



# PRIESTS FOR TOMORROW

February 2017



## SEMINARIES

**Dear Benefactors:**

**Thank you** for all you do to provide for your seminarians! We begin this New Year 2017 with many exciting updates to our programs for the seminarians.

You are encouraged to write to our seminarians as a way of showing your support and prayers throughout the school year at the following addresses:

**Mundelein Seminary**  
1000 East Maple Ave.  
Mundelein, IL 60060

**Pontifical North American College**  
Via del Gianicolo, 14  
Rome RM, Italy 00165

**Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary**  
750 Terrace Heights  
Winona, MN 55987

**St. John Vianney Seminary**  
2115 Summit Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

**Saint Francis de Sales Seminary**  
3257 S Lake Dr,  
St Francis, WI 53235

**T**hree new seminarians were accepted at the December Admission Board and we have several potential seminarians applying for the Admission Board in April. We project starting the school year in August with 33 seminarians, a slight increase over this year's beginning.

The Regency Program is flourishing; Regency is an exciting new yearlong formation program where the seminarians partake of intensive introspection, especially through prayer and spiritual direction/counselling. The program is raising interest among several other dioceses as a model for addressing the specialized needs of seminarians. Regency takes place at the Diocesan Center in the House of Formation; the

participants live at the center, take classes at the universities in La Crosse, are engaged in apostolic activity around the area and are employed in the community.

In this issue we look at what it means to be a "Spirit of Light" in our world. You will meet the winners of the Spirit of Light award, given by Bishop Callahan each year to those who's exceptional support and service stand out as a beacon of Christ's light to others, especially to our seminarians. But as you will read, the seminarians themselves share

how they encounter Christ's light in others, even as they strive to be light themselves.

Know of our prayers and Masses offered for your intentions each day. We appreciate all of you and are grateful for the support you show us in your prayers and in your financial giving. Please keep the men in prayer as they let the spirit of light shine.

God's blessings, always.

*Father Alan Wierzba  
Director of the Office  
for Vocations*



**DIOCESE of LA CROSSE**  
Office for Priestly Vocations

## SPIRIT OF LIGHT AWARD

In 2015, the Office For Vocations started giving the Bishop's award "The Spirit of Light". This is given to honor and thank people for exceptional support and service to the Diocese of La Crosse.



**2015 - RITA BAUER**

Our first recipient was Rita Bauer from Wisconsin Rapids. She was proud to be the first one chosen to win the award and considers it a great honor. It is a centerpiece in her home and she enjoys quietly reflecting on it each day. Rita prays for the seminarians several times a day. To Rita, they are all just like part of her family!



**2016 - TOBY & JAN KELLER**

Toby & Jan Keller from River Falls, Wisconsin received the award in 2016. They have been supporters of vocations in many ways for the past 20 years. To them, it was very touching to win the award. They find it rewarding to get to know the seminarians from the beginning – and find it very fulfilling to see them go on to become a priest. All in all, in Jan's words, receiving the Spirit of Light award was a great experience!



**2017 - DR. JOSEPH DURST**

Dr. Durst was one of the founders of the Admissions Boards (an advisory committee to the Bishop). He has retired from the Board this year, and has enjoyed serving as a member of the board for the past 45 years. This means he has interviewed nearly EVERY priest from our Diocese! He, also, says he felt it a great honor to be chosen. To him, it felt like it was a gift of the Holy Ghost.

## HOW DID YOU ENCOUNTER "THE SPIRIT OF LIGHT" TODAY?

**DEACON AARON BECKER** - Spending time with friends at the end of a long week.

**MATTHEW BOWE** - In my Interpersonal Communications course, we did an activity where we introduced another person after talking to him or her for ten minutes. We could not ask the routine questions (major, hometown, and the like). The Spirit of Light moment was discovering that every person has an interesting story to tell and that some people share very unique stories (e.g., having a part of their intestines removed was an experience shared by three of my classmates).

**DANIEL BUCHAL** - I encounter the Spirit of Light in the sunrise.

**JARED CLEMENTS** - I encounter the Spirit of Light through the love of Jesus

Christ in the Knights of Columbus and their tremendous support for the seminarians.

**DAVID DACHEL** - I encountered the Spirit of Light today in my brother seminarians. I have seen in them the Spirit working to help me realize things more clearly.

**JOHN DURANSO** - I encountered the Spirit of Light today in a little child named Ashton, my cousin. The little 6-month old was the simply the happiest infant I've ever seen and brought the light of joy to everyone in the room.

**ANDREW DUSHEK** - I encountered the Spirit of Light in my meditation on the cross, when placing myself at Calvary and letting the Spirit guide my emotions, taking everything in and allowing myself to surrender.



**PHILIP GRYGLESKI** - I encountered the Spirit of Light today while watching a movie on the life of St. Padre Pio. I received a greater trust in Jesus from watching it.

**BRANDON GUENTHER** - Since we are in finals period here in Rome, I have been encountering the Spirit of Light in my study of Theology. Today, for example, studying the prophet Isaiah and seeing how God was preparing Israel to receive the Light of Christ.

**BRADLEY HAAS** - Receiving the Eucharist is always a way I receive the Spirit of Light and the Eucharist always makes a day better.

**ETHAN HOKAMP** - I read an article today about the blessing a young priest can be. It shed light on the reason why I am in the seminary studying to be a priest with most of my life still ahead of me and

encouraged me to dedicate myself to the formation I am receiving.

**MICHAEL IWANSKI** - I encountered the Spirit of Light today by the many generous people who are supportive and encouraging. Always reminding me to find happiness and peace in doing God's will. These same people are the ones who live lives close to Christ and His Church, who try to live daily in the light of truth instead of the darkness of sin, and are truly happy while living out their Catholic faith.

**DEACON PETER KIEFFER** - I encountered the Spirit of Light today in some unexpected words of kindness from someone. I was not having a good day, and those words of kindness brightened my day.

**ALEX KREN** - I encountered the Spirit of Light today at Mass. God's presence in the Eucharist at every Mass is that spirit of light.. and I get to encounter that almost every day.

**KYLE LAYLAN** - Today I encountered the Spirit of Light through a professor who is sincerely striving to know God.

**ERIC MASHAK** - A friend of mine fasted from breakfast this morning for the unborn. This small sacrifice was very generous.

**SAMUEL MCCARTY** - I encountered the Spirit of Life today in the Scripture.

**BLAIR RASCHKE** - I encounter the Spirit of Light everyday by waking up and enjoying the wonderful day the Lord has made for us.

**DAVID REITHER** - One of the ways I encounter the Spirit of Light is when I walk across the college campus and get to see the beauty of God's creation when the sun rises above the hills.

**TIMOTHY REITHER** - I encountered the Spirit of Life while participating in the March for Life in St. Paul. There I encountered many men and women, clergy and lay, who were willing to stand up for their faith and live it with joy.

**JOSEPH RICHARDS** - This morning at Mundelein, we had the Lumber Games, a contest of champions consisting of

a series of log-splitting and log-throwing feats of strength. It was a simple thing, but there was something incredibly edifying about seeing the recreation that four guys from the community were able to provide for their fellows simply for the sake of having a good time in community with each other.

**BARRY SAYLOR** - The Spirit of Light I encountered today was through my brother seminarians. After being sick with the flu all week my brother seminarians have been there checking in on me and making sure I was being taken care of!

**LEVI SCHMITT** - Praying silently after receiving Communion.

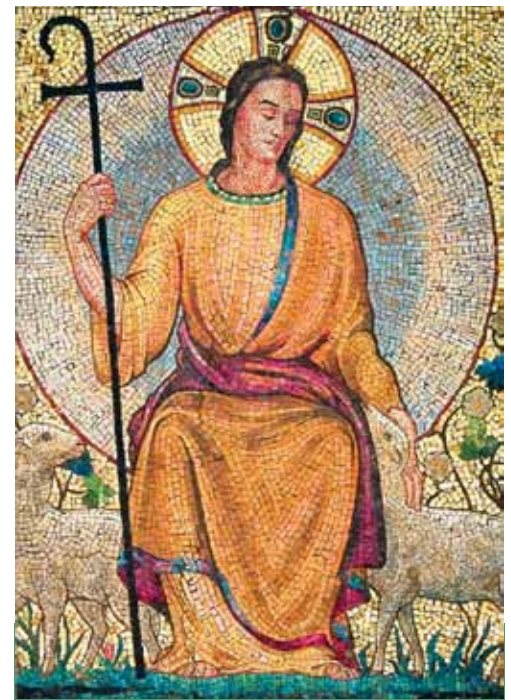
**ARTURO VIGUERAS** - The Spirit of Light is encountered in the Gospel of Mark 4:21-25 when Jesus said to his disciples, "Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand? For there is nothing hidden except to be made visible; nothing is secret except to come to light. Anyone who has ears to hear ought to hear."

The Spirit of Light is found for me by staying in close friendship with Jesus Christ who is the light of the world.

**STEVEN WELLER** - The Spirit of Light is just like the church windows: the light shines through the saints on the window just as the light of Christ shines through us all. I like to think of Spirit of Light as a reminder that we are supposed to be just like the saints, those people that let the light of the church and Christ shine through.

**DANIEL WILLIAMS** - I encountered the Spirit of Light in the Word of God proclaimed at Mass this morning. This, I believe, is the surest encounter I can have with the Spirit of Light because God is always faithful through His Word. His Word brings me light and peace by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**JOHN ZWEBER** - Today, I felt an encounter with the Holy Spirit when I was reading for Mass. I felt the Holy Spirit in the boldness of the truths that I was proclaiming to the assembly of God.



## Pray for Vocations

Heavenly Father, bless your Church with an abundance of holy and zealous priests, deacons, brothers and sisters.

Give those you have called to the married state and those you have chosen to live as single persons in the world, the special graces that their lives require.

Form us all in the likeness of your Son, so that in Him, with Him, and through Him, we may love you more deeply and serve you more faithfully, always and everywhere.

With Mary, we ask this through Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE WINTER ACTIVITY?



**DEACON AARON BECKER** - Snowball fights!

**MATTHEW BOWE** - Going all out for an evening movie at home. This includes delicious treats; warm and foamy hot chocolate, and snuggling in a warm blanket during the cold, dark, and sometimes snowy evening.

**DANIEL BUCHAL** - Snowmobiling with friends and family

**JARED CLEMENTS** - I really enjoy playing board games, especially Settlers of Catan.

**DAVID DACHEL** - My favorite wintertime activity would be sledding with my brothers.

**JOHN DURANSO** - Tubing.

**ANDREW DUSHEK** - Downhill skiing though sadly, I don't get to enjoy that much anymore.

**PHILIP GRYGLESKI** - One of my favorite winter activities is cross-country skiing. It is both peaceful and a pretty good workout.

**BRANDON GUENTHER** - I love being outside during the winter months, especially when there is fresh snow. I enjoy hiking, skiing, sledding, fishing, you name it. And, of course, some good hot chocolate afterwards.

**BRADLEY HAAS** - Curling.

**ETHAN HOKAMP** - My favorite beverage of all time might be eggnog,

and it is only available around Christmas. I really enjoy decorating the Christmas tree with my family and a tasty cup of eggnog.

**MICHAEL IWANSKI** - Snowball fights. Although I do not participate in these often, there's no better feeling than nailing a family member or friend with a snowball.

**DEACON PETER KIEFFER** - Staying inside and watching a favorite television show.

**ALEX KREN** - Playing basketball. I enjoy being indoors.

**KYLE LAYLAN** - Skiing

**ERIC MASHAK** - Going for walks in snowy forests.

**SAMUEL MCCARTY** - Basketball!

**BLAIR RASCHKE** - My favorite winter activity is playing football in the snow.

**DAVID REITHER** - Watching the snow fall.

**TIMOTHY REITHER** - Cross-country skiing in the bluffs of Winona.

**JOSEPH RICHARDS** - At the time of this writing, it is 57 degrees in Chicago on a January day, which is

somewhat representative of our whole winter so far. These days, when the sky should probably be unleashing a frosty blizzard but instead lets loose a steady torrent of rain I love sitting back in an arm chair with a French press of coffee, watching out the window as guys trying to get to their cars get completely drenched.

**BARRY SAYLOR** - Taking walks around campus to admire the beauty of Gods work in nature.

**LEVI SCHMITT** - Beatboxing (second to praying of course).

**ARTURO VIGUERAS** - I like to read books.

**STEVEN WELLER** - Playing Monopoly with several people when it becomes too cold to do anything outside

**DANIEL WILLIAMS** - Having a cup of coffee and reading. While this activity is also done in the other times of the year, doing this during the winter is more enjoyable because I can also look out the window and be happy I'm not out there!

**JOHN ZWEBER** - Skiing.



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

January 2 - Brandon Guenther

January 8 - Samuel McCarty

January 23 - Peter Kieffer

February 7 - Philip Grygleski

February 22 - John Duranso

March 1 - Barry Saylor

March 13 - Eric Mashak

March 25 - Kyle Laylan



Vocations La Crosse Diocese