

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recall that one of my duties is Director of Seminarians. While Fr. Rhett Williams works to help identify men in the initial discernment and application process, my task is to accompany them through the final discernment of their years once they are in seminary.

At present, we have twenty-six men in formation, four of whom are parishioners of our Cathedral parish. In your charity, please keep each of them in your prayers. Here are their names and where they are studying in case you would like to drop them a note of support:

Michael Tracy: Michael is in his third year of configuration and will soon be ordained a deacon (May 23 at Our Lady of the Lake in Chapin, SC). He is in formation at: St. Vincent Seminary, 300 Fraser Purchase Rd., Latrobe, PA 15650.

John Erwin: John is also at formation at St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe (300 Fraser Purchase Rd., Latrobe, PA 15650). He is in his second year of configuration.

Anthony Szwest: Anthony has begun his propaedeutic year at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, 10701 S. Military Trail, Boynton Beach, FL 33436. Next year, he will begin the discipleship phase of his discernment.

John McBurney: John is in his first year of discipleship at Saint Joseph Seminary College, 75376 River Rd., Saint Benedict, LA 70457.

Previously, we spoke of what level of *academic* formation the seminarians were in, e.g., pre-theology, 1<sup>st</sup> theology, etc. These terms only spoke of the intellectual part of their formation. Now, the Church prefers to speak of *phases* of formation, which is more wholistic since seminary formation covers not only academics (intellectual formation), but also three other areas: Spiritual, Human, and Pastoral.

Here are the phases of formation: Discipleship – Growing in becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ. This recognizes that a man doesn't just show up to seminary already fully a disciple. There is still growth to be had. During this time, he learns philosophy as part of his intellectual formation. Configuration – The seminarian is being more closely configured to Christ as shepherd and servant, and his theological studies take place at this time. Finally, Vocational Synthesis – Serving as a deacon in preparation for ordination to the priesthood. This is a time of integration and transition with a heavy pastoral component to help one fully realize the responsibility for the care of souls. Before beginning any of these, the Church has included a special Propaedeutic Year, which is a year of prayerful preparation to discern better God's call.

Please continue to pray for our seminarians, who are giving their lives to serve you in our diocese; and please pray that the Lord will send more men willing to sacrifice themselves as Christ did for you.

And let us pray for each other!  
Father Wilson