



## **PRAYER** 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.



## **PRIESTS FOR TOMORROW**

SPRING 2019



3710 East Avenue South | La Crosse, WI 54602-4004  
Phone: 608-791-2667 | [diolc.org/vocations](http://diolc.org/vocations)



*Diocese of LA CROSSE*



**Father Alan Wierzba**  
Director of the Office for Vocations

## WELCOME

Welcome to our Spring 2019 Newsletter! It was a long winter but wonderful events filled the snowy and cold days with the warmth of generosity and love we so often experience here in the Office for Vocations. The winter gathering of seminarians took place right after Christmas. It was so good to notice the growth and joy in all of the men as we came together for fellowship and prayer with Bishop Callahan over three days in December. During the gathering we celebrated with our families the Christmas dinner and the Mass of Candidacy; you can read more about the Rite of Candidacy below. I am pleased to report that the seminarians are all doing well, and that we are very blessed to have such good men, striving for holiness, discerning as our future priests. Thank you for supporting them!

## RITE OF CANDIDACY

The Rite of Candidacy publicly establishes the intention of those aspiring to be admitted to Holy Orders; that they consider themselves ready to respond to the call of the Lord, and that they have the necessary qualifications and have achieved sufficient maturity to pursue Holy Orders. It is the seminarians' public "Yes" that they will follow Jesus Christ as His priest. Ordinarily the Rite of Candidacy is received prior to a seminarian entering his first year of theological studies. After becoming a candidate, the seminarian is then expected to grow into his priestly identity by wearing

clerical clothing at public events with the bishop, such as at ordinations. This helps the seminarian get used to the public persona he is now undertaking as a man studying for the priesthood. Candidacy is also the first of the five times that a seminarian undergoes the necessary questions, or scrutinies, required by Canon Law prior to being ordained to the priesthood. The other four times are the Ministry of Acolyte, the Ministry of Lector, Ordination to the Diaconate and Ordination to Sacred Orders (Priesthood).



*You are encouraged to write to our seminarians as a way of showing your support and prayers throughout the school year using the addresses provided below.*

**ST. FRANCIS DE SALES SEMINARY**  
3257 South Lake Drive | St. Francis, WI 53235

**PONTIFICAL NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE**  
Via del Gianicolo, 14 | Rome, Italy 00165

**MUNDELEIN SEMINARY**  
1000 East Maple Avenue | Mundelein, IL 60060

**IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SEMINARY**  
750 Terrace Heights | Winona, MN 55987

**ST. JOHN VIANNEY SEMINARY**  
2115 Summit Avenue | St. Paul, MN 55105



Vocations  
La Crosse Diocese



# JOURNEY PROGRAM



***“To understand how my past affects who I am today, and how I react to situations is key to relating well with others. Counselling and reflection have helped me process experiences from childhood, college, and my time in the workforce.”***

— Joseph Glatczak

By Joseph Glatczak

You may have noticed this year, while looking at the vocations poster, there is a new designation listed under the pictures of two men. Instead of College, Pre-Theology, Theology, Diaconate, or Regency it states “Journey.” While this designation could be easily missed, many people have noticed. As one of these “Journey” men I am frequently asked: “What is ‘Journey’?” and “What do you do on Journey?”

## **First, What is Journey?**

Journey is a “Propaedeutic year”—a year of preliminary study and prayer before beginning seminary studies. This year allows men who feel called by God to the

diocesan priesthood time to intensely discern, pray about, and learn about this call in a way not possible once enrolled in seminary studies. This year also gives them a realistic view of the joys, challenges, and expectations of priesthood and seminary.

As I alluded to, Journey is a completely new program the Diocese of La Crosse began this year. To our knowledge, we are among the first of dioceses in the country responding to Rome’s recommendations and guidelines calling for a propaedeutic period in priestly formation. The goal is multifaceted: form good and holy priests, ensure men from various backgrounds are ready to enter seminary, and allow the men and Church to better discern each man’s call to the priesthood.

For me, Journey has been a great blessing.



# Ordination

MAY 4, 2019

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING TRANSITIONAL DEACONS

Samuel Mc Carty, Joseph Richards, Levi Schmitt and Daniel Williams

JUNE 22, 2019 | 10 AM CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOSEPH THE WORKMAN

## PRIESTLY ORDINATION OF DEACON

Brandon Guenther and Deacon Ethan Hokamp

The benefits have been spiritual, intellectual, and personal.

**Spiritual.** Since beginning Journey in the fall, I have had a great sense of peace and consolation. Following the path God has set before me, there exists a peace that I have not experienced for quite some time in my life. Meeting regularly with a spiritual director and living in community with other men discerning God's call have been uplifting as well. We support one another and learn about the battles we face in the process of following Christ Jesus.

**Intellectual.** Journey has given me time to get back into the "schooling" frame-of-mind. Being away from academia for about ten years left my research and reflection skills rather rusty. My test taking and study skills had apparently decided to take a vacation as well. With studies in Journey focusing on the Catechism and Scripture, I feel better prepared to re-enter an academic setting, especially one focusing on faith.

**Personal.** While listed last, this is probably the area that Journey has allowed me to focus on the most. To understand how my past affects who I am today, and how I react to situations is key to relating well with others. Counselling and reflection have helped me process experiences from childhood, college, and my time in the workforce. The varied backgrounds of our priests are what allow each to have a different take on their ministry.

### So what do I do on Journey?

While each day is somewhat different, for me, a regular day begins at 6:00 am and ends around 10:00 pm.

Starting around 6:00 am I take an hour of personal prayer and at 7:10 am we meet as a group for Morning Prayer and Mass. After breakfast, we meet for class or book study. Following the recommendations from Rome, we have classes on the Catechism and Scripture. We have also been reading and discussing the Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis; delving into the spiritual interstices present in this literary work.

From 10:30 am to about 1:00 pm we are usually working in an apostolic outreach. For me, this could be helping out in a catholic school, volunteering at a food

pantry, or the like. In the apostolic ministry I not only see Christ in the people I help and serve, but I pray they see Christ in me. This ministry helps me understand as a priest I will be at the service of others; I will serve as the apostles did.

Twice a week we have dinner as a group and formation. Dinner is often filled with laughter and stories from the week. Formation is a time we focus on important spiritual topics not covered directly in the Scripture or the Catechism courses. Topics have ranged from types of prayer, Ignatian discernment of spirits, liturgy, poetry, and more.

If we don't have formation, we are free to work at our part-time jobs. We are encouraged to work about 20 hours a week for income as well as a means of showing our ability to live a balanced life and be responsible. I have found that my job offers surprising opportunities for evangelization as well as allowing me to occasionally be a Christ to someone in need.

As a community we can be excited our diocese is proactively leading the introduction of a Propaedeutic year. While the year is not complete yet, I believe many good fruits will flow from this addition. From my personal experience I can already see that I have gained a great deal of formation and preparation before entering seminary.

## SIGN UP NOW!

**Monday,  
June 17, 2019**

1st Annual Golf Outing to support vocations will be held at Cedar Creek Golf Course in Onalaska. 18-hole 4-person team.

For more information please visit: [diolc.org/golf](http://diolc.org/golf)



## WHAT DOES THE LENTEN SEASON MEAN TO YOU?



### MATTHEW BOWE

For me, Lent is a period to slow down life and strive for an intimate encounter with the Lord. It does not need to be fancy. Quite the opposite. I do not need to approach it with trumpets and banners; I just need to simply be present with Him.



### DANIEL BUCHAL

I think of Lent as a time of renewal. It is a time to clear out the brush and pull out the weeds in our lives so that new habits, practices, or activities that bring us closer to God can grow in place of older ones which lead us away from God.



### JARED CLEMENTS

Lent is a time of purification and deeper conversation with Christ. It is a time to fall in love deeper with Christ, so much so that on Good Friday you feel the pain that Christ feels on the Cross because you love Him.



### JOSEPH CULLIGAN

Each Lent I consider the condition of my relationships with Christ, myself, and with others and identify areas that need growth. Then I decide specific ways that I can intentionally grow in those relationships through various practices of prayer, fasting, and giving alms. For me, a successful Lent is one that helps me keep the big picture in mind - as we die to ourselves at Lent, we rise with Christ at Easter!!



### JOHN DURANSO

Lent for me is the time when I look over my life and try to find what is taking my eyes off of God and preventing me from doing His will, and asking God to take it away so I can love Him more deeply and serve Him more faithfully.



### PHILIP GRYGLESKI

Lent is a time to take a step back from our daily routine and ask the Holy Spirit how He wants to be present in our daily lives. "Lord, how do you want to mold me, so that I look more like Jesus?" But God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). Always keep in mind, especially during Lent, that the Lord wants us to be purified and look more like Jesus, because He loves us and wants us to live with Him and be happy with Him. Beautiful Lenten penances are simply a response to the Father's love for you.



### DEACON BRANDON GUENTHER

Lent for me is analogous to the season of spring; a time of renewal and growth. Hopefully, with the end result of bearing the fruit of greater charity!



### DEACON ETHAN HOKAMP

The time of Lent is a time of penance in which the whole Church is called once again to a conversion of heart. It is a preparation to Holy Week and Easter and thus is a time of 40 days spent with Christ in the desert, where he fasted before beginning his public ministry. The past few years I have found doing things such as limiting my use of social media, fasting from snacks, and taking on some prayers I would not normally do—such as the Way of the Cross—have helped me to focus my gaze on Christ and draw closer to him during Lent.





### ALEX KREN

Lent is an opportunity for us to dive into the mysteries of Christ's Passion, Death, and Resurrection. It's a chance for us to purify our souls to become the men and women God created us to be.



### ERIC MASHAK

As a Roman Catholic tradition, we have a communal walking pilgrimage almost every day during Lent to a different church in Rome. Most of these churches are dedicated to particular saints; there is a real sense of walking with the saints throughout these forty days toward greater unity with Christ.



### DEACON SAM MC CARTY

Lent for me is a time to set aside what's keeping me from giving myself totally to God.



### DAVID NOWICKI

Lent shares its etymology with the musical term *lento*, which means slow. I think this underscores the necessity for us to have a time to slow down and turn more deeply toward Christ, specifically in preparation for Easter.



### ISAAC PECHA

In our secular world, we imagine that time is naturally empty, uniform, and flat—it has no objective meaning, and each day is what you personally make of it. But just as the bluffs and valleys of our diocese make our land beautiful, so do the feasts and fasts of the liturgical year make our time beautiful. For me, Lent is a chance to enrich the landscape of our year by entering into a valley, not alone, but with a Catholic Christian community on a pilgrim journey through a breathtakingly diverse world.



### JOHN REGNIER

Lent is the season that God reminds me of my mortality and ultimate purpose. During the days of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, I have the opportunity to deny myself and work to give the parts of me that I waste on the world to God. It's by no means an easy season to live in, but I trust that the Church has established it for a very good reason. I work to approach it as a gift from God to me, a time to be cleansed of my sins and be better prepared to love Him now and in eternity.



### TIMOTHY REITHER

The season of Lent for me has always been like a pause and rewind button. It is an invitation to take a new look of how I have been faithful in following the Lord and also where I have grown lazy in my commitment to Him. It is a renewed call to lessen my dependence on material things and grow in trusting solely in Jesus.

## SAVE THE DATE



### PRIESTS FOR TOMORROW

Supporting the education and formation of seminarians for the Diocese of La Crosse

## FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2019

Keynote Address by  
**Cardinal James M. Harvey**  
Archdiocese of Milwaukee

The Cargill Room at the  
Waterfront Restaurant  
328 South Front Street  
La Crosse, Wisconsin

Cocktails from  
4:30 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.  
Dinner at 5:30 p.m.  
Program and Silent  
Auctions following

## WHAT DOES THE LENTEN SEASON MEAN TO YOU?



### DEACON JOE RICHARDS

The last few years, Lent has been a time for me to take stock of how I'm doing in my relationship with Christ. I usually direct whatever fasting or extra practice I take on for the season around whatever is holding me back or what could help me say yes to him more deeply.



### DEACON LEVI SCHMITT

Lent for me is a time to be with Christ in the desert.



### DANIEL SMYTH

I think of Lent as a way I can unite myself to Christ as he is led out into the wilderness for 40 days



### ARTURO VIGUERAS

The great season of Lent means a greater commitment to prayer, special attention attuning myself to the sacramental life of the Church and active participation in the liturgical life of the Church. All of this helps me to gain a greater interior disposition to enter more deeply into the central mystery of our salvation.



### STEVEN WELLER

Lent is the time for the Christian to live more fully his or her baptism. Penance strengthens the Christian to act outwardly more perfectly that filial and baptismal reality within.



### DEACON DANIEL WILLIAMS

Lent is a time not just of giving something up, but a time for me to add something. I like to add a special devotion or prayer that increases my time with the Lord so that it becomes not just a time for penance, but also drawing closer to Him. This way Easter becomes a greater celebration of the redemption He won for me and for all of humanity.



### ISAAC WOLFE

Lent for me is a time of intentional movement towards God. We always are called to grow closer to Him but during this season we are called in a special way. I find that the self-sacrifice that I make helps me to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for us and to remember just how much He loves us.



### JOHN ZWEBER

For me, Lent is a time to rest in Jesus. Lent helps me to step back from all the distractions, so I can be more intent on discipleship.



DIocese of LA CROSSE

3710 East Avenue South | La Crosse, WI 54602-4004  
Phone: 608-791-2667 | [diolc.org/vocations](http://diolc.org/vocations)

