



INSTITUTE *for*
PRIESTLY FORMATION

Summer 2023

Hearts on Fire

Magazine



Hearts on Fire Benefit

On April 13th, IPF held its annual IPF Presents Hearts on Fire Benefit Banquet at St. Robert Bellarmine. Read details about the event and the goal of the evening on pg 12.



INSTITUTE *for*
PRIESTLY FORMATION

A Public Association of the Faithful
in the Archdiocese of Omaha

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Cover Photo:

At the IPF Presents Hearts on Fire Benefit Banquet, Fr. Richard Gabuzda introduces a video of adjunct summer faculty talking about the importance of the summer program.

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Our Mission

In collaboration with Catholic seminaries and dioceses, we form seminarians, priests, and bishops in holiness and accompany them in their ongoing spiritual growth, so they can more effectively lead others to Christ.

Our Vision

We envision a joyful and powerful renewal of holiness across the U.S. Catholic Church as more diocesan seminarians, priests, and bishops seek and commit to a personal, deep, and sustained spiritual communion with the Trinity.

Our Objectives

1. Live out our beliefs and convictions in everything we do with humility and magnanimity, and inspired by the Holy Spirit, knowing we are nothing without God.
2. Stay focused on why we exist: to serve the spiritual formation needs of diocesan seminarians, priests, bishops, and those involved in priestly formation.
3. Ensure the ongoing excellence of our programs, retreats, publications, and activities by proactively seeking input and information from others.
4. Sustain and grow funding to ensure that IPF continues its mission for generations to come.

From the IPF Executive Director:

Dear Friends,

During Holy Week I was with the priests in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City to give a reflection on spiritual fatherhood prior to their Chrism Mass (when the holy oils used in the diocese are blessed, and the chrism is consecrated). This is typical in many dioceses—a chance for priests to gather for prayer, a meal, and a reflection before their Chrism Mass.

While in Oklahoma City, I visited a new shrine dedicated to Blessed Stanley Rother, a priest from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, who spent much of his priesthood as a missionary in Guatemala and was martyred there. It is an enormous shrine that seats 2,000 people and opened in February 2023. Blessed Stanley is buried underneath the altar. I thought about Blessed Stanley's life as a pastor in the mountain villages in Guatemala. In January 1981, after 13 years in Guatemala, he returned to Oklahoma, briefly, at the request of others because his life was in danger. However, his heart never left the people of Guatemala. He returned to Guatemala in April 1981 and was martyred in July of that year. He wrote a letter to the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City about his desire to stay in Guatemala. His own words are suggestive of his own spiritual fatherhood. He wrote: "This is one of the reasons I have for staying in the face of physical harm. The shepherd cannot run at the first sign of danger."

Priests give access to Christ through the sacraments and reveal God the Father's love in his (the priest's) paternal care for those who have been entrusted to him. Like the ministry of Jesus, the priest does not take the place of God the Father; rather, he reveals the Father's love. Spiritual fatherhood is a lifelong commitment for a priest to conform his life to that of Christ, to be in communion with Jesus and God the Father, each day, as to reveal the love of God to others.

We are honored to have a fund that is named after Blessed Stanley Rother that supports our retreats for seminarians who are on the cusp of ordination, that they may be more conformed to Christ in their daily lives. It was inspiring, and renewing, to pray at the tomb of Blessed Stanley, a parish priest, with a heart conformed to Christ, the Good Shepherd.

God bless you,



Fr. Brian Welter,
Executive Director of IPF



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From the IPF Foundation President:



As we approach Pentecost, I feel a joy I have never known or understood, the powerful gift of the Holy Spirit. I generally do not make New Year's resolutions; however, I decided this year to research and, hopefully, grasp a deeper understanding of the third member of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit. In several books that I have read, a common theme

throughout history is to describe the

Holy Spirit as a "mystery," "Unknown God," "the Great Unknown," "the unstudied," "the poor person in the Trinity." I would have been the first one to agree with this description, never truly understanding the full role of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Trinity. However, my last three years at IPF have led me to a deeper spiritual understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit. Not only do I appreciate His many precious gifts, but I also begin to recognize Him everywhere.

My last three years at IPF have have led me to a deeper spiritual understanding of the power of the Holy Spirit.

This year, I have experienced many moments of insight, awareness, and knowledge that can only have come through the power of prayer and enlightenment by the Holy Spirit. For example, I perceive the Holy Spirit's presence in the finding of IPF's new office building, renovation of the space, and overwhelming financial support to help pay for the building through grants, individual gifts, and multi-year pledges in one year! I see the Holy Spirit's power in the continued growth of programs for seminarians, priests, and bishops across the country, when IPF was asked to host a symposium with Church leaders from across the country, and in our advisory boards, committee members, event volunteers, and Spiritual Moms, who are so important to the success of events, and provide a dome of grace for IPF. The Holy Spirit is also present in the success and support of our first Hearts on Fire Benefit Banquet in Omaha this year and across the country and in the outstanding IPF staff

who join our dedicated IPF family. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the mission of IPF and the hearts of those associated with IPF is clearly visible.

We look forward to the arrival of 115 seminarians and nearly 70 adjunct faculty and spiritual directors on Memorial Day weekend. It is such an exciting time of year to be a small part of the ongoing renewal.

I leave you with a hymn that many learned as a child, "Come Holy Ghost." We sang the song all the time, but it is here at IPF I gained a deeper understanding of its meaning:

"Come Holy Ghost, Creator Blest, And in our hearts take up thy rest;

Come with thy grace and heavenly aid to fill the hearts which thou hast made..."

"O Comforter, to thee we cry, Thou heavenly gift of God most high:

Thou font of life and fire of love, And sweet anointing from above..."

"Praise be to thee, Father and Son, and Holy Spirit with them one.

And may the Son on us bestow the gifts that from the Spirit flow..."

Come Holy Spirit,

Mary Buttell,
President of the IPF Foundation



Come, Holy Spirit! Veni, Sancte Spiritus!



Return to Me With All Your Heart: IPF's Lenten Morning of Reflection

Return To Me With All Your Heart was a beautiful Lenten morning of reflection led by Fr. Jim Rafferty on March 25th at Christ the King Parish. A great crowd turned out for the half-day retreat led by the staff of IPF. Those in attendance were encouraged to spend time in prayer, futher their relationship with God. As always, the day ended with the participants sharing many graces received from the presentation and their prayer time. You can visit the IPF website any time to watch the video of Fr. Rafferty's talk along with many other excellent teaching videos. We hope to see you at our next Morning of Reflection on December 9th at Christ the King Church in Omaha, NE.



Scan the code with your phone to view the 2023 Lenten Reflection!



Nancy McNulty



Rachel Wiechelmann

Welcome Nancy and Rachel to the IPF Staff

We are delighted to announce two new members of the IPF staff. Nancy McNulty joins the IPF staff as our new Administrative Assistant, welcoming guests and assisting with IPF programs. Rachel Wiechelmann is our new Staff Accountant, working diligently with IPF's finances. Two brief biographies are listed below that provide further details on each of these two lovely ladies.

Nancy McNulty joins the IPF staff after working for Christ the King and St. Philip Neri Churches. A proud graduate of Franciscan University, Nancy's Master's degree in Counseling has played an important role in both her professional and personal life. Nancy has a lifelong love of the Church and works to help the indispensable role of the Church in bringing all people to Christ. Nancy and her husband of twenty-nine years, Jim, are members of St. Peter Catholic Church in Omaha. An advocate of homeschooling, Nancy was blessed to homeschool their five wonderful children. She now enjoys the role of grandmother to two beautiful grandsons, with grandson number three due in July. Nancy looks forward to continuing her service to the Church through her work with IPF.

Rachel Wiechelmann was born and raised in Aberdeen, Washington. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting and with a minor in Communications from Western Washington University in 2020. After her graduation, Rachel moved to Omaha, Nebraska where she quickly found her home. Currently, Rachel is pursuing her MBA at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and will graduate in December 2024. Outside of work, Rachel is very active in her parish young adult group, Regeneration. She also enjoys hiking and disc golfing on the weekends. Rachel is a parishioner at St. Gerald in Ralston, Nebraska.

IPF Living Stones Campaign Donor List

Donations Received in the Living Stones Campaign

IPF regrets any errors or omissions.

If you notice an error, please contact the Institute at 531-272-8476 or email ipf@priestlyformation.org.

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Workers bring in a new altar for the IPF Chapel in early April. Other new furniture delivered included the ambo, stand for the tabernacle, candle holder, and a few small tables to hold items for Mass.



IPF Priests of St. Joseph Update

In March, the IPF Priests of St. Joseph gathered at the St. Joseph and Mary Retreat House on the campus of Mundelein Seminary for some days of fraternal sharing. Each day included a time of Eucharistic Adoration, Mass, and conversation. From left to right, they are Fr. Josh Brown, Fr. Jorge Garcia, Fr. Andrew Gehringer, Fr. Richard Gabuzda, Fr. Robert Cadrecha, Fr. Jim Rafferty, and Fr. Jeff Eirvin.

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Pilgrimage to Italy

In celebration of our 30th anniversary, the Institute will be conducting a pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi. The nine-day excursion, November 10-18, 2024, will bring pilgrims to many places of interest in both Rome and Assisi.

Some of the highlights include visiting St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museums (including the Sistine Chapel), and the scavi, the excavations underneath St. Peter's. On our way to Assisi, we will stop in Greccio, the place where St. Francis held the first live "nativity scene." During our two days in Assisi, we will visit the Basilicas of St. Francis, St. Clare, and San Damiano.

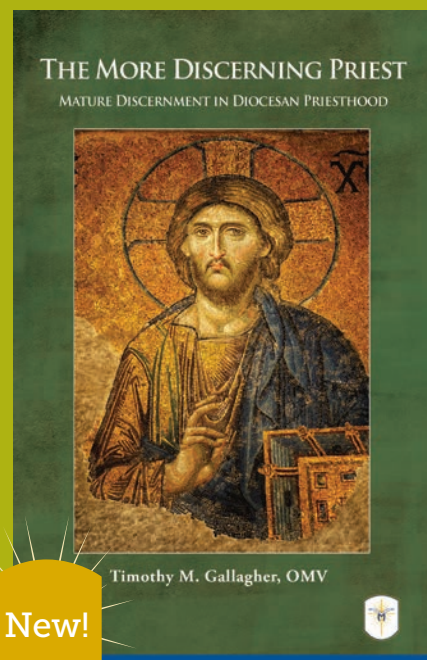
More details will be forthcoming, but those interested can contact Fr. Rich Gabuzda for more information.

Fr. Richard Gabuzda
531-272-8449
ipf@priestlyformation.org

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New!

The More Discerning Priest

By Fr. Timothy Gallagher, OMV

In their life and ministry, priests must not only resist the discouragement of desolation but also an energy, a consolation that may draw them toward a good thing—but not one that God desires for them. In eight clear and practical rules, Saint Ignatius of Loyola provides a roadmap through such sensitive discernments. In this book, the first of its kind, Father Gallagher applies these eight rules specifically to the priestly vocation. This short, easily read, and profound book will provide light and guidance to any priest who reads it.

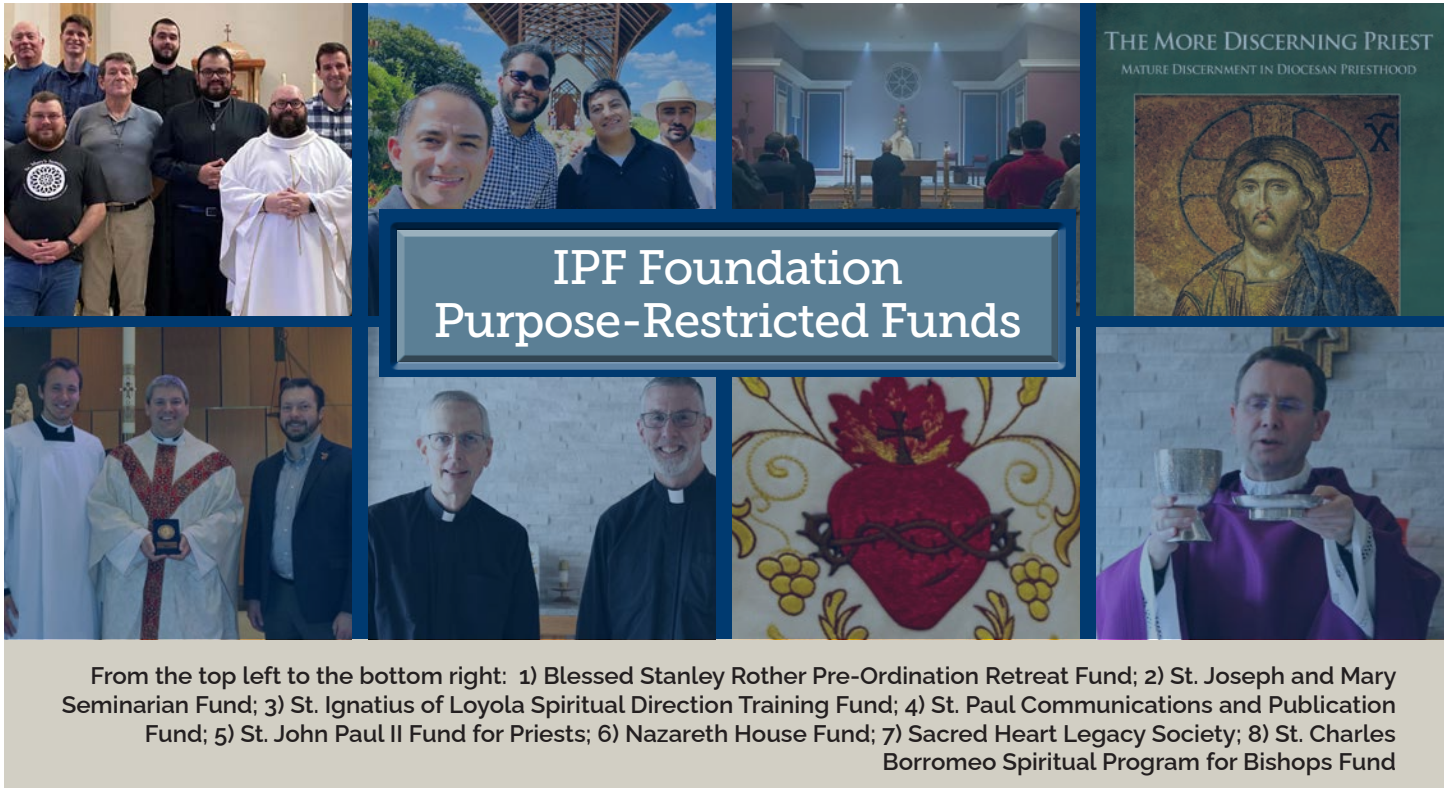
Order online at
www.ipfpublications.org

ISBN #: 9798985934540

Cost: \$10.95

Why is a Foundation Important to a Non-Profit Corporation?

A series of articles in the next several issues of the *Hearts on Fire Magazine* will provide information regarding the IPF Foundation and why a thriving Foundation is essential to the future of IPF.



From the top left to the bottom right: 1) Blessed Stanley Rother Pre-Ordination Retreat Fund; 2) St. Joseph and Mary Seminarian Fund; 3) St. Ignatius of Loyola Spiritual Direction Training Fund; 4) St. Paul Communications and Publication Fund; 5) St. John Paul II Fund for Priests; 6) Nazareth House Fund; 7) Sacred Heart Legacy Society; 8) St. Charles Borromeo Spiritual Program for Bishops Fund

As the Institute for Priestly Formation grew, so did the need for another revenue stream and the ability to provide for the future of IPF. That realization prompted plans to establish the IPF Foundation Corporation in 2006 with the very generous pro bono legal work of Omaha attorney Larry Dwyer. Larry, with the support of Fr. Rich Gabuzda, had the forethought to prepare and file the extensive legal documents and Articles of Incorporation for the IPF Foundation.

According to the document, "The Institute for Priestly Formation Foundation Corporation is organized exclusively for religious, educational, and charitable purposes to the extent that such business may be conducted by organizations that qualify as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provision under any federal law."

The purpose of the IPF Foundation Corporation is "exclusively to support and benefit the Institute for Priestly Formation Inc. . . . and it adopts IPF's Mission Statement as its own." The IPF Foundation provides donors with additional ways to give in a manner that reflects the donors' giving preferences. A thriving

Foundation is essential to the future of IPF and is imperative to the growth of the mission of IPF and a renewal of the priesthood in the Catholic Church.

The purpose-restricted funds listed above support IPF programs. The money in these funds is requested via grants by IPF so that it can be used to provide for individual programs. In this issue, we are highlighting a fund for the Pre-Ordination Retreat program, the Blessed Stanley Rother Pre-Ordination Fund established by the Rev. James Schwertley Estate.

This newest IPF program, the Pre-Ordination Retreat, meets an important need for seminarians approaching either diaconate or priesthood ordination. It is a silent directed retreat that includes daily Mass, individual spiritual direction, retreat silence, and four personal one-hour periods of prayer each day. Although previous Pre-Ordination Retreats have taken place at a retreat house near Corpus Christi, Texas, this year the retreat will be held at a retreat house near Baltimore, Maryland. For more information on this fund or other Foundation Funds, visit the IPF website: priestlyformation.org.

Summer at IPF



Mass at St. John's Church

- Daily Mass at 8:30 a.m. Monday through Friday
- Starting Monday, June 12th through Friday, July 28th
- Except for June 19th, July 3rd + 4th, July 24th, and days when funerals are held in St. John's (check the IPF website for updates)



Adoration at St. John's Church

- Weekly Evening Prayer and a Holy Hour of Adoration at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday
- Starting Wednesday, June 14th through Wednesday, July 26th

Friends Night Takes Place in New Location

This year, due to construction on Creighton's campus, we will not be able to use the Skutt Student Center for Friends Night. There is also construction work being done on the fountain and steps outside of St. John's Church. Full details about the schedule for Friends Night on Wednesday July 19th will be provided as we get closer to the actual event. We still plan to begin with Adoration in St. John's Church. The second half of the evening will take place in the Harper Center Ballroom (off of 20th and California Streets). Thank you for your patience and understanding!



Seminarian Peter Danner with his Spiritual Mom Anna Hill at Friends Night 2022.

Tina Targy is New IPF Programs Coordinator

Tina Targy, who was serving as the Events and Volunteer Coordinator for the IPF Foundation, has moved into a new position at IPF. She is now the Programs Coordinator, assisting Susan Wilson with summer programs at IPF, and serving as the point person for all programs outside of the summer months. Please join us in congratulating her on this new position, and offering prayers for her as she starts this new job.

IPF Hearts on Fire Benefit Banquet Recap

Aiming to “Fill the Gap” for the Summer Seminarian Program

The Institute for Priestly Formation was very excited to host an in-person benefit banquet this year - the first time since 2019. The \$150,000 goal for the event was focused on the Summer Program for Diocesan Seminarians, primarily raising money to “Fill the Gap” between what seminarians pay to attend and what IPF subsidizes, as well as looking to defray some of the costs incurred by the 70+ adjunct faculty and spiritual directors who journey to Omaha each summer to help staff the program.

The celebration took place on April 13, 2023 at St. Robert Bellarmine’s Mainelli Parish Center. After a wonderful social hour and dinner, Bob Gunia, the emcee, invited Fr. Brian Welter, IPF’s Executive Director, to the stage. After a brief introduction, Fr. Welter presented the first IPF St. John Vianney Award for Priestly Service to Archbishop George Lucas. The archbishop’s service on the IPF Corporate Board has provided encouragement and support for the mission of IPF.

After the award, Will Targy, a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Omaha, came forward and reflected on how his time in the summer program had moved his heart and provided a chance for him to go deeper in his relationship with God. Fr. Gabuzda followed this with an overview of the summer program, then introduced a short testimonial video. The video, produced by Stella Productions, shared the heart-warming perspective of IPF’s summer adjunct faculty. They talked about why they returned to Omaha each

summer, the graces they had seen from the program, and how IPF gave them hope.

With the video finished, Mary Buttell, President of the IPF Foundation, came forward and began the evening’s call to action: attempting to “Fill the Gap” for the summer program for diocesan seminarians. She identified the costs and expenses that IPF works with each summer and set the goal to raise \$150,000 for the evening. Fr. Joseph Kelly and Fr. Vincent Fortunato, special guests from New York and New Jersey who are long-time summer faculty members, came forward to encourage those attending to help “Fill the Gap”. After a few prayers and much laughter, the staff at IPF was overjoyed at the response from the crowd. Between the underwriting and money raised during the call to action, IPF’s net profit for the evening was approximately \$110,211.00.

The event was an incredible success. IPF would like to recognize Tim and Sally O’Neill for their work as the event chairs, as well as thank all those who attended. IPF also offers a special thank you to Fr. Reeson and the parishoners of St. Roberts for their hospitality. If you were unable to attend or donate to “Fill the Gap”, please visit the IPF website. A virtual event video is available for all to watch, which provides a deeper understanding of IPF’s mission. If your heart is moved, we would encourage you to help IPF achieve the final net goal by using the envelope enclosed in this magazine to make a donation.



Bob Gunia, Master of Ceremonies, keeps track of the support offered as those in attendance help to “Fill the Gap” for the IPF Summer Program for Diocesan Seminarians.



Watch IPF’s Virtual Event by scanning the QR code above with your phone



From the top left: Fr. Joseph Kelly, Rob Stuart, and Fr. Vincent Fortunato are all smiles at the Benefit Banquet.

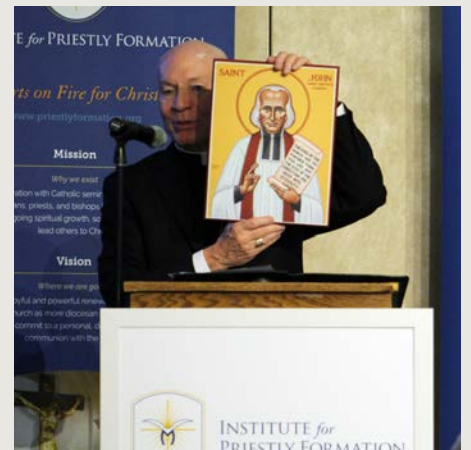
Kathy and Fr. Rich say hello to Valerie and Michael Conzett during the event.

Seminarian Will Targy and his mother, Tina Targy, offer a cheerful grin to the camera.

Archbishop George Lucas peeks out from behind the St. John Vianney Award that was presented to him.

Brett Frevert and Mary Buttell enjoy a moment of comraderie as the event begins.

Joan and George Baca, seminarian Thomas Matya, and Sally O'Neill pose for a group photo.





Symposium Held in Chicago

In March, the Institute welcomed more than 100 participants to the Conference Center at Mundelein Seminary for a symposium on the "propaedeutic year." Mandated by the Vatican's Dicastery for the Clergy, the propaedeutic year is an initial time of formation, prior to formal seminary studies.

The event, with support from Mundelein Seminary and the McEssey Foundation, provided a time and place for bishops, vocation directors, directors of the propaedeutic year, and other seminary formators to gather for input and discussion about this important new addition to priestly formation.

Keynote presentations were offered by Deacon James Keating, faculty member at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, St. Louis, and Bishop Andrew Cozzens, Bishop of Crookston. Responses to the keynotes were offered by Bishop Ronald Hicks of Joliet and Fr. Brady Wagner, who directs the spiritual year at the Archdiocese of Denver seminary. A panel presentation was offered by four individuals, representing different aspects of the formation itinerary: Fr. Tom Byrne, Fr. John Floeder, Fr. Paul Hoelsing, and Fr. Andrew Merrick. Large and small group discussions were held throughout the weekend as well.

Comments provided by the participants called for continuing conversation on this subject, including the desire for a future symposium. Other ideas include offering a webinar in March of 2024 and providing an online location for further exchange of resources and ideas.

The symposium was the first nationwide gathering focusing on the propaedeutic year. The exchange of ideas among participants from different areas and situations provided a sense of encouragement and hope as this new chapter in seminary formation gets underway.



New IPF Publication Distributed Like Bread

Written by: Dr. Jonathan Ciraulo, Author

Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988) is one of the most important theologians of the twentieth century, whose enormous erudition led Henri de Lubac to call him "the most cultured man in Europe." Known for his sixteen-volume theological trilogy on beauty, goodness, and truth, Balthasar also wrote frequently on discernment, the priestly and religious life, and the importance of celibacy.

Distributed Like Bread: Hans Urs Von Balthasar Speaks to Seminarians synthesizes this material in order to present Balthasar's theology of the priesthood in a way that responds to current questions regarding the intelligibility of the priestly vocation today. Balthasar helps to set the priesthood in its proper theological setting, for example, by helpfully downgrading the importance of typical sociological arguments in favor of celibacy, showing instead that the celibate state is understood properly only when it is seen as an eschatological sign. Balthasar also provides helpful categories for conceptualizing the relationship between personal freedom and the office of the priesthood, showing how one becomes a person precisely through the reception of a definitive mission, a mission that makes a person truly ecclesial and, thus, open to both God and to others. Balthasar upholds the necessary distinction between the sanctity of the priestly office and the subjective holiness of any given priest but also gives us a framework by which we can understand the particular call to holiness for every priest.

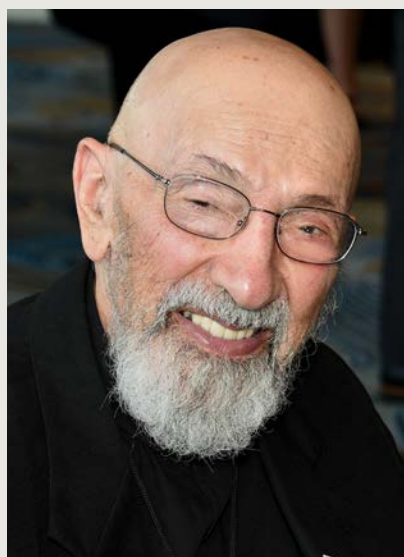
Above all, the book shows that the priest is called to imitate the Eucharistic Christ, who distributes Himself with abandon for the life of the world. Although specifically addressed to seminarians, this book will be of interest to priests, religious, and all those discerning God's call.



Order online at
www.ipfpublications.org

ISBN #: 9798985934533

Cost: \$8.95



Celebrating Msgr. Esseff's 70th Ordination Anniversary and 95th Birthday

Msgr. John Esseff has worked with the Institute for Priestly Formation since the very beginning, as he was often consulted for his discernment input and wisdom even before the programs began. This year, he celebrates two milestones - his 95th birthday and his 70th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. On June 4th, he offered a Mass of Thanksgiving for his 70th anniversary of ordination in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. On June 13, he celebrated his 95th birthday. Msgr. Esseff has had to minimize his travel schedule and will not be joining IPF in Omaha this summer. Join us as we hold Msgr. Esseff in prayer for his years of dedicated and faith-filled work! May his close relationship with Jesus continue to bear great fruit in his life and ministry.



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Calendar of Upcoming Events

- ▶ July 19, 2023
Friends Night
St. John's Church + Harper
Center Ballroom, Omaha, NE
- ▶ August 27 - Sept 1, 2023
NCDVD Conference
Long Island, NY
- ▶ September 24-29 (Oct. 3rd), 2023
**Spiritual Direction
Training Program, Sec. A**
Mundelein Seminary, IL
- ▶ October 8-13 (17th), 2023
**Spiritual Direction
Training Program, Sec. B**
Mundelein Seminary, IL
- ▶ October 19, 2023 (Morning)
**IPF Corporate Board
Meeting**
- ▶ October 19, 2023 (Afternoon)
**Joint Meeting with
IPF Corporate and IPF
Foundation Board**
- ▶ October 20, 2023 (Morning)
**IPF Foundation Board
Meeting**
- ▶ November 6-13, 2023
Alumni Retreat
Cenacle of Divine Providence,
Clearwater, FL
- ▶ November 11, 2023
**Bishops Advisory
Council Meeting**
- ▶ December 9, 2023
**Advent Morning of
Reflection**
Christ the King Parish
Omaha, NE

