



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Annual Seminarian Collection to help future priests kicks off Aug. 5-6

GREEN BAY, Wis. (Aug. 2, 2017) – The annual Seminarian Collection will kick off this weekend, Aug. 5-6, and every Catholic household will be contacted through the mail around this time. This collection benefits the education and support of those who are pursuing a calling to the priesthood for the Green Bay Diocese. Families who would like to make a gift today can do so online at [www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give](http://www.catholicfoundationgb.org/give). Seminararians will visit parishes throughout the month of August to ask for support through this important collection.

“As Pope Francis has shared, a vocation flows from the heart of God, is a fruit that ripens in a well-cultivated field and blossoms in good soil. We can provide that ‘good soil’ by supporting these disciples and encouraging more local men to consider the call to the priesthood. Their faith journey would not have been possible without parishioners’ prayers and support of the Seminarian Collection. Please know whatever gift you are able to give is greatly appreciated,” said Bishop David L. Ricken.

This year, Father Adam Bradley, Father Mark Mleziva, Father Matthew Rappl, Father Jon Thorsen, and Father Zachary Weber were ordained priests on July 1, 2017. This is the largest group of seminararians to be ordained at one time since 1991. This surge is credited to a growing interest in the Catholic priesthood over the past 10 years and the evangelization efforts of the Green Bay Diocese. Most men are in the seminary for six to eight years, which includes two years of studying philosophy and four years of studying theology.

The newly ordained Father Jon Thorsen said, “As a seminarian, my journey to the priesthood has been one of great joy. Your prayers and support of the Seminarian Collection has made my priesthood journey possible. On behalf of all my fellow seminararians, thank you for your continued support of this important collection.”

This is the 13th annual collection for the support of seminararians. Last year, \$1,029,000 was given by over 12,300 donors. The educational and spiritual formation of each candidate for the priesthood costs roughly \$38,000 each year. This coming school year, the Diocese of Green Bay expects to spend more than \$1 million for tuition, room and board, health insurance, summer language, spiritual and pastoral programs, a small stipend, support of the Office of Vocations which invites disciples to consider the priesthood, and other costs.

“As many people know, a calling to the priesthood is not very common and the cost of education can be an added hurdle for those considering this life. This collection makes it possible for our candidates to undertake the beautiful task of serving the Church. All of our efforts are working because people around here are so generous. The Seminarian Collection is never far from the minds of our seminararians as they go about their year,” said Father Daniel Schuster, Vocation Director.

#### **Seminaries:**

*Seminarians are currently studying at the following seminaries:*

- St. John Vianney College Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.
- Conception Seminary College, Conception, Mo.
- St. Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, Ill.
- St. Francis de Sales Seminary, Milwaukee/Sacred Heart, Hales Corners, Wis.
- Pontifical North American College Seminary, Rome, Italy

**Meet Our Seminarians (including details on home parishes and current studies):**

- Dcn. José López, St. Philip the Apostle, Green Bay, Theology IV, St. Francis de Sales Seminary
- Dcn. Kyle Sladek, St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Green Bay, Theology IV, Mundelein Seminary
- Greg Parent, Ss. Peter & Paul, Green Bay, Theology IV, North American College
  - (Greg will be ordained to the Diaconate on September 28, 2017, in Rome, Italy.)
- Connor Schlaack, Most Blessed Sacrament, Oshkosh, Theology III, St. Francis de Sales Seminary
- Matthew Faucett, Holy Family, Marinette, Theology III, North American College
  - (Co-Sponsored Seminarian with the Archdiocese for the Military Services – Army)
- William Evans, St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Theology III, St. Francis de Sales Seminary
- Benjamin Johnson, Most Blessed Sacrament Parish, Oshkosh, Theology II, Mundelein Seminary
- Kevin Ripley, Assumption BVM, Pulaski, Theology II, Mundelein Seminary
- Jon Hynek II, St. Francis of Assisi, Manitowoc, Theology II, St. Francis de Sales Seminary
- Samuel Schultz, Holy Spirit Parish, Kimberly, Theology II, Mundelein Seminary
- Patrick Costello, St. Margaret Mary, Neenah, Theology I, North American College
  - (Co-Sponsored Seminarian with the Archdiocese for the Military Services – Navy)
- Zygmunt (Ziggy) Gross, Good Shepherd, Chilton, Theology I, Mundelein Seminary
- Matthew Colle, St. Mary's Parish, Luxemburg, Pre-Theology II, St. Francis de Sales Seminary
- Michael Uchtyl, Ss. Peter & Paul Parish, Hortonville, Pre-Theology II, St. Francis de Sales Seminary
- Aaron Hietpas, St. John Nepomucene, Little Chute, College IV, St. John Vianney Seminary
- Nathan Runde, St. John Nepomucene, Little Chute, College IV, St. John Vianney Seminary
- Mark Hawbaker, St. Pius X, Appleton, College III, Conception Seminary College
- Jace Scheffler, St. John's Parish, Menasha, College III, St. John Vianney Seminary
- Peter Vande Hey, St. Katharine Drexel, Kaukauna, College II, St. John Vianney Seminary

**New Men in Process:**

Four additional new men are planning to attend seminary in the fall from Kimberly, Appleton, Green Bay, the Manitowoc area, and Shawano.

The Catholic Foundation encourages financial stewardship and generosity through faith-based giving. The Foundation focuses on supporting Catholic parishes, schools and ministries through endowment funding. To learn more, please contact Cindi Brawner or Josh Diedrich at 920-272-8181, or via email at [catholicfoundation@gbdioc.org](mailto:catholicfoundation@gbdioc.org).

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**Who we are:** As friends and followers of Jesus, the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay is devoted to fostering households and communities of discipleship through the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church. We are missionary disciples striving to lead all people to the Kingdom of God. Established in 1868, the diocese is composed of 324,000 Catholics in 16 counties: Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Forest, Kewaunee, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago.

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