



**SAINT PAUL SEMINARY  
OFFICE OF THE RECTOR**

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DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH

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August 12, 2019

Dear Brother Knights,

Vivat Jesus!

I hope this letter finds you well and continuing to do the work of the Lord that you so gallantly do in the name of the Lord Jesus. First, I want to thank you for your ongoing witness to not only the local Church but the universal Church. The work of the Knights of Columbus reaches far and wide.

Secondly, I want to update you on some very exciting happenings in the world of formation of our men for priesthood, in addition to the work to promote vocations to the priesthood of Jesus Christ. This past June we had two men ordained to the Diaconate and four men ordained to the priesthood. On October 3, we will have another man ordained to the diaconate in Rome. Next year we anticipate three men being ordained to the priesthood and one man being ordained to the diaconate.

For the upcoming academic year, we have six new admissions to the formation program for the diocese. They come from all walks of life including two recent high school graduates, a pharmacist who worked in a local hospital, a civil engineer from Penn Dot, a computer engineer from Google, and a recent communications graduate from Pitt. All six are fine men of faith and are eager to begin formal discernment to the priesthood. Together we have thirty men studying for the priesthood at all stages of formation. Over the course of the last year, three men discerned out of the program which is not a bad thing. This means they are in tune with the Holy Spirit and doing well in their work of discernment.

This year our college and pre-theologians will attend Franciscan University of Steubenville for philosophy and scripture study. The theologians continue their studies at Saint Vincent Seminary, Latrobe; Saint Mary Seminary, Baltimore; Theological College, Washington, DC; and North American College, Rome. Despite the dark times the human church has been through over the last year, this is an exciting time for our men. The Lord still calls and men still respond to be a part of the renewal of the Spirit in the Church. As the Knight Motto says, "May Jesus live" and reign forever and ever. May Jesus be alive in their hearts always and in all ways.

Thank you for your ongoing support as these men study and discern their call to the priesthood. In addition to your prayerful support, once again I ask you to prayerfully consider financially supporting the men through the RSVP Program. This is invaluable to the men and I know they very much appreciate your generosity and kindness. Mike Lynch and I are working to ensure that all seminarians are equally covered through this program. Thank you in advance for your understanding as we ensure equity amongst our men. May Jesus also be alive in your hearts always and in all ways.

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Additionally, I ask you to support your parish priests who desire to do right and walk humbly with the Lord in faithfully serving His flock—give them a pat on the back and offer a prayer or two for them. May Jesus also live in them always and in all ways.

I know many of you have asked in the past for all the seminarians to visit a particular council or event. With their class schedules as well as the formation schedule here at Saint Paul's and the other seminaries, this is difficult. I am working with Mike Lynch to set up a time when Father Mike Ackerman, Director of Priestly Vocations, and I can come to your chapter meetings to give you an overall update on our formation program and to offer assistance in any way we can.

Please know, the Knights are remembered in a special way in our daily communal prayers. Please continue to pray for our men in formation as well as all of our priests and bishops. Thank you again for all that you do and will do for those involved in pre-ordination formation in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

God Bless you always and in all ways.

In the joy of His name and His service, I am fraternally yours in Christ.

Vivat Jesus,



Very Reverend Thomas A. Sparacino, M.Div.  
Rector  
Director of Pre-Ordination Formation