



VOCATION SPIRIT NEWS

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YEAR FOR PRIESTS

GIFT: May Thankfulness Continue toward Christmas

I title this article gift. As Christians, we try our best to look at life as a gift—each and every moment as a grace from God. This past weekend many of us Wisconsinites stuffed ourselves with stuffing, turkey and all the trimmings, watched the Green Bay Packers run over the Detroit Lions, and spent quality time with friends or family we may not have an opportunity to see on a regular basis. For me, being away at school for much of the year, Thanksgiving really was a time to be with family that I often miss amidst my busy schedule at St. Joe's and Loyola University.

It is easy to look back on Thanksgiving as a time that was and will not happen again for another 360 some days. But that is not what we as Christian people are called to do. Rather, we have to look forward, to envision future gifts and future treats, future family time, future grace filled moments. If God is Love—if we really believe that God IS Love, then we are called to Love to the best of our



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ability when we seek a deeper relationship with the One who is calling us to the greatest possible Love.

Gathered together with family during the holidays is a time when Love can most often feel present (Although, there are always those tense moments when family disagreements or riffs might make Love appear distant...but that if for another article!). Still, the holidays are ideally a time to become closer to family, to realize the bond that brings all of you to the same house or the same table.

As we journey on toward Christmas, we have an opportunity to envision an Advent that is a preparation toward further gifts and

further giving. Advent is an opportunity to realize the bond our baptism has provided us as Christians. It is also a time to feel united in the Spirit with the entire world community. We trim the tree, hang our stockings, light Advent wreaths, prepare the church choir concert all in the hope that our Savior will be born.

And indeed he will come. We bring our gifts to his tiny manger and he brings his gift of peace and enduring love through Word made person. The divine and the human become one in Christ—and we realize our identification with Jesus of Nazareth, a baby in a manger, from a relatively poor family. Mary, Joseph and Jesus gather in those first days of Christmas. As Fr. Larry Gillick puts it, Advent is an invitation to be “faithfully and not fearfully watchful.” May we prepare in Love to meet a virgin mother, her faithful husband, and their baby boy—our wonderful gift of LOVE.

Peace and blessings,

Bob Spoerl,
College seminarian, Editor
of Vocation Spirit News.

So, How DO I Know?



<http://tsricci.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/>

AWAKEN ME TO THE TOUCH OF CHRISTMAS AS I FEEL YOU, MY GOD, THROBBING WITH LIFE IN EVERYTHING.

- Prayer by Edward Hays

VOCATIONAL AND YOUNG ADULT QUICK LINKS:

thinkpriest.org

[HOW DO I KNOW?](#)

[HOUSE OF PEACE](#)

[Cardinal Stritch
Campus Ministry](#)

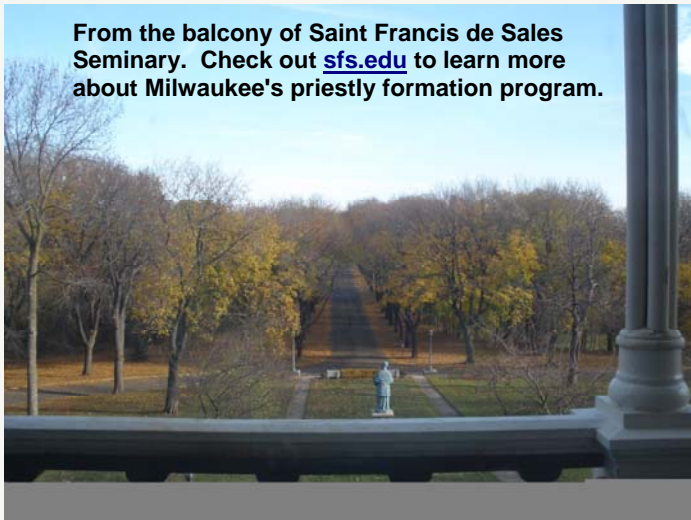
[Capuchin Volunteers](#)

[Franciscan Sisters of
Charity](#)



thinkpriest.org

From the balcony of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary. Check out sfs.edu to learn more about Milwaukee's priestly formation program.





Meet Fr. Jim, the Vocation Director for Milwaukee Archdiocese



Father Jim Lobacz was born and raised in Kenosha, Wisconsin where he graduated from Saint Thomas Grade School and Saint Joseph High School. All of his studies for the priesthood took place in Milwaukee at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary College and Saint Francis Major Seminary culminating with his ordination in June of 1979. As a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee he has served as a parish priest on Milwaukee's south side, a high school chaplain in Burlington, the vice-rector of Saint John Cathedral, assisting priest for Holy Name of Jesus in Wilmot, and a campus minister for Cardinal Stritch University.

A Blessed Advent to all our friends in the Archdiocese, from Fr. Jim and Fr. Don!



St. Francis de Sales Seminary Rector, Fr. Don, behind the mic, on the radio

Seminary debuts new radio show

St Francis de Sales Seminary is taking to the airwaves with a new radio show on Relevant Radio, 100.1 FM. *New Heart, New Spirit... Your connection to life at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary*, features Rector Fr. Don Hying and special guests who will discuss the Seminary's momentum, goals, what seminary life is really like and ways to get involved.

New Heart, New Spirit airs at 11 a.m. the first Saturday of every month. Show topics and guest ideas are welcome. Please email us at newheartnewspirit@sfs.edu with your ideas.

[CLICK HERE FOR PODCAST](#)

Rembrandt's Return of the Prodigal Son: An Advent Motif

Prayer by Rita A. Simmonds:

Come and enter this scene,
My friend —
Whose light and dark speak Bethlehem.
The single shepherd looks a pauper
Donned in rags that reek of fodder.
His knees thus mounted in the earth,
He shrouds his face of noble birth
Within the scarlet cloak of one
Who cannot help but call him "Son!"

The father's face glows light new-born.
His hands re-hold life once foresworn:
His son of wanton ways untold
Whose steps of excess bore him home.

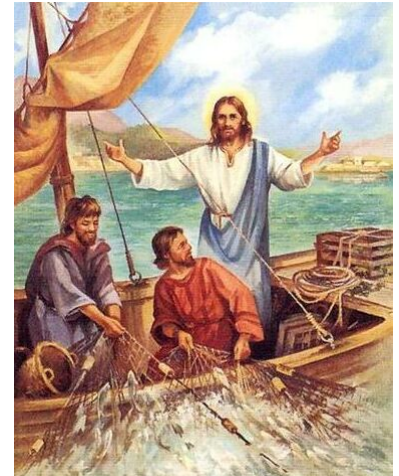
This sudden gift befits a king!
A song is found!
The angels sing!



<http://www.rock.uwec.edu/facultypages/pksudrna/brquemrbnt-1.jpg>

"I will make you fishers of people."

This is what Jesus told Andrew, and Andrew followed him.



HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS RESOURCES Lesson Plans for High School Theology and Religion Teachers

Teachers have the opportunity to help students begin to choose their life paths, and these flexible lesson plans make it easy to give existing curriculum units a vocations flavor. The idea is to develop a classroom "vocations culture" in which students feel free to consider Church vocations among their many options. Each lesson has a teacher's guide and accompanying downloadable worksheets. You'll see the goal, core concepts, teaching tips, prayer, and Scripture readings to help make the most of each lesson. [Click here for lesson plans to enhance your classroom culture in a way that fits your style!](#)

DISCERNING THE CALL TO THE PRIESTHOOD...COME AND SEE:

