



# THE INSTITUTE FOR PRIESTLY FORMATION

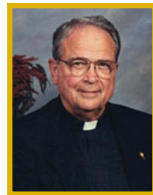
A Public Association of the Faithful in the Archdiocese of Omaha

## A THOUSAND MILES, EIGHTEEN YEARS AND COUNTING

As IPF completed the eighteenth year of our summer Spiritual Formation for Diocesan Seminarians program, we decided to check the statistics for that program. The quick check revealed some interesting facts: 1,740 seminarians coming from 142 dioceses have attended our program. One statistic unveiled an amazing fact: although IPF has served nearly 80% of the dioceses in the United States, it turns out that only one diocese has sent a seminarian for each of those eighteen years.

Our statistical research revealed that the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. has sent 64 seminarians to IPF over the past eighteen years *without missing a single year!* Seminarians aged 21 to 61 have made the 1000+ mile journey from Washington to Omaha—as many as seven men at a time.

The first seminarian from the Archdiocese of Washington to attend the summer program, Father Michael Dolan, was an unusual candidate. A father, grandfather



*Fr. Dolan*

and medical doctor, Father Dolan attended Blessed Pope John XXIII National Seminary, the seminary for later vocations. He was certainly the “grandfather” of the program that summer since the next oldest of the Washington seminarians in that class was in his twenties.

Another seminarian, also from the Archdiocese of Washington, made a 30-day retreat, the Spiritual Exercises, with Fr. John Horn, S.J. that same summer. Msgr. Rob Panke, currently the



*Msgr. Panke*

rector of the newly-established Blessed John Paul II College Seminary in the Archdiocese of Washington, had earlier been ordained a deacon and was looking for a place to make the Exercises. Father

George Aschenbrenner, SJ, recommended trying our just-launched location at Creighton University. And so, Msgr. Panke became the first seminarian to complete the 30-day retreat with IPF.

Though no diocese can rival Washington for continuity, here are some runners-up: Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston (15 years, 49 seminarians), Diocese of Sioux Falls (15 years, 41 seminarians), Archdiocese of Omaha (15 years, 36 seminarians), Diocese of Fort Worth (15 years, 33 seminarians), and Archdiocese of Indianapolis (15 years, 31 seminarians). The record for the highest number from a single diocese goes to... the Archdiocese of Newark, 78 seminarians over a period of 10 years.

We look forward to continuing to welcome the long, proud line of Washington seminarians who make the annual trek to Creighton as well as all others, from near and far!



*2012 Participants in the Spiritual Formation for Diocesan Seminarians Program*

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Dear Friends,

In October we will join the Church throughout the whole world in observing a Year of Faith, as announced by our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI. Coinciding with the 50th Anniversary of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council as well as beginning the Synod of Bishops General Assembly on "The New Evangelization," Pope Benedict sees these coming weeks and months as a time for all of us to "rediscover the journey of faith so as to shed ever clearer light on the joy and renewed enthusiasm of the encounter with Christ."

We know that any renewal of faith in the life of the Church is intimately linked with the renewal of the priesthood. The Institute's mission seeks to be of service to bishops as they attend to this most important aspect of their ministry, their care for priests. Our desire is to help priests and future priests live in "intimate and unceasing union" with the Lord so that, with him, they can lead their parishioners along the journey of faith and holiness.

August marked the conclusion of another full summer of programs for seminarians and priests—our eighteenth summer to be precise. The cover article in this newsletter amasses some wonderful statistics about our program for seminarians and celebrates the great support which we have received over these eighteen years from the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.

Other articles in this issue acquaint our readers with generous individuals and groups who continue to sacrifice on behalf of the IPF mission. We are especially excited about the response to our new initiative, the Pope John Paul II

Fund. Many individuals and groups have joined together to honor priests while at the same time helping IPF continue to provide spiritual formation for priests and future priests.

Our new website continues to draw more people into the IPF mission. Throughout the summer, testimonies from program participants were posted along with the "Seven Questions" feature which allowed readers to learn more about prayer and the spiritual life. And, for the first time, the website was the vehicle for live streaming of our Friends Night which took place in July.

As always, we are grateful for the support of all our friends and benefactors. We remember with gratitude the many who keep IPF in their daily prayers, including a growing number of contemplative religious communities. Thank you for your sacrificial love!

May the Lord draw us into a deeper and more vibrant faith in the days and weeks to come!

Sincerely in the Lord,



Rev. Richard J. Gabuzda  
Executive Director



**YEAR OF FAITH** 2012  
2013

October 11, 2012 – November 24, 2013



# WHO REALLY RECEIVES THE GIFT?



Each summer over 170 women volunteer to pray each day for a seminarian enrolled in the IPF Spiritual Formation for Diocesan Seminarians Program. Many, many more women pray for all the seminarians and the success of the Institute. Why?

In the beginning, a Spiritual Mom rightly believes she is giving a great gift to the seminarians—her gift of prayer for their specific needs as they progress through the summer program. As time progresses and a spiritual bond is formed, many Spiritual Moms come to realize they are actually the one receiving the gift.

At the end of the summer, we asked the Spiritual Moms for their comments and suggestions. There was a definite

theme to the comments. Maureen Cooney said, “Thank you for all you are doing to help seminarians become the holy priests we all long for. They help lead us closer to God.”

According to Angie Connelly, “It is a blessing to be part of the dome of grace. The weekly prayer intentions make me think of things to pray for in regard to myself and my family that I would not have normally prayed for.” In a similar note, Mary Carpenter said, “You have

blessed us with the opportunity to strengthen our faith as we pray for these young men.”

This year, for the first time, we were able to stream Friends Night live via the internet. Barbara Schumacher wrote this comment, “Thank you so much for the video of IPF Friends Night. Our family was unable to attend, so with great joy I feel I shared in the evening.” Similar comments were received from groups around the country who have formed “prayer cells” to pray for the seminarians and the mission of IPF. Technology made us all one big family in prayer and celebration!

It is with deep gratitude that we thank each and every Spiritual Mom for each and every prayer extended to

the seminarians and the Institute. Nancy Alers commented that she “learned that praying for priests is a very important mission” while Louise Scott added that “it has been a wonderful experience and a privilege to be a Spiritual Mom.”

So who really receives the gift? The Spiritual Moms? The seminarians? The Institute for Priestly Formation? All three. According to Catherine Schroeder, “God is amazing when we say ‘YES’ to Him!” Thank you for your gift.

*“Thank you for all you are doing to help seminarians become the holy priests we all long for.”*

*— Maureen Cooney*



1 Spiritual Mom Barb Thompson and Joseph Kelly from the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau enjoy Friends Night together.

2 Archdiocese of Chicago seminarian Matt Litak listens intently to his Spiritual Mom Muriel Munchrath.

3 Mary Kay McGee makes a point with her Spiritual Son Luis Mejia Mejia from the Diocese of Des Moines.

4 Seminarian James Mueller from the Archdiocese of Chicago awaits Spiritual Mom Cecilia Tonn’s contact information.







# IPF GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING PRIEST FUNDS AND DONORS TO DATE

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		Accounts have also been established for the following priests:	
		Msgr. James R. Cain	Archbishop Elden F. Curtiss
		Msgr. Eugene H. Kerwin†	Msgr. Andrew H. Meister†
		Fr. James F. Schwertley	

† = deceased

# OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE AWARD HONORS DEAR FRIENDS OF IPF

Three long time friends and supporters of IPF were honored this summer with the Our Lady of Guadalupe Award: Most Reverend Sam Jacobs, Bishop of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana, Msgr. Bill Fitzgerald, Spiritual Director with the Summer Seminarian Program, and Teresa Monaghan, an Apostolic Oblate with ProSanctity in Omaha.



*From l to r: Fr. Jim Rafferty, Fr. George Aschenbrenner, S. J., Bishop Sam Jacobs, Msgr. Bill Fitzgerald, Teresa Monaghan, Kathy Kanavy, Fr. Rich Gabuzda*

# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS \$75,000 GRANT GRATEFULLY RECEIVED



This is the second year in a row the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus has approved a \$75,000 grant in support of the Summer Seminarian Program. IPF gratefully acknowledges and thanks the Knights for their support of the Mission of IPF. The Nebraska State Council and several local Councils have also contributed to the financial support of the Institute over the last several years. Pictured here at the reception of the check from the Knights are Tom Pogge, Mission Advancement Director, Mike Conrad, Supreme Director and Immediate Past State Deputy for Nebraska, Fr. Richard Gabuzda, Jim Haiar, State Deputy for Nebraska, and Kathy Kanavy.

## NCDVD ANNUAL MEETING FEATURES IPF



The National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors awarded the St. John Vianney Award to IPF at their annual meeting in September. The award is presented to individuals or organizations that have made an outstanding contribution and positive impact on vocations to diocesan priesthood by respond-

ing to a demonstrated need or issue.

IPF's relationship with NCDVD dates back to 1995 when the Institute was first being formed. IPF is deeply appreciative of being honored with this award.

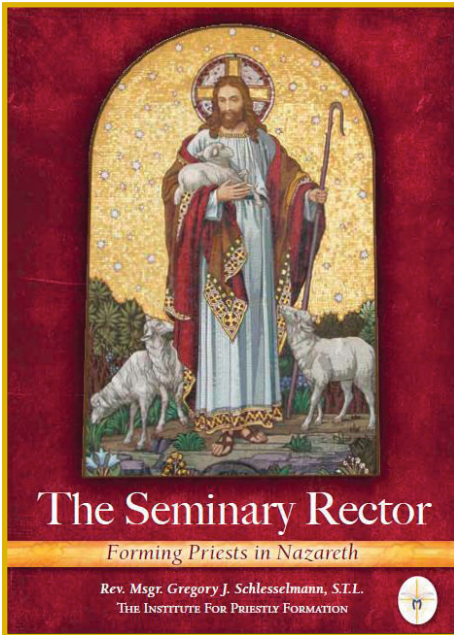
IPF's Deacon James Keating was a keynote speaker at their annual meeting. In his meditation, "Falling In Love and Staying in Love: Vocation, Discernment, and Prayer", the themes of love and prayer were explored to help men discern if the priesthood is their true way to holiness.



*Deacon James Keating*



# NEW BOOK HELPS SEMINARY RECTORS



IPF Publications announces the publication of a new book, *The Seminary Rector: Forming Priests in Nazareth*, authored by Msgr. Gregory Schlesselmann. Written as a prayerful reflection on the important role of the seminary rector, this book addresses the specific

*Continued from Inaugural, page 4.*

was announced at the annual Celebration of Priesthood Banquet held in April. Since its conception, 32 accounts have been opened within the fund for diocesan and ordered priests, living and deceased.

When \$5,000 is donated in honor of a priest, his name will be permanently inscribed on the beautiful plaque which will be on the Wall of Honor at the Institute. A brief biography of the honored priest and a list of all donors to his account will be perpetually inscribed in the Book of Remembrance. When the Institute's new Center for Priestly Spirituality is constructed, there will be a prominent place for remembrance where the plaque and book will be placed.

Every year a Mass will be celebrated on the IPF campus in remembrance of all honored priests and listed donors.

Is there a special priest in your life you

needs of a rector as he pastors his seminary flock. The book is based on Msgr. Schlesselmann's years as rector of Cardinal Muench Seminary in the Diocese of Fargo as well as his service to the Institute for Priestly Formation as an instructor and spiritual director.

The book is divided into chapters which address the rector's role as it relates to the five identities of the priest, discussed in Blessed John Paul II's *Pastores Dabo Vobis* and the writings of St. Paul: Beloved Son, Loyal Brother, Chaste Spouse, Loving Father, and Good Shepherd. Each chapter contains Scriptural text, discussion of the chapter's theme, and reflection questions. The basic premise of the book is that Nazareth, the place where Jesus spent His seminal years with Joseph and Mary, was the first seminary, for it was there that Jesus' formation took place.

With the assistance of a generous gift from the Sullivan Foundation, the book was produced and distributed to every rector and bishop in the United States.



*Msgr. Charles Brodersen, Msgr. William Fitzgerald, Msgr. William Whelan, Fr. David Reeson and Fr. Mark Toups were in attendance at the Pope John Paul II Fund Mass and luncheon.*

would like to honor and at the same time assist the Institute in the spiritual formation of future priests who will impact other lives in yet unknown ways?

Please contact Tom Pogge, Director of Mission Advancement, at 402-280-3528 or [ptpogge@creighton.edu](mailto:ptpogge@creighton.edu), to receive a copy of the Pope John Paul II Fund for Priests brochure or to make a donation.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 14-19, 2012  
**Training Program in Spiritual Direction**  
Mundelein Seminary  
Chicago, Illinois

OCTOBER 20-23, 2012  
**Federation of Seminary  
Spiritual Directors Meeting**  
Detroit, Michigan

DECEMBER 8, 2012  
**Morning of Reflection**  
Christ the King Church  
Omaha, Nebraska  
*For the Laity and the Clergy*

JANUARY 14-18, 2013  
**Training Program in Spiritual Direction**  
Mundelein Seminary, Chicago, Illinois

JANUARY 24, 2013  
**"March for Life" Alumni Gathering**  
Blessed JPPII Seminary  
Washington, D.C.

FEBRUARY 4-11, 2013  
**IPF Alumni Retreat**  
Cenacle of Our Lady of Divine Providence  
Clearwater, Florida

FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 3, 2013  
**12th Annual Symposium on the Spirituality  
and Identity of the Diocesan Priest**  
Antheneum of Ohio Mount St. Mary's Seminary  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
*Theme*  
*Beloved Son: Living Christ's Own Filial Obedience*  
*Keynote Speaker*  
*Archbishop J. Peter Sartain, Archdiocese of Seattle*

MARCH 23, 2013  
**Anniversary Celebration Mass and Reception**  
St. Cecilia Cathedral  
Omaha, Nebraska  
*For the Laity and the Clergy*

APRIL 4, 2013  
**Celebration of Priesthood Dinner**  
Saint Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church  
Omaha, Nebraska  
*For the Laity and the Clergy*

MAY 13-17, 2013  
**Training Program in Spiritual Direction**  
Mundelein Seminary, Chicago, Illinois



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FALL 2012

Man is made for the infinite. Pope Benedict XVI



Pope Benedict



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Testimonies



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