

Saint Francis de Sales
SEMINARY



Salt *of* *the* Earth

A Saint Francis de Sales Seminary Communication
Summer 2024



“HERE I AM, SEND ME.”

Isaiah 6:8

The Ordination Class of 2024 Generously Responds to God's Call.

The class of 13 new priests includes nine for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, the largest class in more than 30 years.

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A Word from Our Rector

Our First Aim



Dear Friends,

For the past year, I have been telling folks that it is unlikely that Saint Francis de Sales Seminary's enrollment would increase in the fall of 2024. We once again ordained 13 priests, which means 26 men in the past two years are now faithfully serving in our parishes. We know that some men each year will make a good discernment and decide to withdraw from formation. And, for much of this year, the number of new men entering was tracking, well... as average. I could not have been more mistaken! As we look to the 2024-2025 formation year, we will form 91 seminarians, with 81 in house – a 10 seminarian increase!

This year's enrollment only reinforces the demand to address significant campus needs in order to safeguard a solid environment where our growing number of seminarians can discern His call and prepare for priestly service. Providentially timed, we are now planning an inaugural capital campaign, after a very successful

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Saint Francis de Sales Seminary is a home where men experience the love of God and are formed as priests of Jesus Christ.

feasibility study! We must accommodate our growing community, address critical infrastructure needs, and restore beauty to our historic campus.

Frankly, that a significant investment is necessary to restore Wisconsin's first academic institution, built before the Civil War, is not surprising. But what is surprising is that this will be the Seminary's first capital campaign in its 179-year history! We have great confidence that with God's grace, and the support of this community, we will be paving the way for the next 50 years of seminary formation in Milwaukee.

However, during this time of exciting changes, what sets the Salesianum apart must remain the same! Our hearts must remain focused, not on the numbers, but on our first and most essential goal. Our mission simply continues, rooted in our formational priority:

Saint Francis de Sales Seminary is a home where men experience the love of God and are formed as priests of Jesus Christ. *Our first aim is to give glory to God.* Through the daily engagement of human, spiritual, pastoral, intellectual, and liturgical formation, men become prayerful, resilient, fraternal, and sacrificial priests in the heart of the Church.

We are grateful to our campaign leaders who are devoted to protecting this sacred mission: Kevin and Linda Steiner of West Bend who have agreed to be our Campaign Chairs; Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKi, Cardinal James M. Harvey, and Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan who will serve as our Honorary Campaign Chairs; the bishops of Wisconsin who all support the campaign; Ed and Bridie Mooney and Jim and Nora Barry who will serve as Major Gift Chairs; and many other friends who have said yes to the Lord's invitation to take on a leadership role. I am humbled by the love each of these individuals has for the Salesianum. Thank you! Once plans are complete, the silent phase will begin. We anticipate a public launch in the fall.

Thank you for your prayers and support. Thank you for facilitating such amazing growth. Thank you for driving this campaign and for helping Saint Francis de Sales Seminary boldly and faithfully carry out its God-given mission.

Sincerely in Christ,

Handwritten signature of Fr. Luke N. Strand.

Fr. Luke N. Strand, Rector



The fruit of the Seminary's mission: With their hands on the Book of Gospels, our seminarians recite the Oath of Freedom, the Profession of Faith, and the Oath of Fidelity in preparation for ordination to the priesthood of Jesus Christ.



Giving glory to God: Deacon Zachary Galante (Milwaukee) prays before the tabernacle prior to his ordination to the priesthood.



Linda and Kevin Steiner will serve as chairs of the Seminary's inaugural capital campaign.

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 plan your charitable giving. Checks made payable to Saint Francis de Sales Seminary can be mailed to:

3257 South Lake Drive, Saint Francis WI 53235



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

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



Giving Their Lives to Christ and His Church

Thirteen Men are Ordained to the Priesthood.

Wisconsin's presbyterate grew this spring as 13 men were ordained to the priesthood. The dioceses of Green Bay and Madison each welcomed two new priests, while the Archdiocese of Milwaukee saw nine men ordained. It was Milwaukee's largest class in over 30 years! Each ordination, whether large or small, is an occasion of great joy as men freely give their lives to Christ and His Church.

Links to photographs and videos of all the ordinations can be found at sfs.edu/ordination.



Archbishop Jerome ListECKI's homily elicits a laugh before he tells them to remember seven words: "Faithfully serve Jesus Christ in His Church."



The nine Milwaukee men pray together before ordination on May 18.



Archbishop ListECKI prays the Prayer of Ordination over the candidates.



Front: Frs. Zachary Galante, Charles Luke, Denny Jacob, Dennis Beltré, Kevin Durand. Middle: Frs. Nicholas Dhein, Craig Richter, David Sweeney, Dominic Lazzaroni. Back: Fr. John Baumgardner, Archbishop Jerome Listecky, Fr. Luke Strand.



Joy abounds as Fr. Raul Gomez, Fr. Juan Carlos Altamirano, Bishop David L. Ricken, Fr. Mark Rydell, and Fr. Luke Strand celebrate Frs. Altamirano and Rydell's ordination in Green Bay on May 25. Photo courtesy of Sue Simoens, Diocese of Green Bay.



Frs. Altamirano and Rydell join Bishop Ricken at the altar. Photo courtesy of Sue Simoens, Diocese of Green Bay.



Fr. David Drefcinski and Fr. Athony Kersting revel in the moment after being ordained by Bishop Donald J. Hying of Madison on June 7. Photo courtesy of Joseph Ptak.



Madison's deacons celebrate with the newly ordained priests. Madison anticipates ordaining four more priests next year! Photo courtesy of Joseph Ptak.

Priests of Jesus Christ

Meet the Class of 2024



Rev. Juan Carlos Altamirano Herrera • Diocese of Green Bay

Home Parish: St. Therese of Lisieux, Appleton

Teaching Parish: St. Robert, Shorewood and Good Shepherd, Chilton

Assigned to: St. Pius X and St. Therese, Appleton

Rev. Dennis Beltré Báez • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: La Sagrada Familia, DR

Teaching Parish: St. Paul and St. Louis, Racine

Assigned to: St. Clement, St. Dominic, and Holy Name of Jesus, Sheboygan



Rev. Nicholas Dhein • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: St. Peter, Slinger

Teaching Parish: St. Monica, Whitefish Bay and St. Eugene, Fox Point

Assigned to: St. Joseph, Waupun; Annunciation, Fox Lake; St. Katharine Drexel, Beaver Dam; St. Columbkille, Elba; Holy Family, Reeseville; and St. John, Clyman

Rev. David Drefcinski • Diocese of Madison

Home Parish: St. Mary and St. Augustine, Platteville

Teaching Parish: St. Therese of Lisieux Pastorate; Watertown, Johnson Creek, and Lake Mills

Assigned to: St. Therese of Lisieux Pastorate; Watertown, Johnson Creek, and Lake Mills



Rev. Kevin Durand • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: St. Thomas Aquinas, Waterford

Teaching Parish: Holy Trinity and St. Michael, Kewaskum

Assigned to: Holy Family, Fond du Lac

Rev. Zachary Galante • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: St. Frances Cabrini, West Bend

Teaching Parish: Holy Trinity and St. Michael, Kewaskum

Assigned to: St. John Vianney, Brookfield (Summer only)



Rev. Denny Jacob • Archdiocese of Milwaukee/Community of St. Paul

Home Parish: St. Mary, Santi Nagar, India

Teaching Parish: St. William, Waukesha

Assigned to: St. James, Mukwonago; St. Theresa, Eagle; and St. Peter, East Troy



Rev. Anthony Kersting • Diocese of Madison

Home Parish: St. Cecilia, Wisconsin Dells

Teaching Parish: St. Jane Frances de Chantal Pastorate, Janesville

Assigned to: St. Maximilian Kolbe Pastorate; Waunakee, Westport, Dane, and Lodi



Rev. Dominic Lazzaroni • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: St. Francis de Sales, Lake Geneva

Teaching Parish: St. Frances Cabrini and St. Mary's Immaculate Conception, West Bend

Assigned to: St. Joseph, St. John Neumann, St. William, and St. Mary, Waukesha



Rev. Charles Luke • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: Holy Name of Jesus, Sheboygan

Teaching Parish: St. Leonard, Muskego

Assigned to: St. Robert, Shorewood and Holy Family, Whitefish Bay



Rev. Craig Richter • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: St. John Neumann, Waukesha

Teaching Parish: St. Rafael the Archangel, Prince of Peace, and St. Vincent de Paul, Milwaukee

Assigned to: St. John Nepomucene, St. Joseph, St. Patrick, Sacred Heart, St. Richard, St. Edward, and St. Lucy, Racine; and St. Sebastian, Sturtevant



Rev. Mark Rydell • Diocese of Green Bay

Home Parish: St. Mary, Menasha

Teaching Parish: Immaculate Conception, St. Augustine, Sacred Heart, Milwaukee; and Holy Rosary, New Holstein; Ss Peter and Paul, Kiel; and St. Anne, St. Anna

Assigned to: Holy Cross and St. Katharine Drexel, Kaukauna



Rev. David Sweeney • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Home Parish: St. John Vianney, Brookfield

Teaching Parish: St. Charles, Hartland

Assigned to: St. Dominic, Brookfield





The propaedeutic stage offers time for a new seminarian to deepen his spiritual life.

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Through societal ministries in the local community, we ministered to the poor and needy with gentle, loving hearts on fire for Jesus.



Our propaedeutic seminarians spend time serving in the Dominican Republic.

A True Gift for the Church

Reflecting on the Inaugural Year of the Propaedeutic Stage

Andrew Smith (Superior)

A year ago, I could not have imagined the fullness of my heart’s desire would be gifted to me: pursuing the priesthood in the Catholic Church. After a few days of craziness between meetings, phone calls, and taking a leave of absence from medical school, I heard the words “propaedeutic stage” from my vocation director. Long story short (and through many miraculous doors swung open for me), I walked out of the hospital and into the Seminary for this new mystery year the Church instituted worldwide.

Early on in the orientation process, the words “media fast,” “societal ministries,” and “community nights” buzzed through the air. Slowly, the fog evaporated, and the true gift of the year became more apparent. I was immersed in prayer, learning, work, and service. A future priest should be a virtuous man who is oriented towards his ultimate goal of being Beatitude in heaven. This is something we call “being integrated.” The whole of the person strives for self-knowledge, leading to self-possession, and finally, self-gift. The propaedeutic stage “seeks to provide seminarians with the basic groundwork they need to engage in priestly formation”¹ and to someday give himself completely out of love for God and neighbor.

Throughout the year, my class and I consistently heard the axioms “be free” and “be human.” The goal was to uplift our humanity through healthy socialization, exercise, rest, and leisure. Simply, to do what humans have always done!

For example, I was able to use my wrestling and weightlifting background to organize workouts for the propaedeutic men. The year provided ample space to pursue exercise, music, and even how to take the perfect nap!

Through societal ministries in the local community, we ministered to the poor and needy with gentle, loving hearts on fire for Jesus. We simply ate, prayed, and chatted with them!

A trip to the Dominican Republic opened our eyes to poverty, the universal Church, and a new cultural experience. We lived with two changes of clothes and relied on God’s Providence while living a true spirit of poverty. God taught our minds, hearts, and bellies that living on His Providence truly is freeing!

In bold and subtle ways, God made known His Love for my peers and me in the daily routine of prayer and three silent retreats of the year. The propaedeutic stage provides time and space to break open and deepen the spiritual life.

I marvel at the men God continues to bless me with as we grow deeper in friendship pursuing the priesthood, and ultimately heaven. I think the typical lay Catholic would be surprised how virtuous, relatable, and fun seminarians are! God offered me a great gift in being a seminarian in Saint Francis de Sales’ inaugural propaedeutic stage! I am truly filled with gratitude and joy. Praise God for the fruits the propaedeutic stage will reap for His holy Catholic Church!

¹ Program of Priestly Formation, no. 119

Leaving Home

Reflecting on Eight Years of the Salesianum

Fr. Dominic Lazzaroni (Milwaukee)

What makes a home? A home is where you live, sure, but it's more than that. A home is where your family is. A home is where you have both refuge and responsibility. A home is where you can be yourself while being challenged, and all the while know you are loved. All this being said, I can earnestly say that for the past eight years, Saint Francis de Sales Seminary has been a place I have truly called "home."

When I entered college seminary for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, although I did not live at Saint Francis, it was clear to me that Saint Francis de Sales was my home. The priests were true fathers, worthy of emulation in their compassion and availability, and when I would return from college seminary in Chicago, my Saint Francis seminarian brothers would greet me without fail with a warm, "welcome home." My time working at the Seminary over the summers felt much like doing chores around the house: mowing the lawn and cleaning floors, trimming the hedges and painting rooms. There was always a place for me, and I eagerly awaited the time I would spend at the Salesianum.

When I moved into Saint Francis for major seminary, this sense of home only increased. I was met with both a sense of belonging and of responsibility. My faith was nurtured and grew each day as I prayed at Mass and in early morning holy hours with the priests and seminarians. I dove into my house jobs and chores, increasing in leadership and responsibility as the years progressed, and I was encouraged to foster my gifts and talents, and to share them with the larger community. I spent time at the Seminary, not only during the formation year, but also over breaks as a place of rest. I grew to understand myself as a beloved son of the Father in the midst of my quirks and foibles, and, in doing all these things, I allowed the Lord to use this home that is Saint Francis de Sales Seminary to form me into the priest I am today.

Now that it's time for me to leave Saint Francis, I find myself leaving a home. This means I must say goodbye to something which I love, something that has become a part of me as I have become a part of it. I say goodbye to a family of brother priests and seminarians who will remain, confident in the Lord's continued good work in their lives. I leave with great hope for the future, and I know, like any home, I am always welcome to come and visit. What a privilege to have such a community, for it reveals itself as a microcosm of the Church, united on the firm foundation of Christ and held together by the compassionate zeal of His members, all reflecting our heavenly homeland while here on earth. I will miss Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, for it is a true home, and I wouldn't want to have it any other way.



After eight years of seminary, Fr. Lazzaroni is now an ordained priest moving on to parish life.

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A home is where you can be yourself while being challenged, and all the while know you are loved.



College seminarian Dominic Lazzaroni (seated) is at home in the hallways of the Salesianum in 2018.



The Sacred Order of Deacons

Ten Men Are Ordained to the Transitional Diaconate.

Milwaukee Deacons Aaron Siehr, Brady Gagne, and Timothy Sanchez beam after their ordination by Bishop James T. Schuerman on April 20.

In four ordinations around the Midwest, ten of our seminarians were ordained transitional deacons this spring. They are called “transitional” because they anticipate being ordained to the priesthood next spring. But once ordained a deacon, always a deacon! They are now servants of the Word, the liturgy, and charity.

Links to photographs and videos of all the ordinations can be found at sfs.edu/DiaconateOrdination.



Madison Deacons Ryan Ruhle, David Jaramillo, and Bradley Grobbel celebrate with Bishop Donald J. Hying after their May 10 ordination. Photo courtesy of Joseph Ptak.



Frs. John Baumgardner and Brad Krawczyk share the joy of ordination with newly ordained Deacon Jason Diebolt and Bishop Timothy L. Doherty of Lafayette-in-Indiana on June 1. Photo courtesy of Chad Krockover/Krock Photography.



La Crosse’s newly installed Bishop Gerard W. Battersby ordains his first transitional deacons, Matthew Szymanski, Joseph Glatczak, and Brian Ward on June 1, less than two weeks after his installation. Photo courtesy of the Diocese of La Crosse.

Vocation Office News

Grateful to Serve the Mission of the Vocation Office

Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

In 2013, just days after my graduation from Marquette University High School, with the help of my parents, Joe and Julie, I moved into the Saint John Paul II House of Discernment, located at Saint Robert Parish in Shorewood, for the first time as I prepared to begin college seminary that fall.

Now, eleven years later and again with the help of my parents, I have returned to the JPII House, not as a seminarian, but rather as the vocation director for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

As I step away from parish life in Fond du Lac and into my new assignment, I'm grateful for the prayerful encouragement of so many of you, faithful friends of the Vocation Office. That's a testament to the culture of vocation and love for the diocesan priesthood that exists in our local Church. What a gift.

While the title of vocation director presently falls to me, that responsibility is one shared by us all as together we seek to invite our sons, brothers, and young men to take up their cross and joyfully follow the Lord in the priesthood, for the sake of our salvation, and for our families, for you and for me.

"Faithfully serve Jesus Christ in his Church." These words were preached by Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI during the recent ordination of Milwaukee's nine newest priests. Lived well, with charity and generosity, these words mark not only the heart of a priest, but also the hearts of those he serves.

Since my own ordination, already three years ago, time and again, I have seen these words take flesh in the witness offered to me by brother priests and by

the faithful of our local Church. As diocesan priests, we have the privilege to be immersed in the life of the Lord and in the lives of our people.

Be it standing at the Altar or sitting with a family at their kitchen table, despite the brokenness around and within us, I have been privileged to see firsthand so many examples of holiness and conversion.

The signs of hope that we see now are but the first fruits, not the least of which includes the revival of our Saint Francis de Sales Seminary. Indeed, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2).

The Lord is never outdone in generosity. Why should it be any different for us in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee? Together then we pray for an abundance of diocesan priests, and for the families from which they surely will arise, today and always.

Faithfully yours,

Fr. Michael J. Malucha

Visit www.thinkpriest.org for more information. Contact the Vocation Office at vocationoffice@sfs.edu or 414-747-6437 with any questions.



Fr. Michael Malucha



Fr. Malucha settles in with some of the men living at the JPII House this summer.



Brotherhood and Basketball

The Fourth Annual De Sales Invitational Builds Fraternity.

The Shoremen sing their Alma Mater after winning in the semifinals.

It is hard to overstate the significance of the De Sales Invitational, both for the men of the Salesianum and for seminarians across the nation. The three-day event has quickly grown in prominence, with 350 seminarians and priests descending upon Saint Francis this year. It is a tremendous undertaking that requires every man in the house to help pull off. It is a master class in human formation!

There were 28 games of thrilling basketball among 16 teams, with the Shoremen falling in the championship game to Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary from Denton, Nebraska. The weekend also included beautiful liturgies, many hearty meals, and a grand social after the semifinal games. The time together is so meaningful for all of the seminarians, Saint Paul Seminary brought a contingent of 55 men to experience the life-giving fraternity offered by the Salesianum. No one wanted to leave on Sunday!

The entire unforgettable weekend was underwritten by our generous donors Tom and Lynne VanHimbergen, Kevin and Linda Steiner, and Pat Connaughton of the Milwaukee Bucks.



Fr. Luke Strand blesses the teams after the Shoremen defeated Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary from Winona, MN.



Seminarians genuinely enjoy getting the chance to meet other seminarians from around the country.



It is standing room only for the Saturday night semifinal game between Saint Francis and Notre Dame Seminary from New Orleans.



High school men from Chippewa Falls cheer on Deacon Kevin Durand (Milwaukee) at the foul line.



John Lesniewski (Milwaukee) breaks away for an easy basket in the championship game.



Adam Widder (Milwaukee) drives against Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary with 500 fans filling the gym at the Friday night game.



Liturgies are also standing room only with hundreds of seminarians, priests, and six rectors gathering in Christ King Chapel three times a day.



The team celebrates a second-place finish after a first-rate weekend of hospitality.



Scenes from the Salesianum

Eleven men are instituted into the Ministry of Lector by Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger of the Diocese of Albany on March 16. Left to right: Jacob Bovee (Green Bay), Adam Widder (Milw), Carl Oman (Superior), Nicholas Emsing (Gary), Fr. Luke Strand, Gilbert Kimaro (Albany), Bishop Scharfenberger, Jacob Bruns (Milw), Scott Zarling (Milw), Timothy Heyrman (Milw), Scott Pederson (Superior), Andrew Kreye (Superior), and Joseph Pham (Albany).



The Green Bay seminarians are delighted to welcome Bishop David L. Ricken and Vocation Director Fr. Mark Mleziva to Saint Francis on April 9.



Sister Mary Clare, OCD offers reflections to the seminarians on Ash Wednesday. She explored interior landscapes as a means of preparing for greater union with God, and pathways of purification and their role in our journey to transformation in Christ.



While visiting his seminarians at the Salesianum, Bishop Ricken of Green Bay consecrates the chalices and patens of his men about to be ordained to the priesthood.



The de Chantal gatherings continue to bring scores of women to the Seminary to pray for vocations to the priesthood.



Recently ordained priests come home to celebrate the Institution of the Priesthood on the morning of Holy Thursday.



Dr. John M. Haas, president emeritus of The National Catholic Bioethics Center, gives a powerful talk “Addressing Proportionism” at the Annual Lecture in Christian Ethics on April 3.



At the end-of-the-year Rathskeller, Archbishop ListECKI signs the basement wall. It is a tradition for seminarians in their last year. The archbishop was invited to add his name since he submitted his letter of retirement in March.



On May 1, Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI consecrates the chalices and patens of the Milwaukee men about to be ordained.



Our propaedeutic stage seminarians visit Fr. Dan Tracy in Hudson, WI as part of a Blessed Solanus Casey pilgrimage.



Seminarians’ “Marriage and Family Life Day” focuses on ministering to women and couples dealing with miscarriage, stillbirth, and infertility. The March 20 day was cosponsored by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Upcoming Event



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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
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Milwaukee, Wis.
Permit No. 338



90 Seminarians will be on hand to welcome you.

Annual Seminary Dinner

Friday, October 4 | Baird Center
Zeal for the Lord's House

There is something extraordinary

going on at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, and we invite you to be a part of it. Our 2024 Annual Dinner will be

a memorable evening of celebrating the 91 men who are answering the Lord's call and the thousands of faithful Catholics who support them.

It will be a night that revitalizes your faith and imbues a confident hope for the future. It will be an event with surprises as we embark on the next exciting chapter in the Seminary's history. Please plan to attend and be a part of this remarkable mission.

The dinner will be held in the new fourth-floor ballroom of the Baird Center (formerly the Wisconsin Center) in downtown Milwaukee. Invitations will be mailed in early August. We expect to reach capacity quickly, so a swift response is recommended. Visit sfs.edu/AnnualDinner for more information.



ZEAL
FOR THE
LORD'S HOUSE



The Annual Dinner will be in new Baird Center fourth-floor ballroom which is across the street from the first-floor ballroom where the event was previously held.



Our dinner is the ideal opportunity to show your support of the priesthood.

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

414- 747-6400