendars too!

For more information or to support the mission of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, visit our website at www.sfs.edu.
Like us on Facebook to keep up to date with the latest news and photos.

414- 747-6400