



FALL '11

# VOCARE

THE VOCATIONS NEWSLETTER FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

## *Introducing our newly appointed Regional Vocation Coordinators*



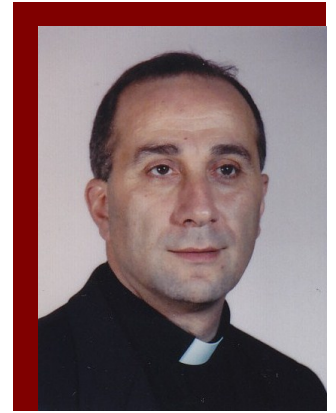
Fr. Stephen Pullis



Fr. Philip Ching



Fr. David Bechill



Fr. Marie-Elie Haby

Archbishop Vigneron has appointed four priests for the newly created position of Regional Vocation Coordinator to assist Fr. Tim Birney, the Director of Priestly Vocations with the very important work of vocation promotion in the Archdiocese of Detroit. The Regional Vocation Coordinators will be the primary 'vocation presence and promoter' for each of the Regions where they are presently assigned. In addition to their first assignment, either as Pastor or Parochial Vicar, their newly appointed responsibilities will include:

- Attendance at Regional meetings to represent and promote the programs of the Office of Priestly Vocations
- Vocation talks when requested for parishes/schools in their Region
- Quarterly meetings with the Director of Priestly Vocations to help coordinate vocation programs in the Archdiocese of Detroit

The priests who are assigned to this new ministry are:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Fr. Stephen Pullis, Northwest Region | (Parochial Vicar: St. Joseph, Lake Orion)          |
| Fr. Philip Ching, Northeast Region   | (Parochial Vicar: St. Lawrence, Utica)             |
| Fr. David Bechill, South Region      | (Parochial Vicar: Divine Child, Dearborn)          |
| Fr. Marie-Elie Haby, Central Region  | (Pastor: St. Stephen/Mary, Mother of God, Detroit) |

In conjunction with the upcoming January release of the Pastoral Plan for Vocations, *"Do Whatever He Tells You"*, authored by the Office of Priestly Vocations and the appointment of these four priests, it is the expectation that the Archdiocese of Detroit, in short order, will begin to see an increase of men visiting Sacred Heart Major Seminary and discerning a priestly vocation. Please include in your daily prayers the success of this new approach to vocation ministry in our Archdiocese, that it may bring about a renewed interest amongst our youth to at least consider, 'could God be calling me to the priesthood?'

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# 'Do Whatever He Tells You'

## A Pastoral Plan for Vocational Awareness

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*“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 ‘Lord of the harvest’, whether in parish communities, in Christian families or in groups specifically devoted to prayer for vocations.”*

- Pope Benedict XVI

For the past six months, the Office of Priestly Vocations has been working on the development of a Pastoral Plan for vocations to be utilized at every level of the Archdiocese of Detroit. It is the goal of “Do Whatever He Tells You” to remind the people of God of the ‘new life’ they have received through the sacrament of baptism. By virtue of water and the Holy Spirit at baptism, we have become His sons and daughters and thus called to live a life of holiness. As a baptized member of the family of God, we are all imbued with a vocation, a calling.

In a particular way, this *Plan* will focus on providing the education, direction, and inspiration necessary to assist our priests, lay ministers, and all people of God to become ‘vocation directors’. This will afford everyone to be reminded of the important role they play in the life of the Church, and give our still discerning young people the best possible opportunity to consider, ‘Could God be calling me to live out my life as a child of God, my holiness, as a Priest or Consecrated Religious?’

In regards to the priesthood, the Archdiocese of Detroit has experienced a steady flow of men into the seminary, however, the numbers have not fluctuated to any great degree. Since 1988, and the re-founding of Sacred Heart Major Seminary, we have averaged a per year total of 40.6 candidates into the seminary. According to our best records, our largest number of seminarians during this time period was 49 and the lowest number was 32. During the same time period, we have ordained 122 men, with a per year average of 5.3. While these numbers are respectable, they are far from what should be

achieved for an Archdiocese of 1.3 million Catholics. If we were to do a sampling of per capita comparisons to a few other (Arch)Dioceses in the USA, it would look like this:

	AOD Seminarian Equivalent
Bismarck: 59,000 Catholics - 16 Seminarians	353
Marquette: 62,000 Catholics - 11 Seminarians	231
Lansing: 250,000 Catholics - 30 Seminarians	156
Minneapolis/St.Paul: 800,000 Catholics - 61 Seminarians	100

The Archdiocese with the largest amount of seminarians is Chicago, around 110. While we are half their size, their numbers provide us with the ability to set realistic goals for the Archdiocese of



The personal invitation of a priest remains the most effective way to promote vocations



The Blessed Virgin Mary, as the most perfect follower of Jesus, is the perfect patron for encouraging vocations especially following her request at the Wedding at Cana to 'do whatever He tells you' (John 2:5)

Detroit. It would be unreasonable to expect 150 seminarians when we know Chicago is twice our size and does not even have that amount. So, taking all the above into consideration, I believe a realistic and attainable number of seminarians for the Archdiocese of Detroit would be in the 70-85 range. While I will always advocate for quality over quantity, that should not limit us to examining how we 'measure up' to other locations throughout the country and how we can improve.

The preface from, *"Lend Your Own Voice to Christ"*, by Archbishop O'Brien states: "Though some of our Catholic faithful might find it hard to believe: while survey after survey indicates that more than 90% of American priests are happy in their vocation, too many are reluctant to encourage other men to experience the joy of the priesthood. On the other hand, the more than 80% of men ordained each year point to the prompting of a priest as the reason for taking the first step toward the seminary." If not us priests, who?

When it comes to men, regardless of their age, an invitation to consider the Catholic priesthood needs to come from a priest! People in the business world will tell us...follow the facts....and the facts are overwhelmingly clear. The single most important factor for increasing our potential candidates for the seminary is as simple as a personal invitation. No budget is needed, no creative advertising strategy, no social media, no technology...just the courage to do what Jesus did...look a man in the eye, extend a hand and simply invite them to, "Come, follow me!" This is everyone's challenge in the Church, but especially the challenge of priests.

And so we find ourselves at the pinnacle of all things orientated towards vocation ministry...the encouragement of a priest to a young man to consider a priestly vocation, could be the birth of yet another minister of God's graces through the sacraments, preacher of the Good News, man of God for others. Imagine if every priest made it his goal to have one man each year from his parish attend a vocation event at the seminary?

The Pastoral Plan is scheduled to be released for the entire Archdiocese on January 8, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord and the beginning of National Vocations Awareness Week. You will be able to view a draft of the Plan on our website: [www.detroitpriest.com](http://www.detroitpriest.com) under the Resources page.

**Fr. Tim Birney**  
Director of the Office of Priestly Vocations

## Our New Detroit Seminarians



**Name:** John Bettin  
**Year:** Pre-Theology I  
**Education:** B. A. Accounting / Finance, University of Detroit Mercy  
**Home Parish:** St. Joseph, Lake Orion

**Reflection:** I look forward most in the priesthood to introducing, or re-introducing, individuals to Jesus Christ and the

Church, especially through the Sacraments and helping one another deepen our relationship with Christ.



**Name:** Andrew Dawson  
**Year:** Pre-Theology I  
**Education:** B.A. (Physical Recreation) University College of St. Mark and St. John, England  
**Home Parish:** Guardian Angels, Clawson  
**Reflection:** I first considered the priesthood at the age of 32, a few months after joining



the Church in 2006. I came to understand my own reluctance to say "no" to the invitation of others to consider priestly ministry and my deflection of that invitation were recognition that I was already asking myself if God might be making that invitation. That revelation took my subconscious discernment and put it squarely in front of me to address.

Seeking advice of priests and lay ministers and reading as much as possible was very helpful, but ultimately, taking my discernment to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament and to daily Mass gave me the greatest clarity in hearing and being accepting of God's call to the priesthood. What I most look forward to as a priest is to have the opportunity to be an instrument of grace of the Father in people's lives through the sacraments and pastoral ministry.



**Name:** Grayson Heenan  
**Year:** Pre-Theology I  
**Education:** B. A. (Philosophy) Boston College  
**Home Parish:** St. Paul on the Lake, Grosse Pointe Farms

**Reflection:** I entered Sacred Heart Major Seminary due to a deep admiration for the character of the priest. As

mediator between man and God, he has the privilege of serving man and taking within himself all of humanity's deepest groaning-joys, pains, sufferings, desires - and of bringing those before God, who shares His life with the priest in a very special way. To this life, I believe I have been called.

My first consideration of the priesthood came young - in the sixth grade perhaps - and found itself articulated in a naive query: "mustn't all priests go to heaven?" Over the years, after having met several heroic priests, my admiration for priesthood grew and matured and I began to perceive a call.



**Name:** Mark Livingston  
**Year:** Pre-Theology I  
**Education:** B.A. (Economics) Wayne State University, M.S.W. (Social Work) University of Michigan  
**Home Parish:** St. Pius X, Southgate

**Reflection:** As an older vocation, I spent many years discerning God's call amid many personal and societal distractions. That discernment led me to the priesthood and Sacred Heart Major Seminary. It took me some time to find the stillness of mind and heart necessary to hear the Lord's voice- "a tiny whispering sound"- in our distracting world. Jesus is calling so many men to serve Him but hearts become restless when distracted from Him by

worldly attractions. Trust Jesus is calling you as you are today with all your current gifts, talents, and even shortcomings and entrust your vocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary - "To Jesus, through Mary."

I first thought of the Priesthood when I was roughly 10 as an altar boy. I considered it intermittently in my 20's though dating distracted me. Lastly - and far more seriously - I considered the priesthood at roughly 30 years old. God willing that I am ordained to the priesthood, I am looking forward to celebrating Holy Mass, hearing confessions and building relationships with individuals and families in a parish community setting. I love Jesus and I want others to share my joy - celebrating Mass and the sacramental life of the Church from the heart and in community with each other.



**Name:** Christopher Muer  
**Year:** Pre-Theology I  
**E d u c a t i o n :** B . A .  
 (Construction Management)  
 Ferris State University  
**Home Parish:** St. Clare de  
 Montefalco, Grosse Pointe  
 Park



**Reflection:** My discernment started during my sophomore year of college during a night at adoration. Following this, I heard Fr. Tim speak at my home parish about vocations. I spoke to him after Mass. As I continued my discernment, I felt God wanted me to finish my degree. I finished my degree two years later and half way through senior year a vocation to the priesthood was on my heart again. I contacted Fr. Tim in May and I received my acceptance during Holy Week which I feel is no accident. In terms of seminary, I am most looking forward to strong fellowship with my brother seminarians and seeking out God's will for me.

The discernment to the priesthood has been full of grace and many blessings. I look forward to many further blessings and graces during my journey into seminary.



**Name:** Reynaldo Salcé, Jr.  
**Year:** College I  
**E d u c a t i o n :** Southgate  
 Anderson High School  
**Home Parish:** St. Cyprian,  
 Riverview  
**Reflection:** My first thought about priesthood was during my junior year of high school. I was at Mass one Sunday and, as the priest was beginning the Liturgy of the Eucharist, I thought to myself, "I could do that."

Discernment so far has been a great time in my life. A personal prayer life is essential, but you can't do it all alone. If you open up to other young men in discernment as well as priests and others in the consecrated life, you will find a very loving and supportive environment.



**Name:** Ryan Walters  
**Year:** College I  
**E d u c a t i o n :** Seton Home  
 Study School  
**Home Parish:** SS. Cyril and  
 Methodius, Sterling Heights

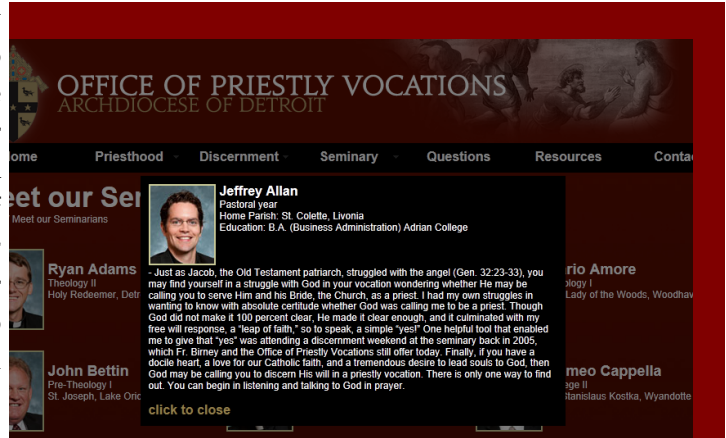


**Reflection:** "Be not afraid" were the three key words that greatly eased any hesitation about my discernment to enter seminary. If any man is discerning entering seminary or becoming a priest, be not afraid! For if God is with you, what is there to be afraid of?

I've thought about priesthood as long as I can remember, however, my call started to become clearer when my parents decided to homeschool me in the sixth grade when I was about 11 years old. As the years went by it became so vivid that God wanted me in the seminary, and God willing, His priestly servant. What I look forward to about becoming a priest is to, first off, bring people closer to God. As for specific things priests do, I am looking forward to be able to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and to hear confessions. Overall, celebrating the sacraments and duties of a priest will bring great joy to me assisting others in their journey toward eternity.

## View the Detroit Seminarians Bio's Online

Have you had the opportunity to visit our new Office of Priestly Vocations website? I'm sure the overwhelming majority of you will answer a resounding 'yes' to that question, but for the very few of you who had to unfortunately answer 'no', let me once again invite you to visit: [www.detroitpriest.com](http://www.detroitpriest.com). In addition to the many new features and interactive graphics we have introduced when we first launched the new site on March 17, 2011, we have now added another! Please take a few moments to visit our: 'Meet the Seminarians' page, where you will be able to view the individual pictures of each of our seminarians in formation for the Archdiocese of Detroit. By clicking on their picture, you will also be able to learn more about each of them, as they will be sharing with you either some insights on their vocation to the priesthood or reflections on seminary life. This intended to be a source of support for all who may visit the site. Whether you are a priest, searching to know our seminarians better or a discerner seeking to know what your calling in life might be, all will benefit from a visit to [www.detroitpriest.com](http://www.detroitpriest.com).



## Vocations Video Contest

Make a movie about: **Vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life**

**Win a cash prize!! \$300.00**

**Winning Video may also be displayed at Rainbow, on the website for The Office of Priestly Vocations and vocation presentations throughout the year!**

**Making your video:**

- 1) May be funny or serious, but must promote vocations to the Catholic Priesthood and Consecrated Life, adhere to Catholic values and be original; the more creative, the better;
- 2) Video length between 3-5 minutes (including credits);
- 3) Deadline to mail video with completed entry form, must be postmarked no later than: Friday, January 6, 2012
- 4) Additional entry forms with rules for video contest may be found at:

[www.detroitpriest.com](http://www.detroitpriest.com)

**Eligibility/Judging Criteria:**

- ⇒ Open to all **students** of high school age attending an AOD Catholic high school or a member of an AOD Parish Youth Group
- ⇒ 1 **WINNER** will be selected from all entries and awarded \$300.00 cash prize!
- ⇒ A panel of judges will select the winning entry.
- ⇒ Entries will be judged on general appeal, creativity and originality in keeping with the theme of promoting vocations.
- ⇒ Winner will announced by February 12, 2012



**Mail standard definition DVD (NTSC, Region 1) or .MOV, MP4, .AVI with completed entry form to:**

**OFFICE OF PRIESTLY VOCATIONS  
• 2701 Chicago Blvd. • Detroit, MI 48206**

**Any questions call 313-237-5875**

# Evening Prayer and Dinner with the Archbishop

*Discerners are to be invited by priests of the Archdiocese to Evening Prayer and Dinner with Archbishop Vigneron*

“Christ, who commanded prayer for the laborers in the Harvest, has also personally called those laborers. But usually He calls by means of us and our words. So, do not be afraid to call. Go among your young people. Go and meet them personally and call them. The hearts of many young...and not-so-young people...are ready to listen to you. Many of them are looking for something to live for; they are waiting to discover a worthwhile mission to which they can devote their lives. Christ has attuned them to His call and yours. We must call; the Lord will do the rest.”

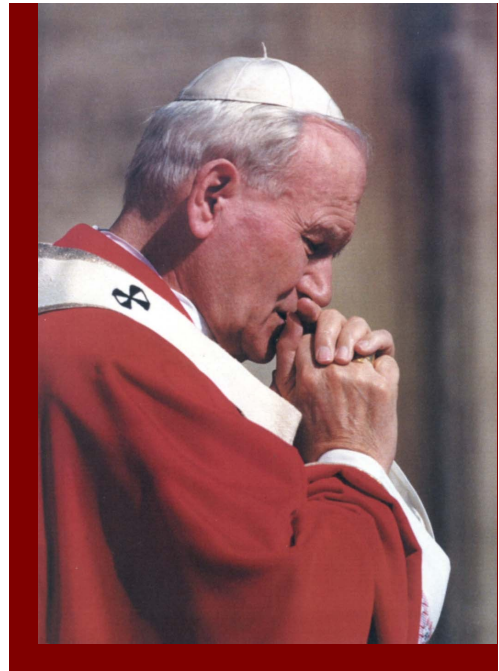
- Blessed Pope John Paul II

On Tuesday, December 6, every priest in the Archdiocese of Detroit has the opportunity to become an active part of this ‘call to call’ for more laborers of the harvest. For the past five years, the Archbishop of Detroit has hosted an Evening Prayer and Dinner at Sacred Heart Major Seminary for men who at some level might have an interest in the priesthood. The men who attend the evening are only there because of the personal invitation from a priest. Each year, the newly ordained throughout the country are given a survey with several questions



Archbishop Vigneron talks to those discerning a vocation to the priesthood at a previous Archbishop dinner

related to their discernment and eventual ordination. When asked, “what was the most important influence for you to consider the priesthood?”, the answer by overwhelming numbers (80%) say, “A priest invited me.” If it be true that “the hearts of many young and not-so-young people are ready to listen”, perhaps it is time for all people of God, but especially priests, to see themselves as a ‘vocation director’...someone who is willing to invite our young people to at least consider, could the Lord be calling you to follow Him as a priest or religious?



Blessed Pope John Paul II was a champion for priestly vocations, not only by encouraging men to “open wide the doors to Christ” but also by his heroic example of priestly holiness

In the past, this evening has drawn over fifty possible discerners of the priesthood. I encourage every priest to heed the words of Blessed John Paul II, “Be Not Afraid” to call, and let the Lord do the rest.

The Evening Prayer begins at 6:30pm in the Main Chapel at Sacred Heart, followed by Dinner in the Cardinal Mooney Parlor and a short program consisting of a video and talks by a seminarian, and Archbishop Vigneron. If you would like to attend with a potential candidate(s) from your parish or school, please register at 313-237-5875.

## Consecrated Life News

### Dominican Sisters of Our Lady of Mount Thabor

www.mtthabornunsop.com

"We are a cloistered, contemplative community of nuns here in Ortonville, MI. Our ministry is prayer and worship, yet you can be certain we are very active here at our monastery."

Contact:

mtthabor@aol.com

248-627-4355

Our Lady of Mt. Thabor Monastery

1295 Bald Eagle Lake Road

Ortonville, MI 48462

### Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist

www.sistersofmary.org

"Holy Mass, Divine Office, Rosary, FUN with the Sisters, and All Night Eucharistic Adoration"

Contact:

sjab@sistersofmary.org

vocations@sistersofmary.org

734-994-7437

Vocation Retreats:

- February 11-12, 2012
- May 26-27, 2010
- Register at www.sistersofmary.org

### Religious Sisters of Mercy

www.rsmofalma.org

"Young women between the ages of 18 and 35 who are discerning a vocation to Religious Life are invited to join us for a vocation retreat at our Motherhouse in Alma, Michigan."

Contact:

Sr. Catherine Marie, RSM (*Associate Vocation Director*)

vocation@rsmofalma.org

989-714-8556

Vocation Retreats:

- November 11-13, 2011
- February 24-26, 2012
- Register at www.rsmofalma.org

### Society of Jesus (Jesuits)

www.thinkjesuit.org

"Meet young Jesuits in early formation and learn about Jesuit life, training, and ministries. Each day will feature presentations, talk of Jesuit vocations, Mass, meals with the Jesuits, and lively conversation."

Contact:

Fr. Patrick Fairbanks, S.J. (*Director of Vocations*)

Vocations@jesuits-chgdet.org

773-975-6882

Vocation Retreats:

- March 30 – April 1, 2012

## Calendar of Events

Event	Date	Location	Audience
Archbishop/ Guest Dinner	Tue., Dec. 6, 2011	Sacred Heart Major Semi- nary	AOD priests and guests, men 16 years of age and older interested in the priesthood
National Vocation Awareness Week	Sun., Jan 8, - Sun., Jan 15, 2012	All US Dioceses	All Catholic Faithful
Discernment Weekend	Thurs., Jan. 26 - Sun., Jan. 29, 2012	SHMS	Men 18-55 years of age; registration required
World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life	Sun., Feb. 5, 2012	World	All Catholic Faithful
Day of Discernment with the Archbishop	Sat., Feb. 25, 2012	SHMS	All men 17-55 discerning the priesthood; registration required
Discernment Weekend	Thurs., Mar. 22 - Sun., Mar. 25, 2012	SHMS	Men 18-55 years of age; registration required

### Office of Priestly Vocations

2701 Chicago Blvd.

Detroit, MI, 48206

313-237-5875

Visit the website:

**DetroitPriest.com**

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