



YOOPERS FOR SEMINARIANS

PATH TO THE PRIESTHOOD

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MARQUETTE



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FALL 2019

Greetings

In our third Yoopers for Seminarians newsletter, **let me express my warm gratitude for the outpouring of support for our seminarians from around the diocese!** Over 150 families have already joined YFS 2019, and we hope you will consider joining too!

This initiative is meant to unpack and show all that is involved in preparing our seminarians to serve our diocese as priests! In this issue, we look at some of the **varied summer experiences that our men have.** The four stories inside are just a small glimpse of all the different ways they learn and grow during the summer.

Every fall our parishes participate in the **Upper Peninsula Catholic Services Appeal (UPCSA)**, which is the biggest source of funding for our vocations program! Twenty-percent of the UPCSA budget goes straight to seminarian formation.

THANK YOU for supporting UPCSA in your parish, it makes the education of our future priests possible! If you haven't already submitted your UPCSA pledge, please do so in support of our future priests.

Please keep praying for our seminarians, for the men who are in the midst of applying to become seminarians next year, and all the men in our diocese who are open to the priesthood. Come Holy Spirit! Send many more laborers to work in our UP Vineyard!

Fr. Ben Hasse
Vocations
Director



Two long-time UP businesses are supporting the young men in the Diocese of Marquette who are in formation for the priesthood. Tim and Carol Beauchamp from Tim Beauchamp Builders, Inc. in Rock and Pat and Christine Sommers from Sommers Sausage Shop in Crystal Falls agree parishes across the diocese need more young men to serve as priests.

"We have decided to support Yoopers for Seminarians because we believe it's essential that young men know there is support and encouragement in the UP for those who feel the Lord may be calling them to the priesthood," Carol Beauchamp says.

She says while parishes support vocations and seminarians, the couple wanted the young men to know there is support and encouragement for them from the business and secular world. "We want to help support them while they continue the discernment process."

The Sommers say they always want to support Catholic ministries. They previously gave to Marygrove until it closed. When they spoke to Fr. Ben about the Church and seminarians and then received the Yoopers for Seminarians, they decided to give. "Our seminarians are our future here in the diocese," Pat Sommers says.

The couple met the seminarians at St. Barbara's in Vulcan during the Seminarian Retreat Dinner this summer. "We really enjoyed being invited to the dinner with the Bishop and seminarians and listening about their concerns. We enjoyed talking with Fr. Ben and think he is doing a great job with the seminarians."

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YOOPERSFORSEMINARIANS.ORG

SEMINARIANS: *How They Spend Summer Vacation*



BEN RIVARD | Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit

Organizing and hosting a parish retreat focused on consecration to Jesus through Mary, performing burials, and visiting the homebound were just some of the experiences for Ben Rivard this summer as a seminarian. He served a summer internship at St. Paul in Negaunee and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Palmer where Fr. Larry Van Damme is pastor. Ben says Fr. Larry was an excellent guide and mentor, impressing upon him the importance of a deep prayer life, taking every concern and decision to Jesus in the Eucharist.

“Fr. Larry has a true sense that Jesus is the principal pastor who works through his priesthood. I had many opportunities to walk with people in their journey of faith which awakened in my heart a deeper desire to serve the Church as a priest and a pastor.”

Ben says while there were a few challenges this summer there were many graces including getting to know the people of the parishes. “I enjoyed the relationships I developed and am thankful to have made many new friends.”

A challenging aspect of parish life is managing time since each week has different events and a new schedule. “I discovered that the schedule of a pastor is largely formed by how he is able to fit into other people’s schedules and so he must be flexible.”

Ben says his experience showed him the priesthood is not an empty and lonely life as some might think, but full of adventure and meaning. “The life of a priest is filled with joy if he stays close to Jesus. I would encourage men in the Upper Peninsula to investigate a vocation to the priesthood and consider it as a real and possible option.”



DCN. TOM MERKEL | Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit

This summer Dcn. Tom Merkel served the parishioners at St. Ignace and Mackinac Island and Moran. He was able to proclaim the Gospel, assist with communion, lead the intercessions, and help with preaching, which he enjoyed.

Serving with Fr. Francis Ricca allowed Dcn. Tom to serve the sick and dying. “He showed me how important it is to love the people you are serving. I really liked his example of caring for the dying and the elderly. I was able to go on several sick calls with him and watch him anoint the sick, and we were able to pray with the family members present.”

Dcn. Tom said St. Anne’s at Mackinac Island was a great place to serve and evangelize because many of the Mass attendees were tourists which meant the congregation always was changing. He said moving from parish to parish also was challenging but parish staff helped him along.

“One of the best experiences was working with the Right to Life in St. Ignace to get signatures for the D&E abortion ban. The people I worked with were great and very dedicated to protecting the unborn. It was also a good time to work with other Christians from other denominations.”

During the school year, seminarians are intensely engaged in the seminaries on many levels. They spend their summers serving in churches, taking pilgrimages to the Holy Land, spending 30 days at a silent retreat, and learning firsthand what is involved in the service of a priest. Here are stories of four seminarians from the Diocese of Marquette and where God led them this summer.

CHRISTIAN FLAGSTADT | Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit

When Christian Flagstadt traveled to the Holy Land, he says it was like walking through Scripture.

“My pilgrimage to the Holy Land has deepened my understanding and amazement that Jesus truly came to Earth to dwell among sinful humanity. The places I have read and prayed with in Scripture became real and sources of grace.”

During the pilgrimage, he attended Mass in the cave of the manger in Bethlehem, near the rock of Calvary, and inside the tomb of the Resurrection. He also walked the Via Dolorosa, or the Way of the Cross, where Jesus carried his cross. “Along that route, I often thought to myself, 'Jesus you did this for me, how great your love is for me.'”

His time in the Holy Land gave Christian the chance to follow Jesus' footsteps, but he also followed Peter's story. “I was really inspired the day I was able to pray by the Sea of Galilee where Jesus first called Peter. After touring the Holy Land, I was able to visit Rome, thus following Peter's footsteps. My journey has provided me with a renewed confidence of Jesus' unfailing love for me; a love so strong, that Jesus would become a man and die for me.”



BRANDON YANNI | Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit

Brandon Yanni also made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, followed by a 30-day silent retreat which he says was the best experience of his life.

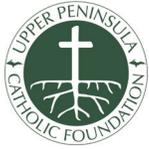
During the retreat, each day includes meeting with a spiritual director, Mass, recreation, the Liturgy of the Hours, and four or five hours devoted to prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. “All of this was in silence, with the exception of spiritual direction. If this sounds like a lot, you're right!” They did receive two days when they were allowed to speak, known as days of repose.

Many people will not or do not want to experience a 30-day silent retreat. Brandon says he entered it with apprehension, but once a routine was established, the days went by quickly. “Humans are very good at distracting themselves,” he says. “A silent retreat helps to overcome these distractions. In the silence, it was only myself and God. I cannot imagine moving forward in my discernment of the priesthood without having had this experience.”

“If I were to select one takeaway from the retreat, it would be the desirous love which God has for each of us. Despite the sin which plagues the world, God constantly makes Himself known to us, and our very existence moment to moment is testament to the love which He has for us. It is only in light of this love that we can make any sense of the world.”



Yoopers for Seminarians
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ARE YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, OPEN TO THE PRIESTHOOD?

Contact Fr. Ben Hasse, benjhasse@yahoo.com or (906) 290-2434 to talk or to learn more about upcoming events.



Save the Date!
Permanent Deacons
Ordination: Jan. 10, 2020

Seminarians gathered with Bishop John Doerfler at St. Barbara's Parish in Vulcan during the August 2019 Seminarians Retreat.