



Salt *of* *the* Earth

A Saint Francis de Sales Seminary Communication
Fall 2023

PRAY FOR US, O HOLY MOTHER OF GOD
That We May Be Made Worthy of the Promises of Christ



The splendor of fall offers a beautiful backdrop for the annual Marian Procession on our campus.



A Word from Our Rector

The Heart



The Seminary is the heart of the diocese.

Bold words from our 10th rector, Albert Cardinal Meyer. Meyer knew that a thriving Seminary, a strong “heart,” filled with men who love God and the Church, would provide lifeblood and grace to our families and our parishes.

If the Seminary is the heart of the diocese, it is our chapel, under the patronage of Christ the King, that is the heart of the Seminary. It is here, more than anywhere else, where men are formed to be priests unto the heart of Christ. It is here that our Lord pierces through vice and fosters virtue. Here that He forms us to be stewards of His mysteries and advocates of divine grace. Here, within the heart, that we spend three hours each day.

In addition to surfacing critical structural and mechanical needs as well as space limitations, our Master Plan Team, which we recently formed to assess our campus’ most pressing needs, has identified that an investment in Christ King Chapel is essential for the future of priestly formation at the Salesianum. Accordingly, we have enlisted Conrad Schmitt Studios to begin exploratory work on the 19th century painting of the ordination of Saint Francis de Sales that adorned the back wall of the sanctuary until it was covered in the 1950s. We trust that the careful attention to the heart – the heart of the Seminary, heart of the archdiocese – will bear abundant fruit in the life of the Church.

Thank you for continuing to pray for this mission. Thank you for your sacrificial investment in priestly formation. Please know of our regular prayers for you.

In His Most Sacred Heart,

Fr. Luke N. Strand, Rector



Careful work reveals that the historic mural in Christ King Chapel is preserved under the linen covering.



The mural graces the sanctuary of the chapel before being covered in the 1950s. Archdiocese of Milwaukee Archives.

Understanding PPF6

New Names for the Classes

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has revised the Program of Priestly Formation (PPF), introducing new terminology for the stages of seminary formation. Here's a quick guide to the new terms:

<u>OLD</u>	<u>NEW</u>
	Propaedeutic Stage—New for first year seminarians
Pre Theology I	Discipleship I
Pre Theology II	Discipleship II
Theology I	Configuration I
Theology II	Configuration II
Theology III	Configuration III
Theology IV	Configuration IV
	Vocational Synthesis Stage—New for transitional deacons before ordination to the priesthood

Seminarians now have a minimum of seven years of formation before ordination to the priesthood. The average cost of formation is \$65,000 per year, for a total cost of \$455,000 to form each priest.

Please Support the Seminary!

Be part of our mission to form priests in the image of Jesus Christ.

Please pray for us and keep Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in mind as you do your end-of-year charitable giving. Checks made payable to Saint Francis de Sales Seminary can be mailed to:

**3257 S. Lake Drive
St. Francis, WI 53235**



Secure online contributions can be made at sfs.edu/donate or use this QR code.

Every gift is appreciated by the men who will serve as your priests!



Deacon Zachary Galante is ordained a transitional deacon at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome by Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City on September 28. Photo courtesy of the Pontifical North American College.



Laughter rings out when priests get together.



Cardinal James Harvey relishes the opportunity to visit with Wisconsin priests and seminarians.



Priests of all ages and from many dioceses enjoy being together.

Building a Broth

The Salesianum Draws Priests Together

Rev. Justin J. Kizewski

Director of Intellectual Formation

“**H**ow good it is that brothers live in unity” (Psalm 133:1). Saint Francis de Sales Seminary works to build up the priesthood especially in the state of Wisconsin. The year is bookended by the visible signs of this reality. For two years in a row, we have hosted priests from around the state and beyond for solemn Sunday vespers. We sing the Church’s evening prayer, celebrate with a Te Deum and Eucharistic Benediction and conclude with dinner and a social. The event draws priests together, some from long distances travelled after Sunday Masses, and aims to strengthen the bond between them, and the bond is their connection to Christ. At the end of the year, many of the men travel from diocese to diocese in order to attend the various ordinations and Masses of thanksgiving festivities. What a sight it is to see a large representation of our near 80 men descend on a newly ordained’s home cathedral or parish!

Throughout the year, we welcome as guests a host of priests from around the country, but especially from around the state. We try to welcome as Christ all our guests and pride ourselves on the hospitality we are able to provide. Guests are encouraged to make use of facilities, to join for dinner and social times with seminarians and faculty alike. In house, we try to be attentive to time with each other that helps build priestly friendship and support with the idea that in the not-too-distant future, the priests will call the seminarians brothers. Finally, second semester gets its exclamation point on hospitality and fraternity when we welcome more than a dozen other seminaries with their students and faculty for the basketball tournament.

Why is this important? As Fr. Strand stated at this year’s seminary dinner, we are not just forming men to become priests, we are also forming men to stay priests. We are convinced that the best way to support a man in the priesthood is with the help of his brother priests. There are some things in a priestly life that only a priest can understand. There are moments when for a priest to be understood, he will need a brother priest. In imitation of Christ (cf. Mt 11:30), brothers can help ease burdens when they become too heavy or inspire to keep fighting when one becomes tired of the battle. There is a healthy fear of letting a brother down that empowers men to do great things together. Few things draw out the inklings of a call more than seeing priests together. The goodness of this unity overflows and enhances the union between the priest and the people, who perceive in their priestly friendships the priests’ humanity, brotherhood and union with Christ.

erhood of Priests

The Salesianum Sends Priests to Serve

After the Archdiocese of Milwaukee ordained five priests in May, our men traveled to Madison, Superior, Gary and La Crosse to participate in the ordination of eight more priests! Joy abounded as they crisscrossed the state and beyond.



The Diocese of La Crosse wraps up our ordination season on June 24 with the ordination of Fr. John Zweber and Fr. Alex Kren by Bishop William P. Callahan, O.F.M. Conv. Photo courtesy of the Diocese of La Crosse.



Fr. Mark Foley and Fr. Simon Tipps celebrate their May 26 ordination by Bishop Donald J. Hying of the Diocese of Madison. Photo courtesy of Joseph Ptak.



Fr. Robert Ross is ordained for the Diocese of Gary by Bishop Robert J. McClory on June 3. Photo courtesy of Anthony Alonzo, Northwest Indiana Catholic.



Two days after Madison's ordination, the Diocese of Superior ordains three men to the presbyterate. Fr. Isaiah Schick, Fr. Luke Strand, Bishop James P. Powers, Fr. John Baumgardner, Fr. Dan Tracy and Fr. Julian Druffner are jubilant after the Mass. Photo courtesy of Katzie and Ben.



More than 150 priests and seminarians come together on a summer evening at the Salesianum.



The capacity crowd prays a decade of the rosary together.

Annual Seminary Dinner

Seminarians' ZEAL on Full Display

A sold-out crowd of over 2,000 faithful Catholics gathered at the Baird Center (formerly the Wisconsin Center) on October 6. The tremendous enthusiasm in the ballroom was encouraging for our seminarians and guests alike. The evening featured prayer, singing and seminarian stories. The videos introduced our men and drew people into their call to the priesthood. Thank you to all who made this crucial fundraiser a huge success!

Links to more photographs and the videos are at sfs.edu/AnnualDinner. Save the date for next year – October 4, 2024!



Fr. Luke Strand welcomes the huge crowd.



Co-chairs Beth Grusenski and Fr. Enrique Hernandez keep the evening fun and focused.



Seminarians greet guests as they arrive at the dinner.



Seminarians ensure guests at every table are thanked for attending.



Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI honors the Seminary's role in revitalizing the Church.



John Lesniewski (Milwaukee) hands the Shoremen's national basketball championship trophy to Archbishop ListECKI.



Alex Becker (Milwaukee) gives an enthusiastic speech on how the Lord is at work at Saint Francis de Sales.



Carmelite sisters support the mission of the Seminary.



This year's main video features funny and moving words from our deacons.



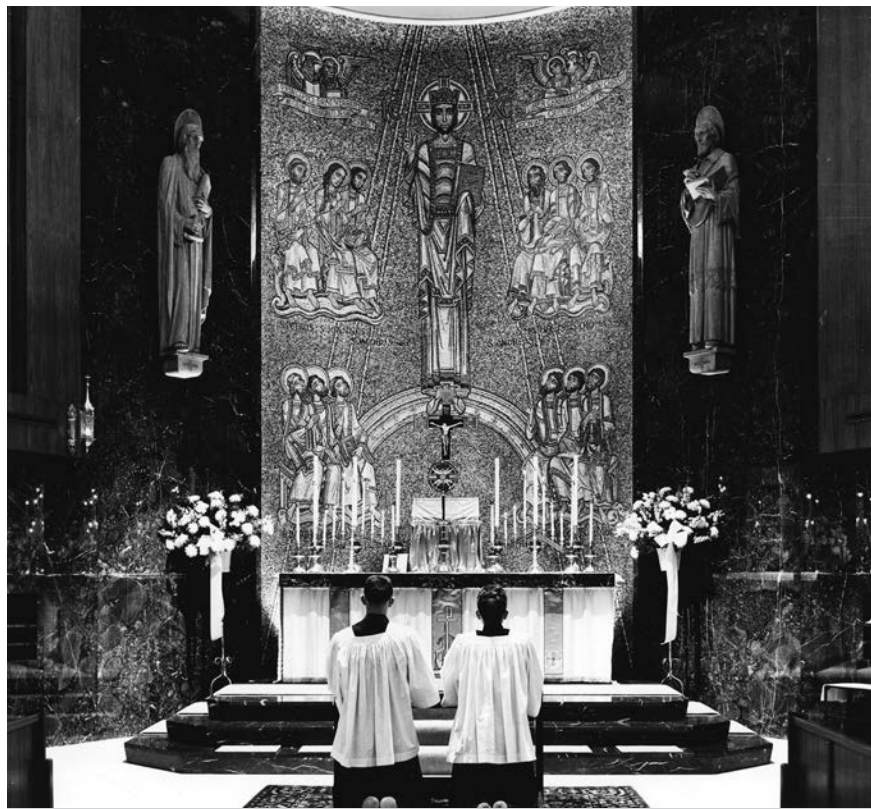
Guests show their support for our seminarians with a standing ovation.



The Seminary community takes the stage at the end of the evening for a final blessing and the singing of Salve Regina.



A rendering of the outdoor shrine depicts the front of the curved mosaic of Christ the King.



Seminarians pray in the Immaculata Chapel in the 1960s.

Make This Place Holy!

Updates to A Treasured Campus

When Archbishop John Martin Henni showed the papal nuncio the land on which he intended to build a seminary, the prelate said, “Make this place holy!” 168 years later, we continue to take his words to heart.

This fall, the Seminary invested in features to enhance outdoor prayer and worship. As we took down the empty Clare Hall (originally Heiss Hall), we were able to preserve the two-story mosaic that had graced its Immaculata Chapel. Thanks to a very generous grant from the Catholic Community Foundation, the mosaic will remain as an outdoor shrine in honor of the many men who were ordained in the chapel. Once shored up and treated to withstand the elements, it will be a spectacular place for outdoor prayer.

In addition, the beautiful statue of Mary that stood in front of Clare Hall was relocated to the west entrance of the south wing of Henni Hall. After a careful journey across campus, the statue was cleaned and restored to its original glory.



Sunlight heightens the magnificence of the Eucharistic Procession in front of Henni Hall.



The two-story mosaic stands covered and protected as the rest of Clare Hall is brought down.



Three workers are needed to hoist Mary atop the pedestal.



Mary is now in the heart of our campus.



Seminarians appreciate being surrounded by beauty.



The Eucharistic procession is a highlight for seminarians each September.



The tree-lined drive provides a majestic setting for Benediction.

Twin Vocations

Deacon Charles Luke (Milwaukee)

I remember a couple of years ago, I was going through some boxes in my parents' attic, and I came across a card that someone had given them when my twin sister Regina and I were born. "Twins are twice blessed," said the inside of the card. It's a nice sentiment which rings differently in hindsight now that the two of us have both pursued religious vocations.

I came to Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in August of 2019, three months before Regina would fly to Naples, Italy, to join the Sister Adorers of the Royal Heart of Jesus. The Sister Adorers are a noncloistered contemplative community founded in 2001 based on the writings of none other than St. Francis de Sales. She received the veil in March the following year and took the religious name Sr. Regina Marie of St. Joseph.

Many people are surprised when I tell them that I have a twin sister who's a sister. Yes, it's something of an anomaly from a statistical perspective, but the Lord doesn't do his work based on statistics.

For myself, the seeds of my vocation were planted early. Habits of prayer and devotion that have stuck with me my entire life were cultivated by my parents, who took very seriously their responsibility to raise their children in the faith. Nevertheless, it wasn't until I was a college student that I really began to get serious about discerning a religious vocation. Learning to pray silently in front of the Blessed Sacrament was the catalyst for my entering seminary – I never had a dramatic revelation of my vocation, never got hit with the proverbial 2x4 – it was something that became more and more obvious for me over time the more I practiced my faith.

There is predictably some overlap between my story and Sr. Regina's, being twins and all. We did a lot of things together growing up – down to playing right and left wing on our youth hockey team. Later, she took up playing the cello, while my first instrument was the violin. Her decision to enter the convent was, in my opinion, a bigger leap than my decision to enter seminary, since my decision included a return home, whereas hers included a one-way international plane ticket.

Prior to joining religious life, Sr. Regina was teaching music in a Catholic school outside of Tucson, Arizona. In Tucson she attended the local Institute of Christ the King Church (the same community that runs St. Stanislaus here in Milwaukee) and made the acquaintance of the Sister Adorers through there.

In 2022, Sr. Regina happily spent some time in Wausau, Wisconsin, where the Sister Adorers have their only U.S.-based convent. She currently is assigned to their convent and retreat house in Le Noirmont, Switzerland.



Twins Charles and Regina play on the same hockey team.



For myself, the seeds of my vocation were planted early.



Sr. Regina Marie visits Deacon Charles at the Seminary in 2022.

Journeys

From Baptism at La Sagrada Familia to Ordination in Milwaukee

Deacon Dennis Beltre (Milwaukee)

Vocation stories are fascinating. One of my favorite things to do when a new academic year starts is to stick around for the introduction of the new seminarians. I am always amazed by how the Lord is present in the lives of these individuals who put their old lives behind to start something totally different. The same applies to all the priests. For me, it is a reminder of the effects of God's revelation, how in a way that I cannot explain, He is present through people who are willing to go the extra mile. My vocation journey is one that literally required a lot of miles for it starts in the Dominican Republic where I am from. But the big jump for me was not leaving my family and way of life behind but giving my full 'yes' to the Lord.

You see, I grew up Catholic and got involved with my local church during my teen years. All thanks to my father who was even more involved. He is a kind of "polymath" in quotidian tasks and affairs of life, and for that reason, he was hired by our parish, La Sagrada Familia. He did a little bit of everything, but most importantly, he met a lot of good people, of whom the most influential were the priests. Since they knew my family, we would be invited to the rectory for gatherings with staff members, and many times they would come to my parents' house for meals. They were good men and did a lot to uplift the community.

In my early teen years, I was distancing myself from my Catholic roots. I did not like going to Mass and preferred staying at home, watching TV, listening to music or being with my friends. But it was thanks to our priests and all their work to uplift our community that I had a revival of my faith. The impact was so big that I spent all my college years as a missionary, even going on mission trips to other countries. Still, there was no thought of pursuing the priesthood.

From the time I started college until I entered Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, I spent nine years working full time for the Catholic Church in different countries. It wasn't until the year prior to moving to the United States that I put my insecurities aside and left everything behind. I gave my full 'yes' to the Lord – and something that definitely helped me was the witness of all the priests of this archdiocese who had encouraged me and been by my side.

I don't know what God has in mind for my priesthood, but I am looking forward to it. For although His ways are a mystery, His company is palpable, and I want to be part of that visible presence of God, just as others have been to me.



Deacon Dennis Beltre is baptized in the Dominican Republic by Fr. Dennis Dirkx. He was named for the priest from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.



Deacon Dennis (small child on the right) visits with another Milwaukee priest, then-Father Don Hying. The Beltre family was also good friends with now-Bishop James Schuerman.

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Fr. Dennis Dirkx hugs Deacon Dennis upon his ordination to the diaconate.



John Lesniewski and Alex Becker (Milwaukee) capture a selfie with young friends in the Dominican Republic.



Andrew Beine and Redmond Tuttle (Milwaukee) help lead a group of teens to World Youth Day in Lisbon.



Brady Gagne (Milwaukee) serves at a hospital in Portland, Maine.

Around the World

Summer Formation Takes Seminarians Far from Home

Classes may end in May, but formation never stops for our seminarians! The men of the Salesianum could be found at points all around the globe this past summer as they worked on ministry skills. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), for men entering Configuration III, is always an intensive summer of being with people in life-threatening situations.

Many of our Configuration II seminarians spent the summer working at La Sagrada Familia in the Dominican Republic, gaining both human formation experience and Spanish speaking skills.

Other seminarians helped campers encounter Christ at Catholic Youth Expeditions in Door County, or led pilgrims to World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal, or shared the Gospel through the Totus Tuus program, or so many other activities! They have listened well to Jesus' words, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19).



Seminarians lead a hike at Catholic Youth Expeditions.



Matthew Szymanski (La Crosse) gets his hospital experience in Corpus Christi, Texas.



Ryan Ruhle (Madison) participates in CPE in Kalamazoo, Michigan.



Fr. Luke Strand surprises the seminarians with a visit during their time in the Dominican Republic.

Pallium Scholarship Benefit

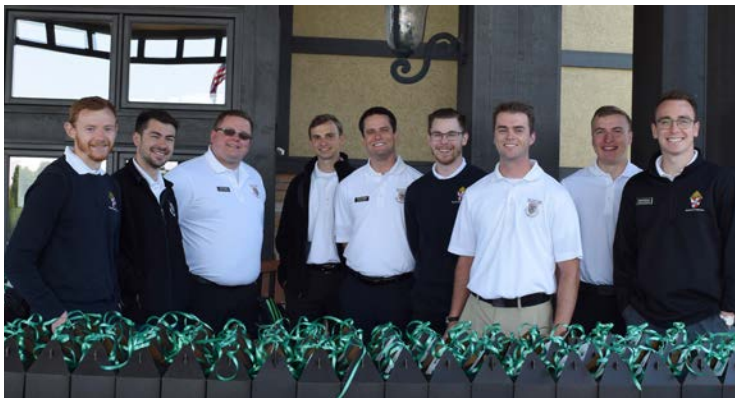
Swinging for Seminarians

The 19th Annual Pallium Scholarship Benefit featured a full complement of 144 golfers at the Wisconsin Country Club on June 12. A breezy evening moved the cocktail reception indoors, but the party continued as friends happily raised funds for the Seminary.

Save the date for next year's golf outing – June 17, 2024!



The Integreyt team lines up a putt.



Seminarians are ready to welcome golfers with awesome gift boxes and Pro V1 golf balls.



The Kelmann Restoration team is delighted to learn they won the tournament in a scorecard playoff.



Fr. Luke Strand and seminarians thank the gathering for its support.



Fifi and Mike Stevens once again co-chair a very successful event.



Scenes from the Salesianum

The Shoremen win first place at the Thunder Cup volleyball tournament for the third year in a row. They also placed third in the soccer tournament at Conception Abbey.



Our men celebrate their dramatic victory in the volleyball championship, winning after being down 23-17 to the home team.



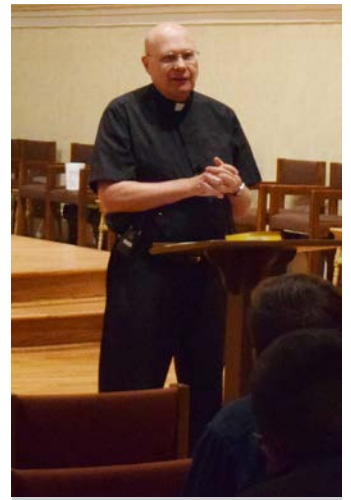
Adam Widder (Milwaukee) and Ryan Ruhle (Madison) play tenacious defense at the Thunder Cup.



Before Clare Hall is taken down, the St. Francis Police Department uses the building to practice breaking into windows and doors.



Introductions on the first day are always a spirited event.



Fr. James Kubicki, S.J., leads a fall day of spiritual renewal. His theme was "Having a Priestly Heart Like the Heart of Jesus."



Joel Kolb (Milwaukee) and Ryan Ruhle (Madison) hold the statues of Mary and Joseph that seminarians pitched in for themselves to buy for the fourth floor.



Fr. Joe Laramie, S.J., leads the Propaedeutic Stage seminarians on a silent three-day retreat.



Tim Heyrman (Milwaukee) meets his committee members from St. Charles in Hartland during Teaching Parish Committee orientation.



Deacon Dominic Lazzaroni (Milwaukee) and Brad Grobbel (Madison) celebrate the first day of school.



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The 2023-2024 Seminarists of Saint Francis de Sales

The Men Who Are Answering the Lord's Call

The Salesianum is blessed to have 81 seminarists in formation this year. The men come from nine dioceses, with the dioceses of Rockford, Illinois, and Albany, New York, joining the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and the dioceses of Green Bay, La Crosse, Madison, Superior, Gary, and Lafayette-in-Indiana for the first time. Please pray for all of our men to grow in wisdom and holiness this year!



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