

A NOTE FROM FATHER EICKHOFF

Next weekend (November 12-13) our parish will welcome Colin McGarel, a seminarian preparing for the priesthood for our diocese. He will be speaking at all the Masses that weekend about his call to the priesthood and his current life as a man preparing to minister to the people of the Diocese of Joliet. I hope that you will all give him a warm welcome.

Not by coincidence we will also be taking up a Second Collection the weekend of November 12-13 in support of the new diocesan seminary fund called "I will give you shepherds." The second collection has a very simple reason for its existence and purpose. As Catholics, we hold that God especially and most definitively makes known to us His mercy and grace through the Sacraments of the Church. These Sacraments (particularly Reconciliation and the Eucharist) are brought to the people of God from God through the priests of the Church. In short, we need priests to bring the Sacraments of the Church to all of God's people. However, the Church cannot just call any man a priest and call it ok. The priesthood is a calling from God that is confirmed by the Church here on earth. A Catholic priest is expected to be dedicated to living his life in the manner of Jesus Christ. The only real way to determine whether a man is able and willing to live his life in this manner is through preparation and practice. A priest needs to be able to explain the Teaching of the Church to other people and to do that he must first learn what that teaching is and how to explain it to others. All of this takes time and preparation. And as we all know here on earth time is money.

The simple fact is that a seminary education (the place where men are prepared for the priesthood) is expensive. The Diocese of Joliet would like to set up a fund to help cover the cost of the education and preparation for the men studying to be future priests of our parishes in the Diocese of Joliet. The money collected during the second collection next weekend (November 12-13) throughout the diocese will go to set up this fund. This is a worthwhile goal as it will help to ensure that men and women throughout the diocese will have priests to bring them the sacraments of God for decades to come.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Eickhoff
Pastor