

Come & See

Newsletter for those pondering the priesthood

Vol. 8, No. 3

Summer 2005

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1 Three newly ordained priests begin the transition from seminary life amidst a whirlwind of memories and emotions.

3 Each year, Saint Francis Seminary makes awards to students who exemplify the melding of academic achievement and Christian service.

4 Are you a runner? Consider running a marathon or a relay for vocations. (If you're not a runner, find out how else you can help the vocations team.)

5 Look at the summer/fall event schedule to mark the activities you want to attend in your calendar.

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FROM SEMINARIAN TO PRIEST: HAPPINESS IN THE JOURNEY

“It’s hard to believe I’m a priest now. This is what I’ve been waiting for so long,” said newly ordained Fr. Peter Berger. Even after the celebration of the sacrament of Holy Orders, his first Mass as a priest, and the celebration dinner afterward, the feeling of amazement still persists.

Peter Berger, Michael Lightner, and Norberto Sandoval became priests for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee on May 21, 2005. Their ordinations came 160 years after the first ordination of a priest from Saint Francis Seminary. Putting things in another context for Fr. Norberto, a Coca-Cola aficionado, ordination came 119 years after the invention of his favorite beverage.

The three new priests will serve the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, even though they come from different home dioceses spanning the global hemispheres. Fr. Peter grew up in Wauwatosa. Fr. Mike’s home, up until the time he left for college at Eastern Michigan University, was Oconto, Wisconsin. Fr. Norberto came to the U.S. from Maracaibo, Venezuela.

Throughout their years of preparation in the Priestly Formation Program at Saint Francis Seminary, the seminarians spend time in prayer, study, and pastoral experiences. It’s not all serious times, though. Describing the happiest memories of his seminary years, Fr. Peter said, “A general memory is the fun that we had as seminarians—rathskeller nights, sports. Those are memories of what it was like to be part of the seminarian community.”

Fr. Norbie also said he had a lot of happy memories from his seminary days. However, he was able to pinpoint a couple of moments that really stand out. “The happiest was when somebody came to me during CPE and requested me to do a funeral.” He completed his clinical pastoral education (CPE) experience at Village at Manor Park, a facility offering independent, assisted, nursing home, and hospice living. The request for funeral services occurred during his first week there. Nervousness during the funeral preparations gave way to affirmation from the deceased patient’s family.

Another happy moment came close to graduation “when Dr. Stosur came to me and said, ‘Congratulations, you made it.’” Dr. David Stosur has been the academic dean at Saint Francis Seminary throughout Fr. Norbie’s years as a seminarian.

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THREE NEW PRIESTS *(continued from page 1)*

Fr. Mike came to Saint Francis Seminary as a fifth-year theologian, having previously attended Mount St. Mary's Seminary, in Maryland. While seminarians for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee typically complete their parish internships during the third year of theological studies, Fr. Mike did his internship, at St. Gregory the Great Parish, in his final year. For Fr. Mike, the happiest memory of his time as a seminarian was ordination as a transitional deacon. Recalling the diaconate ordination he said, "I was vested as a deacon in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Wow! Praised be Jesus Christ."



Fr. Mike Lightner

James-Mequon and St. Cecilia-Thiensville). As he embarks on priesthood, he talked about the challenges ahead. "Initially, the biggest challenge will probably be the transition

from seminary to parish life," Fr. Peter said. "Then it will be to balance my life. I think the temptation is just to work all the time. That's not healthy," he added.

If there is one hallmark in his priesthood, Fr. Peter hopes that it will be compassion.

Decisions might get mixed reactions, but there is still room for treating people on both sides of an issue with compassion. "When you have to make a decision that's unpopular with people who are good people, that's challenging," he concluded.

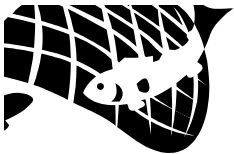


Fr. Peter Berger

Fr. Mike will join the pastoral team at St. Francis Borgia-Cedarburg (which now encompasses the congregations from St. Francis Borgia and Divine Word). Priesthood is sacramental, and Fr. Mike looks forward in particular to celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. "My conversion, my vocation happened in the Sacrament of Reconciliation," he said, explaining the place it holds for him.

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"It's hard to believe I'm a priest. This is what I've been waiting for."



KUDOS TO THE CLASS OF 2005

Seven students received Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies degrees, and three received the Master of Divinity at the commencement ceremony at Saint Francis Seminary on May 13, 2005.

Constance Bach (with honors), Cynthia Blaze, Nancie Chmielewski (with honors) Julie Hueller Curcio (with honors), Ann Deisinger, Karen McNeil (with honors), and Laura Sumner Coon (with honors) graduated from the MAPS program. Peter Berger and Judith Holmes-Jensen received honors in the M.Div. program and graduated alongside Norberto Sandoval.



THREE NEW PRIESTS *(continued from page 3)*

Fr. Norberto will serve St. Helen, St. Alexander, and St. John Kanty, on Milwaukee's south side. As part of his priestly ministry, Fr. Norbie hopes "to change the stereotype of the Latino in the community." St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of the seminary, prayed the words "Live, Jesus!" as part of a prayer dedicating himself and his work to the glory of God. Adopting this saint's example, Fr. Norbie hopes that his priesthood will witness to fidelity and the hope that Jesus will live in people's hearts.



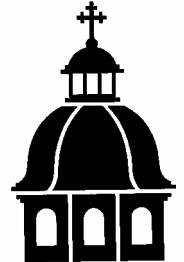
Fr. Norberto Sandoval

Milwaukee's ordinands don't quite fit two major trends in vocations nationwide. Statistics compiled by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops show an average age of 37 for this year's ordination class. The average age for Milwaukee's group is younger, at 31. Across the country, 27 percent of the priests ordained in 2005 are foreign-born, compared with one in three for Milwaukee.

In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, seminarians approaching ordination participate in the annual Spring Clergy Assembly. Attending the 2005 gathering, Fr. Norbie said that he felt welcome and accepted as part of the brotherhood of priests. Fr. Mike echoed the feeling of acceptance. "I felt like a newborn baby in the sense of being accepted into a family," he explained.

As he begins serving in priesthood, Fr. Mike juxtaposed "the power of God and the Holy Spirit and my unworthiness." Who, after all, could actually be worthy of this calling, which Fr. Mike describes as "responsibility of shepherding souls for Christ?"

Even Ordination Mass had its light moments, though. At one point, Archbishop Timothy Dolan quipped that Fr. Mike, a former football player for Eastern Michigan on the pro scouting roster, "is the only one who can call me tiny."



AWARD RECIPIENTS NAMED

Congratulations to this year's award recipients in the Priestly Formation and Lay Formation Programs. Seminarians Peter Berger and Jason Lavann both received Monsignor John Schulien Awards for exemplary scholarship and service. Peter graduated with honors from Saint Francis Seminary and was ordained to priesthood on May 21. Jason just completed his fourth year of Theology. Both have worked part-time for the Vocations Office, and Jason will continue his vocations work until graduation in spring 2006.

The Schulien award, inaugurated in 1977, is named for a longtime professor of systematic theology at Saint Francis Seminary. The award recipient is chosen based on his integration of theological studies, pastoral experiences, and spirituality in seminary and parish life; commitment to the Church and its mission, to justice, and service; and leadership, academic excellence, and ability to effectively communicate the Gospel.

Karen McNeil won the Maranatha Award, presented annually to a student in the Graduate Lay Formation Program for academic achievement, service, and modeling of spiritual leadership qualities. Karen graduated this spring with a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS).

Faculty and administration of Saint Francis Seminary determine the award recipients.

RUNNERS AND VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR VOCATIONS TEAM



The vocations team for Milwaukee's Lakefront Marathon 2005 needs runners and volunteers. Need some inspiration? Remember St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, in which he encourages Christians to train and run to win. In addition to 26-mile runners, the team needs relay runners and volunteers for a variety of tasks before and during the Oct. 2 Lakefront Marathon.

An organizational meeting will take place on Monday evening, **June 6**, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., at Saint Francis Seminary. As a runner, you'll have the opportunity to get your registration form, organize a training group, or put together your four-member relay team. (Relay legs range from 3.5 to 8 miles.) As a volunteer, you can sign up to

- Greet team members at the starting line and/or cheer for them at the finish
- Hand out candy and water to our runners
- Time training runs
- Work on parish-level publicity
- Coordinate a group from your area to attend a parish fish fry together
- Serve as a pick-up person for runners and volunteers to get their vocations marathon team shirts.

Runners pay the usual entrance fee for the Lakefront Marathon, but the Vocations Office will also seek sponsors whose donations will benefit the work of the Vocations Office for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Runners have the option of seeking sponsors, too.

All runners and volunteers will wear specially designed t-shirts to raise vocations awareness among run participants and fans. The t-shirts will carry the slogan,

Walk by Faith.
Run for Vocations.

There will also be Web sites on the back for people to get more information on priesthood and other Church ministries.

"I want this to be a grassroots community effort," said Aisha Mansour, a marathon runner and volunteer for the 2005 vocations marathon team.

If you cannot attend the meeting on June 6, please indicate how you plan to participate by filling out the "Run for Vocations" form below and returning it to the Vocations Office. You can also e-mail the information to the Vocations Office, at vocationsrun@sfs.edu. We will contact you with more details.

RUN FOR VOCATIONS

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

I'm interested in:

- Running the 26-mile Lakefront Marathon
- Running one leg of the marathon on a relay team (3.5, 7.0, 7.5, or 8.0 leg)
- Volunteering pre-race or on Oct. 2 to hand out water bottles to our runners, etc.
- I would like to support vocations ministry by contributing
\$ _____ per mile x 26 miles = \$ _____ (check payable to "Vocations Office")

Please **return this form** or provide the requested information by phone or e-mail to:

Vocations Office
3257 S. Lake Drive
St. Francis, WI 53235
(Phone: 414-747-6437; E-mail: vocationsrun@sfs.edu)

SUMMER/FALL EVENT SCHEDULE

Summer Discernment Group: The discernment group for men of college age will continue to meet throughout the summer for a variety of activities. Here's the schedule for the coming months. If you have questions, contact the Vocations Office at (414) 747-6437. (Luke Strand is involved in various activities this summer and will not be checking his e-mail regularly.)

June 17, 2005 (7:30-9:30 p.m.)

Barbecue at Saint Francis Seminary with evening prayer and campfire

July 10-12, 2005

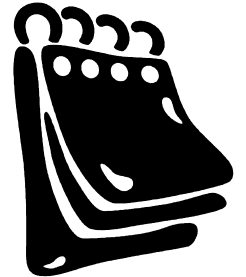
Catholic Youth Expedition (ages 18-28) camping trip on Chamber's Island, in Door County. For information log onto www.cyexpeditions.org

Aug. 26, 2005 (4:00-8:30 p.m.)

Vocations Picnic at Saint Francis Seminary. The discernment group will join others who are thinking about priesthood or religious life for an end-of-summer gathering.

Sept. 16, 2005 (7:30-9:30 p.m.)

First discernment meeting of the fall semester



Theology on Tap (July 12, 19, 26, and Aug. 2): The Vocations Office, in collaboration with leaders of the African-American community, St. Robert Parish, and the Serra Clubs of Racine and Kenosha, will sponsor a Theology on Tap series at St. Martin de Porres Parish this summer. This initiative is part of the Vocations Office's efforts to encourage vocations to among African-American Catholics. Theology on Tap is a summer faith enrichment series for adults. For information on all of the sites, dates, and speakers, log onto www.archmil.org/news/ShowArchivedNews.asp?ID=1539. Pick the sites and topics that meet your needs.

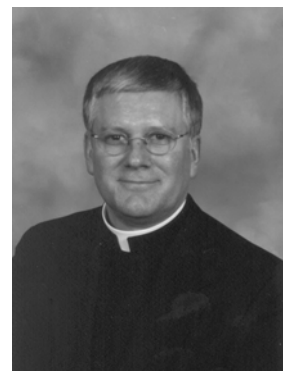
Vocations Picnic (Aug. 26): Men in discernment, men and women identified through this summer's Called by Name Weekends in parishes, seminarians, and resident priests of Saint Francis Seminary will attend this informal gathering for people discerning their vocations.

Marathon Run (Oct. 2): Volunteer to run a marathon, join a relay team for the marathon (you would run 3.5, 7.0, 7.5, or 8.0 miles), or support the vocations team in other ways. See the article on page 4 for details.

Life Directions Retreat (Sept. 9-11): Join other single Catholics, ages 18 to 45, to reflect on God's invitation and learn about diocesan priesthood or religious life. This year's keynote speaker will be Bishop Richard Sklba. The retreat includes workshops, panel presentations, small-group discussions, and one-to-one conversation. There will also be quiet time for prayer and reflection. The retreat is for men and women. Facilitators are priests and sisters from area religious congregations. The weekend retreat begins at 5:30 p.m. on Friday and concludes at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. This year's Life Directions Retreat will take place at the Schoenstatt Retreat Center, in Waukesha. Serra Clubs and Vocation Ministers of the Milwaukee Archdiocese (VMMA) sponsor the retreat so that there is no fee for participants. Registration forms may be requested from Dick Miller, (800) 234-4054 or Sr. Rose Sevenich, OSF, (414) 744-1160. Note: For more retreat opportunities, log onto www.thinkpriest.org/retreat.html.

NEW VOCATIONS DIRECTOR

Fr. Jim Lobacz officially begins his ministry as the new vocations director for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee on July 1, 2005. Fr. Jim will introduce himself in the fall edition of *Vocation Spirit*. Ordained in 1979, he has a variety of ministerial experiences ranging from pastor to teacher to campus minister. He earned his bachelor's degree from St. Francis de Sales Seminary College and his master's from Saint Francis Seminary. He also holds a master's degree in education from Cardinal Stritch University and a doctorate in ministry from St. Mary of the Lake University.



BULLETIN BOARD



Five seminarians were called to candidacy to the diaconate and priesthood during a liturgical celebration on April 21, in Christ King Chapel, with Bishop Richard Sklba as celebrant. Seminarians James Jaeger, Nathan Reesman, Robert Kacalo, Jason Lavann, and Richard Wendell submitted their signed statements expressing that they will freely receive Holy Orders and permanently devote themselves to Church ministry. Prior to ordination to priesthood, a man must serve in the ministries of reader, acolyte, and deacon. All five seminarians called to candidacy are preparing for ordination to the diaconate on September 17, 2005. Ordination to priesthood will be the following May.



Seminarian enrollments nationwide in 2004-05 showed about a one percent net increase over the prior year, although the number of diocesan seminarians dropped by about two percent. In contrast, the number of seminarians who were candidates for religious communities rose by seven percent. This statistics come from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), at Georgetown University. Here in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, the number of seminarians rose by nearly seven percent.



The fourth installment of the *Vocations Roundtable* radio talk show has been recorded. Watch your bulletin for air times. This latest broadcast will feature "second career" seminarians. If you cannot pull Relevant Radio at 100.1 FM (Port Washington) or 1150 AM (Lake Geneva), request a CD from the Vocations Office, (414) 747-6437.



On Easter Sunday 2005, just days before his death, Pope John Paul II blessed a monstrance which is available to parishes, Catholic schools, and religious communities throughout the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to use for Eucharistic Adoration for Vocations. If you belong to a young adult or other group that would like to use the monstrance for Eucharistic Adoration for vocations at your parish, contact Dick Boldin, Rosary Evangelization Apostolate, at 414-570-4389 or info@rosaryea.org.