



SPRING '11

VOCARE

THE VOCATIONS NEWSLETTER FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

The 2011 Ordination Class

Presbyteral Ordinations



Deacon David Bechill

Diaconal Ordinations



Fr. Stephen Pullis



Fr. Eric Fedewa



Deacon Steven Mateja



Deacon Salvatore Palazzolo



Deacon Paul Snyder

Although the end of each academic year means having to say farewell to many seminarians, it also is a time of great rejoicing as we anticipate ordinations to both the Order of Priesthood and Transitional Diaconate. This year the Archdiocese of Detroit is proud to ordain six men for the sacrament of Holy Orders: Salvatore Palazzolo, Steven Mateja, Paul Snyder and David Bechill will be ordained Transitional Deacons on May 21 at Sacred Heart Major Seminary and Rev. Mr. Stephen Pullis and Rev. Mr. Eric Fedewa will be ordained Priests on June 11 at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral. At a date and place still to be determined sometime this Autumn, David Bechill will also be ordained to the priesthood. Please remember to pray for each of these men as they begin their ministry with the people of God, and be sure to also pray that many more will follow in their footsteps!

Fr. Tim Birney
Director of Priestly Vocations

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New Office of Priestly Vocations Website



to these words has developed a completely new website – www.detroitpriest.com. This website has been a long awaited update to the previous website and its creation is due to the very generous donation of Mr. & Mrs. Irv Schulte. The Office of Priestly Vocations is very grateful to them for embracing the Pope’s call to evangelize through new media.

The new website has many different features that are intended to be helpful for those discerning a vocation to the priesthood, for parents who want to foster a culture of vocations, for pastors looking to inspire vocations and for

“ Responding adequately to this challenge amid today’s cultural shifts, to which young people are especially sensitive, necessarily involves using new communications technologies. The world of digital communication, with its almost limitless expressive capacity, makes us appreciate all the more Saint Paul’s exclamation: “Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel” (1 Cor. 9:16) The increased availability of the new technologies demands greater responsibility on the part of those called to proclaim the Word, but it also requires them to become more focused, efficient and compelling in their efforts.

children who are curious about what their own vocation might be. The website is divided into sections entitled “Priesthood,” “Discernment,” “Seminary,” “Questions,” “Resources,” and “Contact.” These sections provide insightful answers to questions like: “Are priests happy?” and “How do I discern?” They also include many other helpful features about seminary life and the priesthood.

Another exciting aspect of the website is the “St. John Bosco Youth Connection” wherein grade school children can find content specifically tailored to them. In this section there is helpful advice, a rotating youth challenge and a prayer for vocations.

These are the words of **Pope Benedict XVI** for the 44th World Communications Day, May 16, 2010. Our Holy Father has repeatedly echoed the call of Blessed John Paul II for a New Evangelization. An important part of this process is finding new ways to preach the Gospel to a culture that has rejected God. Still, the call to teach the faith and to evangelize remains as important as it was in the time of St. Paul. These new ways of spreading the faith include, among many other means, an approach through the new media of the internet.

Until May 23rd there will be a \$50 dollar giveaway every Monday for those who visit the site and fill out a short survey. Please share this with young men and those who you think would find the website helpful. The link directly to the contest is:

www.detroitpriest.com/contest.php

The Office of Priestly Vocations in trying to respond

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

An excerpt from the Holy Father's Message for the 48th World Day of Prayer for Vocations

The work of carefully encouraging and supporting vocations finds a radiant source of inspiration in those places in the Gospel where Jesus calls his disciples to follow him and trains them with love and care. We should pay close attention to the way that Jesus called his closest associates to proclaim the Kingdom of God (cf. *Lk 10:9*). In the first place, it is clear that the first thing he did was to pray for them: before calling them, Jesus spent the night alone in prayer, listening to the will of the Father (cf. *Lk 6:12*) in a spirit of interior detachment from mundane concerns. It is Jesus' intimate conversation with the Father which results in the calling of his disciples. 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.

At the beginning of his public life, the Lord called some fishermen on the shore of the Sea of Galilee: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (*Mt 4:19*). He revealed his messianic mission to them by the many "signs" which showed his love for humanity and the gift of the Father's mercy. Through his words and his way of life he prepared them to carry on his saving work. Finally, knowing "that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father" (*Jn 13:1*), he entrusted to them the memorial of his death and resurrection, and before ascending into heaven he sent them out to the whole world with the command: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations" (*Mt 28:19*).

It is a challenging and uplifting invitation that Jesus addresses to those to whom he says: "Follow me!". He invites them to become his friends,

to listen attentively to his word and to live with him. He teaches them complete commitment to God and to the extension of his kingdom in accordance with the law of the Gospel: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (*Jn 12:24*). He invites them to leave behind their own narrow agenda and their notions of self-fulfillment in order to immerse themselves in another will, the will of God, and to be guided by it. He gives them an experience of fraternity, one born of that total openness to God (cf. *Mt 12:49-50*) which becomes the hallmark of the commu-

nity of Jesus: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (*Jn 13:35*).

It is no less challenging to follow Christ today. It means learning to keep our gaze fixed on Jesus, growing close to him, listening to his word and encountering him in the sacraments; it means learning to conform our will to his. This requires a genuine school of formation for all those who would

prepare themselves for the ministerial priesthood or the consecrated life under the guidance of the competent ecclesial authorities. The Lord does not fail to call people at every stage of life to share in his mission and to serve the Church in the ordained ministry and in the consecrated life. The Church is "called to safeguard this gift, to esteem it and love it. She is responsible for the birth and development of priestly vocations" (John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 41). Particularly in these times, when the voice of the Lord seems to be drowned out by "other voices" and his invitation to follow him by the gift of one's own life may seem too difficult, every Christian community, every member of the Church, needs consciously to feel responsibility for promoting vocations. It is important to encourage and support those who show clear signs of a call to priestly life and religious consecration, and to enable them to feel the warmth of the whole community as they respond "yes" to God and the Church.



Detroit 'Dodge Em' Seminarian Outing

At the end of the school year, the Detroit seminarians gathered together for food and fun

On Thursday, April 28, the 'band of brothers', otherwise known as seminarians for the Archdiocese of Detroit, gathered in Clinton Township for what has become the annual 'rite of passage' to celebrate the end of the school year. The event this year, once again, took place at the familiar battleground known as - Whirlyball! Over the period of two hours the *men-who-will-be-priests* took turns competing against each other by driving a bumper car in an enclosed track while attempting to score a goal against their opponents with a hand-held lacrosse type stick and whiffle ball. This particular *tournament for the ages* is a five on five format with a 13 minute time clock for each round. While this definitely falls under the category of friendly competition, the real purpose of the outing is to provide another opportunity for the men to grow in fraternity with each other. Each of these seminarians aspires to be a priest for the



David Keyser anxiously awaits a pass from his teammates

Archdiocese of Detroit, and the better they know and appreciate one another, the happier, healthier and holier priests they will be. All reports indicate that a great time was once again had by all....and maybe even a little whiplash!



When it comes to fellowship, all the sems are winners!

Be Not Afraid!

Some information about the several Discernment Programs in the Archdiocese of Detroit

The Office of Priestly Vocations sponsors several discernment opportunities at Sacred Heart Major Seminary for men who would like to learn more about a potential vocation to the Roman Catholic priesthood. Each of the discernment programs has been specifically designed to assist anyone who is sensing a calling to serve the Lord as a priest, by exposing them in some capacity to: what it means to be a priest, tools for discernment, how to pray, the seminary formation program, seminarian's vocation stories, and the opportunity to ask questions. The discernment programs are offered throughout the academic year so that those in attendance can benefit from meeting seminarians - men who are 'in the midst' of discernment. The specific programs offered are as follows:

Discernment Weekend

These are offered three times each academic year, beginning Thursday evening and concluding on Sunday afternoon. While on the Weekend, a participant will have the unique opportunity to: interact with the seminarians, be exposed to a seminarians' schedule, attend a seminary class, gain insight from discernment presentations, spend time

in prayer both with the seminarians and in private. It is perhaps the best program that the Office of Priestly Vocations offers men aged 18-55. A brochure with registration information may be found on our new website: www.detroitpriest.com. The dates for the upcoming **Discernment Weekends** are:

November 3-6, 2011

January 26-29, 2012

March 22-25, 2012

Discernment Overnight

These are offered two times each academic year beginning Friday afternoon and concluding on Saturday evening. The Overnights are designed specifically for high school students and are structured in such a way as to provide the participant with a more measured exposure to discernment, prayer, priesthood and seminary life. Each Overnight has a different program, and are designed for a young man to attend throughout his high school days, and provide an excellent way to keep the priesthood 'in the conversation' for a young person still discerning his calling in life. Registration information for our upcoming Discernment Overnights can be found on our new website: www.detroitpriest.com. Dates for the **Discernment Overnights** for the next academic year are:

October 7-8, 2011

April 13-14, 2012

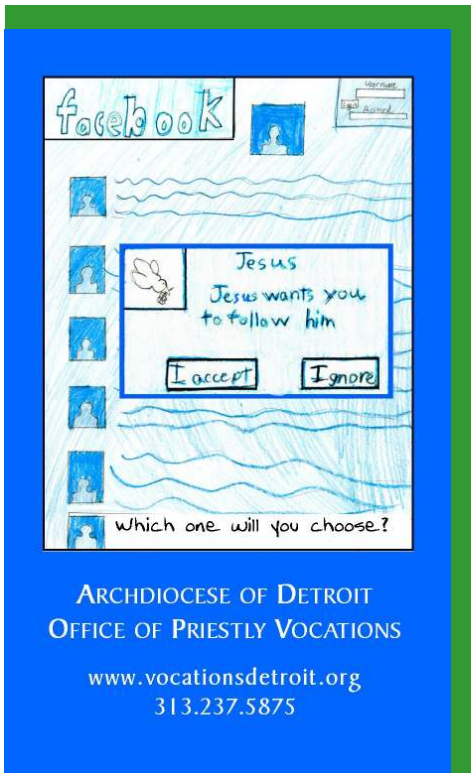
Day of Discernment with Archbishop Vigneron

This day offers the very unique opportunity to spend six hours with the Archbishop who will lead all participants to a deeper understanding of discerning the priesthood. It is a day of prayer, reflection, instruction, discussion and fellowship. The day concludes with Solemn Evening Prayer, dinner and a Eucharistic Holy Hour with the seminarians. The date for the next **Day of Discernment** is Saturday, February 25, 2012 and takes place from 12:30 pm - 7:00 pm. Registration Forms may be found on our website: www.detroitpriest.com



Archbishop Vigneron bids farewell to the men who participated in the Day of Discernment following the Eucharistic Holy Hour

3rd Annual Vocation Prayer Card Contest



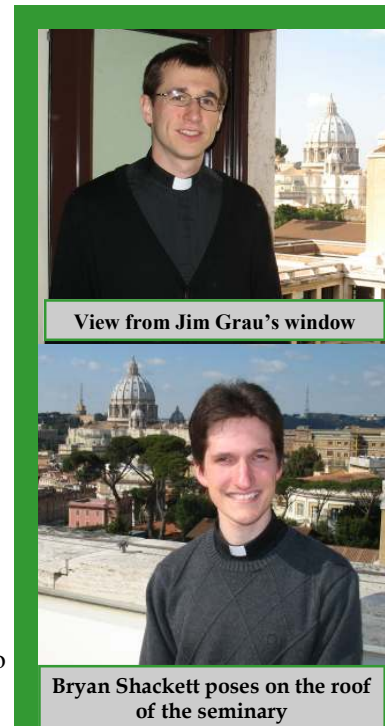
Prayer Card Winner Announced!

On a snowy afternoon in January, Fr. Tim Birney paid a special visit to Shrine Catholic Elementary School to announce the winner of the 3rd Annual Vocation Prayer Card Contest, sponsored by the Office of Priestly Vocations. Congratulations are once again extended to Ian Gappy, a 6th grade student at Shrine Elementary who had the winning entry this year. The judges were especially impressed with Ian's incorporation of Facebook, the very popular social media that many, if not most of our young people, are plugged into these days. By borrowing the common Facebook request of 'friending', an event that occurs when someone is seeking to connect with you on this social website, Ian had Jesus be the one to make the request on his vocation prayer card entry. On Facebook, a user can choose to accept, or ignore this request, and Ian rightly also asked the question that falls to the heart of any discernment of a vocation, 'which one will you choose – accept or ignore'?

Ian's winning prayer card will be handed out to all the young people that Fr. Birney will visit throughout the year during his vocation talks and visits to our many parishes and Catholic schools. This year we had 844 entries from 23 parishes.

AOD Seminarians Studying in Rome

For the first time in several years, the Archdiocese of Detroit has once again sent seminarians to receive their education and formation for the priesthood to the Pontifical North American College, Rome, Italy. At the conclusion of the academic year 2009-10, two seminarians, Jim Grau (Theology I) and Bryan Shackett (Pre-Theology II) who were previously studying at Sacred Heart Major Seminary, were informed they would be receiving a new mailing address for the remainder of their seminary formation. Jim and Bryan now live within a five minute walk to St. Peter's Basilica, and their classes are populated with priesthood candidates from all over the USA (there are over 225 seminarians at the Pontifical North American College). While their course of study and priestly formation will be very similar to the men at Sacred Heart, Jim and Bryan have the unique opportunity to receive their formation in the Eternal City. The American seminary in Rome is the envy of all other seminaries because it has perhaps the best view of the magnificent dome of St. Peter's Basilica. While all their seminary formation will take place in Rome, both Jim and Bryan will return to Detroit to celebrate their priestly ordinations with their classmates and eventually be assigned to minister in a local parish. Jim Grau is scheduled to be ordained in 2013 and Bryan Shackett in 2014. As the Director of Priestly Vocations I have the difficult task of visiting these seminarians each year...so pray for me...but mostly for them!



Blessed John Paul II on Vocations

In response to the recent Beatification of Pope John Paul II, here are some of his reflections on answering the call of the Lord

I turn especially to you, boys and girls, young and not so young, who find yourselves at the decisive moment of choice. I would like to meet you one by one, call you by your name, talk to you heart to heart of things extremely important not only for yourself, but for the whole of humanity.

I would like to ask each one of you: What will you do with your life? What are your plans? Have you ever thought of committing your existence totally to Christ? Do you think that there can be anything greater than to bring Jesus to people and people to Jesus?



- From a talk given in Rome on May 13, 1984

Our interior gaze extends to the limitless horizons of our hopes and aspirations. And in the midst of all of life's contradictions, we search for life's true meaning. We wonder and ask, Why? Why am I here? Why am I alive at all? What must I do? None of you is alone in posing these questions. Humanity as a whole feels the pressing need to give sense and purpose to a world which is increasingly complicated and difficult to be happy in.

- From a talk given in Denver, Colorado on August 14, 1993

Ask yourselves, young people, about the love of Christ. Acknowledge his voice resounding in the temple of your heart. Return his bright and penetrating glance which opens the paths of your life to the horizons of the Church's mission. It is a taxing mission, today more than ever, to teach men the truth about themselves, about their end, their destiny, and to show faithful souls the unspeakable riches of the love of Christ. Do not be afraid of the radicalness of His demands, because Jesus, who loved us first, is prepared to give Himself to you, as well as asking of you. If He asks much from you, it is because He knows you can give much.

- From a talk given in Rome on September 8, 1992

Every vocation is part of a divine plan. This means that in God's creative initiative there enters a particular act of love for those called not only to salvation, but also to the ministry of salvation. Therefore from all eternity, since we began to exist in the plans of the Creator, and He willed us to be creatures, He also willed us to be "called," preparing in us the gifts and conditions for the personal, conscious, and opportune response to the call of Christ and of the Church. God who loves us, who is Love, is also "He who calls" (Rom 9:11).

Vocation is, therefore, a mystery that man accepts and lives in the depths of his being. A gift and a grace, it depends on supreme divine freedom and, in its total reality, it escapes our understanding. We cannot demand explanations from the Giver of all goods – "Why have you made me thus?" (Rom 9:20), because He who calls is also "He who is" (cf. Ex 3:14). Therefore, in the presence of a vocation we adore the mystery, we respond lovingly to the initiative of love, we say 'yes' to the call.

- From a talk given in Porto Alegre, Brazil on July 5, 1980

Consecrated Life News

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:

- May 21-22, 2011
- Register at www.sistersofmary.org

IHM Sisters

www.ihmsisters.org

“Join in prayer and reflection with the Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters. ”

Contact:

Sr. Mary Bea (*Vocation Director*)

mbkeeley@ihmsisters.org

734-240-9820

For Vocation Retreats:

- Visit www.IHMcalling.org/come-and-see

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:

- June 10-12, 2011
- Register at www.rsmofalma.org

Calendar of Events

Event	Date	Location	Audience
Vocations Convocation	Saturday, September 10	Sacred Heart Major Seminary	All lay and ordained faithful interested in nurturing vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life
High School Discernment Day	Friday, October 7 - Saturday, October 8	SHMS	All high school aged men 14-18 years old; registration required
Priesthood Sunday	Sunday, October 30	All US Dioceses	All Catholic Faithful
Discernment Weekend	Thursday, November 3 - Sunday, November 6	SHMS	Men 18 years and older; registration required
High School Vocation Awareness Day	Wednesday, November 9	SHMS	All high school students; registration required
Archbishop/ Guest Dinner	Tuesday, December 6	SHMS	AOD Priests and guests, men 16 years of age and older interested in the Priesthood

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