

Vianney

Saint John Vianney
College Seminary
Saint Paul, Minnesota

news

2012



Men in Christ.
Men of the Church.
Men for Others.

Rector's Update

Giving Back

One might ask, "What are the blessings that come back to the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis from hosting a college seminary such as Saint John Vianney?" There are many.

Forty-one SJV seminarians are teaching religious education in fifteen different parishes this year, from Holy Family in St. Louis Park, to St. Joseph in West St. Paul, from St. Peter in Forest Lake, to St. Hubert in Chanhassen. We also have seminarians helping in Catholic Schools such as St. Agnes and St. Mark in St. Paul, and with youth groups such as the 'Dead Theologians Society' at Maternity of Mary. We have twenty men making bi-weekly visits to residents at the Little Sisters of the Poor in St Paul; twelve spending time with children at St. Joseph's Home for Children; twelve assisting the poor at Sharing and Caring Hands; and six who minister to the members receiving services at Spectrum Lighthouse.

Last year close to eighty of our seminarians gave vocational testimonies in over twenty-five local parishes at all weekend liturgies. In addition to all of these outreaches, is the spiritual work being done right here at the University of St. Thomas. We have four upperclassmen assigned to helping/discipling/evangelizing a men's movement of between twenty and forty UST college students called "Catholic Men's Leadership". Six other seminarians are co-leading bible studies on campus. Two dozen men offer hospitality at "Last Chance Mass" every Sunday at 9:00 p.m., at the seminary chapel, for close to three hundred UST students who regularly attend.

It is our desire to work in harmony with Campus Ministry and to support UST community life, by cheering at football games, participating in student government, celebrating with the broader community in major liturgies, and welcoming new students as they 'Walk Through the Arches,' to name a few. In short, each of our one hundred and thirty-five seminarians are witnessing the Good News of Jesus Christ, and serving numerous people throughout this Archdiocese with apostolic zeal.



Lest we conclude our men are very parochial, it could be mentioned that for the last ten years, first year seminarians have travelled to the New Orleans area, giving one week to helping impoverished families recover from Hurricane Katrina, by painting, carpentry, lawn care, etc. Last year the new men also helped a monastery in Alabama prepare to receive fourteen Carmelite Sisters from Vietnam, as well as build three homes for Habitat for Humanity. A dozen seminarians traveled to Jamaica last year on Spring Break, to serve alongside the "Missionaries of the Poor," a religious community of mostly brothers, inspired by their founder, Fr. Ho Lung, and this year nearly twenty seminarians plan to do some short term service projects in Haiti.

I am very proud of the work our seminarians perform, with charity and generosity. They are lights shining in joyful as well as hopeless places, filled with the enthusiasm of adventurers hunting for ancient treasures, always attentive to the Spirit's guidance, desiring to make a difference for good. It is really our privilege to host them here in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, to form and inspire them to serve the family of God, whom they shall fall in love with one day as future priests, both here, as well as in the twenty-seven other sponsoring dioceses.

Rev. Michael C. Becker Jr.

Seminary Snapshots



Photo Captions:

1. Corey Manning (St. Paul/Minneapolis) and Justin Schneider (Mobile) relax during the New Men Retreat in August.
2. Nick Welter (St. Paul/Minneapolis) shares a moment of light-heartedness at Dunrovin Retreat Center.
3. Ben Nelson (St. Paul/Minneapolis) and Will Summerlin (Lafayette) take a break from a billiards game during the New Men Retreat.
4. Andrew Zipp (St. Paul/Minneapolis) enjoys a card game with fellow seminarians.
5. New Man Andrew Dieter (New Ulm) is welcomed to Saint John Vianney by seniors Garret Ahlers (New Ulm) and Michael McClellan (St. Paul/Minneapolis).
6. The Saint John Vianney Class of 2012.

Saint John Vianney Col



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Development Update

A Warm Welcome

December 15, 2011 we said hello to our new Development Director, Phillip Baumer, an alumni of Saint John Vianney and a graduate of the University of St Thomas (2004) with a B.A. in Philosophy and Catholic Studies. He comes with much youthful energy, a great sense of humor, a deep commitment to our Catholic faith, and a great love for working with people.

Following graduation, Phil worked for Sherwin-Williams in the Management Trainee Program for 6½ years and held various positions in sales management. In December 2009, he earned his M.B.A. from Bethel University. In July 2010, Phil left Sherwin-Williams to be a project manager for McCormick Insulation, a company specializing in mechanical insulation. After spending 7½ years in the for-profit sector, Phil felt a calling to align his career more closely with his faith, which brought him back to Saint John Vianney. He is looking forward to both giving back to the seminary that helped form the person he is today and furthering the mission of the Church.

Phil and his wife Rachel are parents to their upwardly mobile 9-month old son, Ian. Upon Ian's birth, Rachel transitioned from her decade-long career as a paralegal to being a stay-at-home mother. Phil and his family are parishioners of St. Ambrose of Woodbury, where Phil is a catechist for Confirmation candidates.

As we hand the baton to Phil, we have two immediate goals: first to increase our donor base from 1,000 annual contributors to 2,500 households and second to raise annual revenue from \$720,000 to \$1,000,000. We will continue working with Archbishop Nienstedt and the Board of Directors in visioning for the future.



7th Annual Vianney Cup Golf Tournament *September 12, 2011*



Left: Rector Fr. Michael Becker sent the golfers out for the shotgun start of the 7th Annual Vianney Cup. **Center:** Archbishop Nienstedt joined golfers for dinner at Town & Country Club following the day of golf. **Right:** Second Year Seminarian Aric Aamondt (St. Paul/Minneapolis) shared his vocation story during the evening's program.

Save the date for the 8th Annual Vianney Cup!
Monday, September 10, 2012

Vianney Profiles

Fr. John Bauer

Vianney Alum returns as staff member



Fr. John Bauer, a member of Saint John Vianney's class of 2004, joined the staff as a Formator and Spiritual Director in July 2010. He previously served two years as Parochial Vicar at Nativity of Our Lord Parish in St. Paul.

Fr. Bauer joined Saint John Vianney as a true freshman, fresh out of high school, feeling there was a possibility God was calling him to the priesthood, but was uncertain what to expect from the seminary.

He feels that the thing that prompted the most growth in him as a seminarian was "a life structured and centered on prayer. Each morning we would gather for Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament," a practice still followed by seminarians today.

Fr. Bauer says, "It was sometimes difficult and I would find myself distracted or nodding off during that hour. But it was there in prayer that the one who had originally quietly called me to the seminary continued to speak to my heart, gave encouragement, and taught me of his love for his people. With a grateful heart, I can say that I still take this sacred time every day and that it sustains my life as a priest."

Other aspects of Saint John Vianney that were important to Fr. Bauer's formation include the strong sense of brotherhood among the seminarians as well as their active participation in clubs and activities on campus at the University of St. Thomas.

"In the end," says Fr. Bauer, "it would be impossible for me to list all of the ways that Saint John Vianney formed me to be the priest I am today, but I am grateful for every bit of it. I'm also grateful for the blessing of my current assignment where as a member of the Formation Staff I see God's work every day in the lives of the Saint John Vianney seminarians."

Seminarian Aaron Becker's Experience at Lourdes



Aaron Becker is a second year seminarian from the Diocese of La Crosse, Wisconsin. Last summer he joined his youth group on a pilgrimage to Europe. Aaron says that Lourdes, France "was the highlight of the trip because I was seeking healing, which I miraculously received."

Aaron was injured in a tractor accident when he was a young boy, suffering a crushed skull. Despite the gravity of his injuries, the only lasting affect from the accident was poor vision. Aaron remembers, "When I was young I always struggled to fit in because I could not do everything as well as the other kids. Even worse, due to my poor vision I was unable to get a driver's license."

But Aaron's grandma always reminded him that God kept him alive for a reason; she felt he was meant to become a priest. He acted on her influence and entered Saint John Vianney, still struggling with the fact that if he were to become a priest, he would always need a driver and would not, "be able to spontaneously help those in need. This reality has always saddened me," he says.

So he took the opportunity to visit Lourdes last summer where he bathed in the healing waters and prayed at the Grotto, a "very spiritual, emotional and powerful experience."

Since returning home last summer, Aaron's eyesight has improved enough that he hopes to be able to get a driver's license this spring as he continues his seminary studies "with great joy and Glory to God."

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