

FISHERS of MEN

“Follow me, and I will make you...” Matthew 4:19

Volume #1 § Issue #1

Installation of Archbishop Lucas

Installations do not happen everyday. In fact there have been 10 bishops in our 124 year diocesan history, and the last four Archbishops of Omaha served for 12, 21, 24, and 16 years respectively. The seminarians were able to take part in the historic ceremonies for our 5th Archbishop of Omaha, Archbishop George Joseph Lucas. On June 3rd the Vatican announced then Bishop Lucas’ transfer from the Diocese of Springfield to Omaha. Following protocol, the appointment included the Holy See’s acceptance of then Archbishop Curtiss’ resignation, which was submitted on his 75th

birthday, June 16, 2007. Our newly designated Archbishop Lucas received the pallium from Pope Benedict on June 29th at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. His installation day at St. Cecilia’s Cathedral, July 22nd, was marked by exceptionally mild and pleasant summer weather. All of the splendor and order of the Church’s ritual were on display, and we welcomed our new shepherd for the coming years. The seminarians had front row seats for the installation events and will have special regard in our new Archbishop’s ministry. We note the following quotes from Archbishop Lucas in Charlie Wieser’s Letter From the Editor column in the June issue of the Catholic Voice: *“I think we have a lot of work to do with all young people in trying to help them understand that they’re all being called by God for something really important*

Archbishop Lucas at his Installation



and good in their lives. Certainly some of them are being called to the priesthood.” In searching for priestly candidates, Archbishop Lucas said, *“The Archdiocese of Omaha is looking for men who are drawn to the Eucharist, find strength in participating in Mass, and relate to the Lord in Eucharistic adoration.”* §

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Archdiocese Welcomes Nine Men to the Seminary this Fall

Each year some new men begin that journey of trust and become our seminarians. The new faces are always the result of God’s goodness and their prayerful courage. Upon acceptance, the current seminarians are ready to receive them as new brothers in the Lord, and the Archbishop welcomes them as new sons in preparation for the priesthood. The whole transition reflects the spiritual vitality of the Church. Our nine new men have very

different backgrounds and gifts. Take a moment to observe their variety, and appreciate with wonder how the Lord is always at work in the heart of every person. Their more complete biographies are available in the Vocations section of “Meet the Seminarians” on-line: www.archomaha.org/vocations. Each of these new men has the potential to be a fine priest. Let us pray for the new men in particular and all of our seminarians daily. §



Vocation Director's Corner

Father Paul C. Hoelsing—Director of Vocations

Greetings from the Office of Vocations! After one year in the saddle, it seemed appropriate to offer a regular communiqué to pastors, Serrans, parish vocation committees, and others who are especially invested in the work of promoting and fostering vocations. A special shout goes out to the new Serra Club in Norfolk. May this newsletter allow a fruitful encouragement to your efforts in the rural area.

Many ask me what the Director of Vocations does. The days are always different, but the roles may be likened to a pastor and missionary. Looking after the welfare and formation of the seminarians will always be a uniquely pastoral role. Going out to meet and encourage the men who are considering the vocation to the priesthood will require pastoral skills and missionary zeal. In addition to my rotation through the Catholic high schools, I am also offering to cover weekend Masses, as missionaries so often do, with Sunday homilies crafted for this Year for Priests. Travels often take me to groups of Wednesday night religious education classes, confirmation retreats, summer youth retreats, and other gatherings of faithful young people, all in the effort to raise vocation awareness throughout the year. In these pastoral and missionary roles, the Archbishop generously provides the delegation and sends me into this daily labor. Nothing substantial could be accomplished without him.

This year has also seen an adjustment in the responsibilities of the Office of Vocations. Our office has been called upon to oversee the College Campus Ministry in the Archdiocese and UNO in particular. Last year allowed me to begin many relationships with the

FOCUS missionary staff and the UNO students. The additional pastoral responsibility seems to have occurred for three reasons. First, there was some discussion about the management of our resources and fiscal responsibility. These days everyone seems to be tightening their budgets. Secondly, I recently bumped into Fr. Reeson, former Director of Vocations for the Archdiocese, and he mentioned that UNO Catholic Campus Ministry was under his care during his tenure. That institutional memory may have contributed to the consideration of a shift. If I were to offer another reason, it seems that a fruitful connection occurs when the Vocation Director is involved in the lives of college students. Several Newman Centers would endorse this strategy. Many young people are considering their vocation during college. If we want to serve them in those formative years, a Director of Vocations should find a natural habitat in ministry with college students.

Of all the considerations of this first newsletter, it would have to be the immense graciousness I have experienced throughout the year. Through the support of Archbishop Emeritus Elden F. Curtiss, our new Archbishop George J. Lucas, Serrans, Knights of Columbus, my brother priests, and so many others, I am astonished with gratitude. Please be assured of my prayers of thanksgiving and intercession for you all. ☩

Sincerely in Christ,

Father Paul Hoelsing

Office of Vocations
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e-mail: vocations@archomaha.org



Seminarian's Corner

James Weeder—Theology III, Kenrick-Glennon Seminary

Growing up I never thought about the priesthood as a possible vocation for myself. The first time I thought about the priesthood was in 2001 at the age of 25. One of my co-workers, who was in the same stage of life and doing many of the same things that I was, entered the seminary. At that time I was not open to the priesthood and thought the call would go away. After two years of running away from the call I finally gave into "God's nagging," applied, and was accepted to the seminary for the Archdiocese of Omaha in 2003.

As you know this first step toward the seminary is only the start of discernment. In fact, I was ready to quit the seminary after each of the first three years of seminary; however, with the guidance and support of

many of you, especially Fr. Baxter and Fr. O'Donnell, I realized that I had not truly discerned where God was calling me and would have left for the wrong reasons. Although this guidance helped, I was not able to see past the reservations I had about the priesthood until I did a retreat directed by Father Francis Nigli. During this retreat God revealed to me that I could have in the priesthood the happiness that I thought I could only find in marriage. It was at this retreat when I finally said "Yes" to the priesthood. Since that "Yes" I have found much peace, joy, and happiness in my discernment.

I have been very blessed to work with and get to know many of you, the priests of the Archdiocese. Your fraternity, generosity, and witness

reaffirm my vocation. I look forward to the day that, God willing, I will be able to call you brother priests. I know that I have left out many of you who have had an impact on my vocation, but I wanted to mention the above because of the vital role that they had in my discernment. Finally, I cannot close without mentioning Fr. Edward Gill, of happy memory, who suffered much in his final years and shared with me the true joy of the priesthood. Thank you for all that you have done for me and for the "People of God." ☩

Sincerely in Christ,
James Weeder, Theology III
Kenrick-Glennon Seminary

Mark Your Calendar!

Vocation Director's Fall High School Visit Schedule

October 9th – Morning: Humphrey, St. Francis & Lindsay Holy Family

October 9th – Afternoon: Elgin, Pope John XXIII

October 14th & 15th: Skutt High School, teaching seniors

October 30th: West Point Central Catholic High School

November 4th: Norfolk Catholic High School

Seminary Visits for Prospects Schedule:

November 5-7th: St. John Vianney Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. Depart on Thursday at Noon and Return Saturday at 6:00 p.m.

November 14-16th: Conception Seminary in Conception, Missouri. Depart at noon on Saturday and Return Monday at 4:00 p.m.

Let me know if you have anyone interested in attending one of the seminary visits.

Archbishop's Fall Open House for Vocations:

October 25th 5-8 p.m.: Suneg Center at St. Margaret Mary Parish

We had **twenty six** men attend the Spring Open House in June and **five** of those entered the seminary this fall.



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Office of Vocations

Seminarian Day

The Seminarian Day was another fine occasion for the families and friends of the seminarians. The last official event of the seminarians' summer was also the first parish event for our new Archbishop Lucas. The afternoon began with Daytime Prayer and the introduction of the Seminarian Handbook. The seminarians were able to have an extended, personal conversation with our new Archbishop before the parish's Saturday evening Mass. Since five of our current seminarians hail from Saint Columbkille parish, the accommodations and liturgy were especially festive. Fittingly, all witnessed the Candidacy of Mr. John Norman. His home parish and brother seminarians saw him declare his resolution to prepare his mind and spirit faithfully for Holy Orders.

Mr. Norman departed for his first year of theological studies at the North American College later in the month. We look forward to next year's Seminarian Day at Saint Thomas More parish on Sunday, August 1st. ☩



Mr. John Norman Declares his Candidacy

FOCUS

Vision for Life

For the past four years, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students has been active on the campus of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. With a steadily growing number of students in residence halls, the increase in student population, and the general effectiveness of peer-evangelization, we are seeing an opportunity for great service to our Catholic youth in this critical moment of their lives. In fact, five of our nine New Men have come from contact with FOCUS. One is a former FOCUS missionary, Eliot Schwer. Three were involved with FOCUS Bible Studies and student leadership at UNL, Kevin Sueper, Chaz Zurcher, and Tobias Letak. Another attended FOCUS events while a student at UNO, Sam Jizba. Praise God for these fruits of the new evangelization. ☩

Meet the New Men!



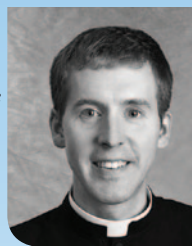
College I

Dan Szalewski age 18
Conception Seminary College
Birthday: January 23rd 1991
Home Town: Papillion, NE
Home Parish: St. Columbkille
djszalewski@archomaha.org



College II

Tobias Letak age 18
St. John Vianney Seminary College
Birthday: March 22nd 1990
Home Town: Omaha, NE
Home Parish:
St. Stephen the Martyr
tmletak@archomaha.org



Pre-Theology I

Jeremy Hans age 38
Kenrick-Glennon Seminary
Birthday: October 30th 1970
Home Town: St. Helena, NE
Home Parish: Holy Family
jjhans@archomaha.org



College I

Jacob Stein age 18
St. John Vianney Seminary College
Birthday: February 28th 1991
Home Town: Papillion, NE
Home Parish: St. Columbkille
jrstein@archomaha.org



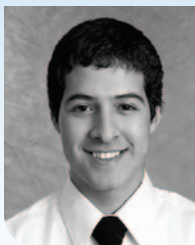
College II

Sam Jizba age 22
St. John Vianney Seminary College
Birthday: November 26th 1989
Home Town: Omaha, NE
Home Parish: St. Elizabeth Ann
spjzba@archomaha.org



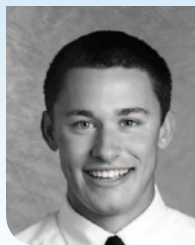
Pre-Theology I

Kevin Sueper age 22
St. John Vianney Seminary College
Birthday: September 2nd 1986
Home Town: Bellevue, NE
Home Parish: St. Mary's, Bellevue
UNL Graduate 2009
kdsueper@archomaha.org



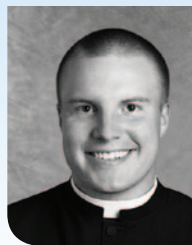
College I

Antonio Guzman age 18
Conception Seminary College
Birthday: October 21st 1990
Home Town: Schuyler, NE
Home Parish:
Divine Mercy; Schuyler, NE
aguzman@archomaha.org



College II

Chaz Zurcher age 22
St. John Vianney Seminary College
Birthday: April 8th 1989
Home Town: Papillion, NE
Home Parish: St. Columbkille
cgzurcher@archomaha.org



Pre-Theology I

Eliot Schwer age 26
St. John Vianney Seminary College
Birthday: March 18th 1983
Home Town: Omaha, NE
Home Parish: St. Margaret Mary
FOCUS Missionary
easchwer@archomaha.org

Schedule of Events

FOCUS Eucharistic Procession

October 1st, 2009 Begin with Mass
at St. Margaret Mary Parish

Archbishop's Open House for Vocations

October 25th, 5-8 p.m. held at the
Suneg Center of St. Margaret Mary

6th Grade Vocation Awareness Day

October 23rd, 2009 Skutt High School
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Archbishop's Christmas Gathering with Seminarians, and Priests.

St. Bernard's Parish, December 23rd,
2009 Evening Prayer 5 p.m. & Dinner
at Archdiocesan Retreat Center
immediately following. Sponsored by
Serra Club of West Omaha

Fall High School Visits

Fall Seminary Visits

National FOCUS Conference

December 29th - January 3rd, 2010

National Vocation Awareness

Week—January 11-16, 2010



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Office of Vocations

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