



IHM News

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SEMINARY

ECCE QUAM BONUM



Et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum

Letter from the **Rector**



I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!" Ps 122:1-2

Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary is again an alive and vibrant house of the Lord. That gladness was apparent this past August when we welcomed the new seminarians and the returning seminarians as they arrived for another year of discernment and formation.

It is truly a blessing to live and work within the house of Lord that is IHMS. Receiving the new seminarians as they come filled with hope and joy is an awe inspiring experience. Their eagerness is infectious. It lifts the spirit and at the same time provokes deep gratitude for the Lord's work in the vineyard of the Church.

It causes me to reflect on all the houses of the Lord that have given to me the gifts growth and shelter. It began with my parents and the house of the Lord they established in the Sacrament of Matrimony, giving to me a place to be received in love and a place to grow and mature under the guidance of the Lord's hand. The houses of the schools I attended, the friendships I made, the co-workers I labored with, my fellow sailors on the USS Forrestal, the seminaries, both IHMS and Mundelein Seminary that guided my discernment and formation, the parishes, schools, and Newman Centers I have served as a priest: such manifold and rich blessings within the houses of the Lord! All of these are on mind and their memories alive in my heart as signs of God's pervasive and constant love.

I would hope you can see the pervasive and constant love of the Lord in the houses he has brought you through in your own life. Please pray for us that this house of the Lord be a home for the seminarians to grow in prayer and virtue. Pray that they may grow in their identity as holy sons of their heavenly Father. Pray that they may grow into the men who will one day become your priests.

It is gladness to be in the Lord's house. It is gladness to have you our friends' prayer and support. It is gladness to be bringing these men to know and say yes to their vocation

God bless you and keep you in His peace,

Msgr. Tom Melvin



Serra Club

By Patrick Hoeft, Senior - Diocese of St. Cloud



Every year the seminarians and faculty of IHM Seminary are hosted by the Serra Club for an evening of delicious food and casual conversation. This year the annual Serra Club picnic fell on the 15th of September, and the Serrans, once again, succeeded in taming the appetites of 42 young seminarians. On the menu this year were grilled brats, potato salad, meat and cheese platters, various other salads and side dishes, chips, and of course, a large variety of home-made goodies.

The Serran's gifts of prayer, food, and good old-fashioned quality time were showered down upon the seminarians... much like the impending rain that showered down upon the gathering halfway through the picnic. Determined not to let the rain dampen the mood (or the food), a collaborative effort was made to quickly relocate the picnic to the IHM dining room. The evening was concluded in the main chapel as the members of the Serra Club joined the seminarians in their daily praying of Vespers.

The annual Serra Club picnic is a great opportunity for the seminarians to meet this wonderful group of people who work and pray hard to support vocations, and it's also a great opportunity for the Serrans to meet the men they spend so much time praying for. IHM is blessed to have such benefactors who contribute in numerous ways to their formation as holy and virtuous men of love and service. **2**

By David Kruse, Senior

SMU

Open House

One of the most enjoyable social events of the year is the bi-annual IHM Open House. The Open House is an opportunity to take one full evening and “open our house” to the Saint Mary’s Community. The students and faculty of Saint Mary’s can come to IHM and have a free meal, cooked by Seminarians, take a tour of the Seminary, play some Bean Bag Toss and Frisbee. Or they can simply sit back and enjoy the abundance of fun, family-like, dinner conversation that we as seminarians are privileged to have every night. It’s an opportunity to literally and figuratively “open our house” to St. Mary’s. As the saying goes, “when you open your house, you open your heart!”

As a senior, I can recall my first open house: I didn’t know anyone and I wondered why 600 or more students and teachers came to our silly little picnic. I have come to realize that what we do at IHM, the way we live, is rare, to say the least. I’ve come to realize that we live in a way that truly fosters a deep and authentic joy. People are more than happy to be invited to take part in it. It’s an incredible gift we have, a gift that God bestows, that we can share with others by simply opening our home and inviting whomever is willing to come. This gift is a joy that says, “You are welcome here. Come and take part in the joy of life in Christ. Come, taste and see that the Lord is good!”



Family Weekend

By Ryder Carlson, Sophomore- Dioces of Rapid City



Just as IHM Seminarians launched into panic mode of the following week's dreaded midterms, the never seemingly well-timed, yet very welcomed Family Weekend made its debut. Beginning on Friday, October 2nd, Saint Mary's University invited the students' families to Winona so that students may take a break from hitting the books in order to relax with family. The major event that SMU sponsors is the annual Fall Frolic. Families gather to enjoy a competitive race or casual stroll within the beautiful bluffs of Winona.

IHM Seminarians under the guidance of Vice-Rector Fr. Schaefer led an impressive stampede in Winona's bluffs. I think that the team t-shirt proudly proclaiming "Ecce," meaning "Behold," was indeed an appropriate statement. The brother Seminarians revealed themselves to be red human-blurs within the multi-colored trees of early October. Okay, maybe not human-blurs, but IHM ran the race and did so to win a reward greater than 1st place. The reward was of fraternity and of being together with family in God's love. That reward certainly outweighs a simple 1st place win.

My family was unable to make the drive to Winona -which was a bummer. There was a small number of Seminarians without family attending this year. However, it provided us with the opportunity to receive the hospitality of other Seminarians' families. No family was opposed to granting another a warm welcome into their own. I think it is due to the families of fellow Seminarians, that we came across the joyful atmosphere of this weekend. Behold- something even better than being fast running red human-blur or winning 1st place. This is the quality of Family Weekend that I found myself especially grateful for.

Info weekend

By Lance Thomas, Sophomore- Diocese of La Crosse

For those that feel that God may be calling them to be a priest, many questions arise in their minds, especially with regards to seminary. What is seminary? What does one learn at seminary? How is seminary life? What does everyone do at seminary? One way Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) Seminary has come about answering those questions is by setting aside a weekend for those considering priesthood to be able to come down and experience the functions of seminary life for a couple days. During this time, they are given the opportunity to participate in daily Mass and our community praying of the Liturgy of the Hours. They get to shadow the seminarians as they attend their various classes, complete their schoolwork, visit with other seminarians, and enjoy some leisure time. They also receive tours of the St. Mary's University campus and IHM Seminary, get to participate in informational conferences, and have some time to meet with the faculty and current seminarians for further answers and support. Thus, they not only get hard data but also receive a taste of the experience of a seminarian's daily life in its rawness. All we ask in return is openness to God's call to whatever He plans for their lives as they join with us for the weekend of exploration, even if priesthood is not in the picture.

My Vocation Story

By Andrew Sullivan, Junior - Diocese of Rapid City

St. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3:21: "Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you." A vocation story is just that. A defence of what gives you hope, God, and how he is working in your life.

My vocation story starts with my first seminary, my family. I am the last of eight children from a Catholic family in Rapid City, South Dakota. In my family our relationship with God and the importance of going to mass is something that was stressed early and often by my parents. I was homeschooled until high school when I went part time to the biggest public high school in South Dakota. This education gave me the opportunity to study my faith in classes and truly be grounded in it. As I grew up I loved going to mass on Sundays, learning about miracles, and different stories about saints. I fell in love with God.

When I got into high school things changed a little. My parents still taught the faith, but I stopped listening so closely. I didn't like Sunday mass as much and started not to pay as much attention to my spiritual well being. I started hanging out with people who weren't Catholic and when issues arose I didn't know how to defend my faith so I just stopped trying. It was only by God's grace that I came to see the error in my ways and started paying more attention to my prayer life and my own salvation.



One person that God sent to me during my time of need was a parish priest named Fr. Tyler Dennis. He spent a great deal of time with the youth in my parish establishing prayer groups, hunting and fishing, and just being present to us. He showed me that one could be in the world while focusing on one's faith and actively trying to get to Heaven. He also showed me that the priesthood was not only about solitude and prayer but also being a spiritual leader for others and being a servant for God and his people. Fr Tyler along with my mom, dad, and close friends that I grew in faith with in my parish influenced me greatly when the choice of what college I wanted to go to came up. With their influence and time spent in prayer I discerned that it was God's will for me that I went to seminary to see if God was calling me to be his priest.

My time here at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary has not been easy by any means. When you come to seminary you are expected to follow the Church's formation and grow as a person in four main areas that are the pillars of formation; human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral. These pillars have challenged me to improve in every aspect of my life. This is extremely difficult, but it has definitely made me a better man and has increased the inner certitude that God is calling me to be his priest.



Immaculate

Pre-Theology



Neal Abbott
Diocese of Winona



Michael Churchill
Diocese of Winona



Mitchell Logeais
Diocese of Winona

Seniors



Patrick Hoeft
Diocese of St. Cloud



Evan Huebl
Diocese of New Ulm



Brady Keller
Diocese of St. Cloud



David Kruse
Diocese of Winona



Matthew Nordquist
Diocese of Winona



Thomas Skaja
Diocese of St. Cloud

Juniors



Andrew Dushek
Diocese of La Crosse



Michael Koepfel
Diocese of Green Bay



Peter Kostecka
Diocese of Duluth



Zachary Leskanich
Diocese of Peoria



Ezra Lippert
Diocese of Winona



Eric Mashak
Diocese of La Crosse



Timothy Reither
Diocese of La Crosse



Andrew Sullivan
Diocese of Rapid City



Nicolas Wilson
Diocese of Peoria



Branden Timm
Diocese of Green Bay



Adam Worm
Diocese of Winona

Heart of Mary

Semmary

Sophomores



Anthony Alwan
Diocese of Peoria



Ryder Carlson
Diocese of Rapid City



Jose Flores-Ugalde
Diocese of Madison



Daniel Hammer
Diocese of Duluth



Brendan Kerin
Diocese of St. Cloud



Robert Kinyon
Diocese of Rapid City



Isaac Landsteiner
Diocese of Winona



Vianney Nguyen
Diocese of Sophomore



Benjamin Peters
Diocese of Winona



Kaleb Quast
Diocese of Duluth



Christian Ruf
Diocese of La Crosse



Lance Thomas
Diocese of La Crosse



Zachary Wiechman
Diocese of St. Cloud

Freshman



Levi Delong
Diocese of Winona



Ryan Hartness
Diocese of Peoria



Cullen Gallagher
Diocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis



Zechariah Kitzhaber
Diocese of La Crosse



Austin Klemen
Diocese of La Crosse



Nicholas McNamara
Diocese of La Crosse



Dylan Moore
Diocese of St. Cloud



John Zweber
Diocese of La Crosse



Vir In Cristo **WEEKEND**

By Eric Mashak, Junior - Diocese of La Crosse

This October the IHM community took a short break from its studies as it partook of the annual Vir En Cristo (Man in Christ) weekend trip to Dunrovin Retreat Center, located near St. Croix, MN. Our keynote speaker for the weekend was psychologist Dr. Stevens of the Lincoln Nebraska Diocese. Using a unique style of accenting his teachings with humor he was able to connect and relate very easily with his IHM audience. His deep insights into the psyche of the human person and the unconscious will continue to help seminarians in their formation at IHM and later in their respective Dioceses' as they fulfill their roles in parish life. Each Seminarian will look back on this weekend with fondness, a sense of peace, and most importantly, a desire to partake of the particular type of fatherhood God is intimately calling each of us to. With our wills conformed to Gods, we are able to say with Shakespeare: "Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more."

Thank you, once again to all who have helped to make this weekend possible. Your support and prayers give us great opportunities in formation.



Alumni Spotlight

By Neal Abbott

Pre-Theology, Dio. of Winona

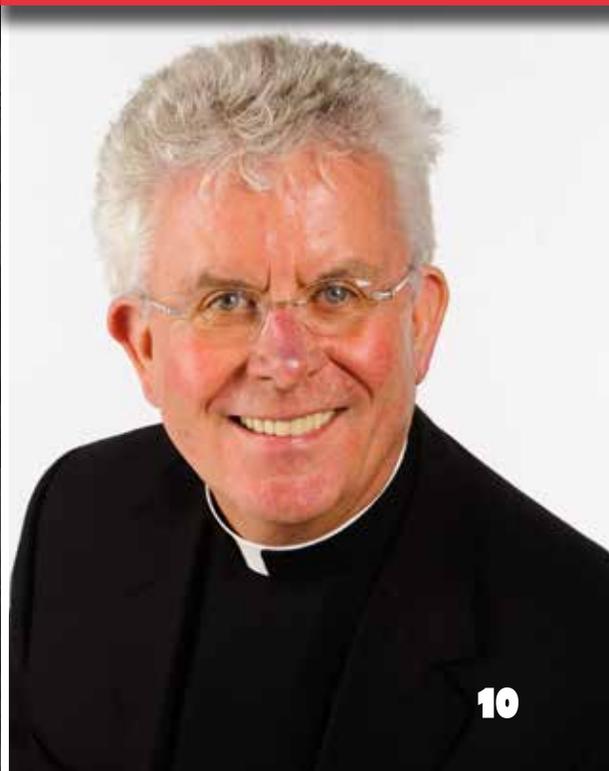
When Fr. Jerry Mahon reflects back on his time at I.H.M., he can't help but laugh to himself, "You know, I lived in that building—Kelly Hall—longer than any human being on the planet or in heaven (twenty-two years). How's that?" Fr. Jerry grew up on a farm outside of Rochester, Minnesota going to St. Francis of Assisi parish with his family, where he received all of his sacraments. His time at his home parish was instrumental in his early formation; he credits the priests at St. Francis with having had a profound influence on his vocation: "Our family loved them...our family made connection with them and we were very active as a family...there would be numerous priests that inspired me, I could name several."

In high school, Fr. Jerry first began to feel a call to the priesthood. Initially, he ran from the call as so many do. When his priest at Lourdes High School in Rochester first asked him if he had ever considered the priesthood, he recalls how, "I was afraid...and I was reluctant...I was shy..." Nevertheless the call persisted, and he felt that he had to go to the seminary to "get it out of his system." Forty-five years later, and Fr. Jerry cheerfully remarks, "I'm still getting it out of my system."

Fr. Jerry was ordained to the priesthood of Jesus Christ at his home parish of St. Francis on May 28th, 1971, but it wasn't long before he was called back to the seminary. Only a year into his priesthood he began his work at I.H.M. Though it may have been the last place he expected to end up, Fr. Jerry was on the faculty for several years and then went on to spend ten years as rector. Looking back on his time at I.H.M., Fr. Jerry could only respond, "Honestly...I loved it... it was a period of maturation for me to grow deeper in what I love—I love Christ, and I love the priesthood...and serving, and living the ministry of priestly formation was a profound belonging for me." Following almost eighteen years at I.H.M. between being on faculty and serving as rector, Fr. Jerry went on to serve as Vicar General for the Diocese of Winona for ten years and has been serving at St. John the Evangelist in his hometown of Rochester, Minnesota for the past twenty years. As our Skype conversation continued, it became clear just how much Fr. Jerry's love for his flock guides his faith. "It's a treasure, it's a gift, it's an experience of real life when you meet people that are thirsting for the meaning of life, and you're able to engage with them. Every time this happens, and it happens to me a lot, you feel completely opened up."

Fr. Jerry's joy and sense of humor continue to guide him every day in his walk with Christ. In a soft voice he looked at me and said, "The priesthood to me has been an enormous gift...and honestly, forty-five years later...it becomes better all the time."

Msgr. Jerry Mahon



Senior Perspective

When my parents first dropped me off at Immaculate Heart of Seminary almost four years ago, I was anxious and unsure of where God was calling me, yet ready for an adventure. It's hard to believe how fast time has gone by as I reflect on these past several years. Seminary has been a place where I've been formed humanly, spiritually, intellectually, and pastorally as a man of love and service. It hasn't been easy, but within the challenges is where real growth happens. It is so important to bring this all to Jesus in prayer, for He is the One who calls us and helps us to become the best version of ourselves. It's all about surrendering our will to God's Will, for this is where we find true happiness.

IHM Seminary is also a place where genuine and virtuous friendships are formed, friendships that will last for a lifetime. IHM's motto is "Ecce Quam Bonum," from Psalm 133, which means, "Behold how good and splendid it is where brothers dwell as one." Friendships are crucial for seminarians and priests, to have those people who are willing to take the shirts off their back for you, no matter what. This "brotherhood of brothers" has helped me become who I am today. This is part of the reason why I've always felt at home at IHM.

During Pope Francis' trip to Ecuador, he told seminarians to always take the path of gratitude on the road to priesthood. At the end of the day, I recognize that everything that I have received from IHM are gifts from God. As a senior seminarian, I can't help but to thank God for the formation, the faculty, the benefactors, the friendships, and my family. I have no doubt that IHM Seminary has prepared me well for wherever God leads me on this journey to the priesthood.

Freshman Perspective

Showing up to seminary and meeting 41 men who are all older than yourself and four priests with a lot of knowledge can be very much intimidating, especially when you have just turned 18. Learning the rules of our lives at seminary, everyone's name, and the personality that matches was a task not to be taken lightly. Yet it was the best introductory week any new seminarian could ask for. It was evident there was a serious bond and a deep connection between all the guys at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary, almost like there was a "brotherhood of brothers" and everyone had a special role.

Ranging from Liturgy of the Hours to Lord's Days of Recollection and even to Vir in Christo weekend, Seminary has been one new adventure and experience to the next. Every single one has been enjoyable too, some more than others, such as the term 'sleeping in' applying to 7am is significantly different than what it meant back in July.

The epitome is how it is already October, midterms are over, and life at IHM seems to be flying by. Before long it will be senior year and reflections will ensue about where all the time went and how living at IHM is not only my place of residence but how it can truly start to feel like home. Listening to God's will and taking one day at a time seminary will prove to be a challenge, but a challenge worth fighting for. Let's see if four years down the road I will have realized how quickly IHM passed and how it has changed me to be a better man, living as Christ would have desired.

Thomas Skaja

Diocese of St. Cloud



Austin Kleman

Diocese of La Crosse



From the office of **INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**



Greetings!

The seasons have changed and Christmas is upon us. Looking back at the semester I recollect on all the blessing God has bestowed on Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary. We welcomed 42 men to the seminary this past fall and I have been able to witness them continue their discernment to the priesthood. This discernment is often accomplished through the dying of self and committing ones' life to God.

Throughout the semester this theme of dying of self has been brought up in discussion between faculty and students. Incoming students often do not know what to expect and some feel they may become board or will not have enough to do. This comment led to discussion that can be summed up in a single comment made by a seminarian: "If you are board then you are not committing yourself to the formation program". We also experience this in our everyday life because when we commit ourselves to God we must also sacrifice that which is comfortable to us.

Thank you for your continual prayer, support and sacrifice. It is with your help the men are able to commit themselves to the program and IHM Seminary is able to continue its mission forming holy virtuous men of love and service.

Rebecca Peters

Rebecca Peters
Director of Development

P.S. Donate Online Today at:

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Rebecca Peters

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The Dioceses *We Serve:*



Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary

is pleased to assist the following dioceses in preparing men for the Catholic priesthood:

- St. Paul/Minneapolis
- Duluth
- Green Bay
- La Crosse
- Madison
- New Ulm
- Peoria
- Rapid City
- Saint Cloud
- Sioux Falls
- Winona



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Upcoming Events

January 2-9

Senior and Junior Retreat

January 4-9

Sophomore and Freshman Retreat

January 22

March For Life, St. Paul MN

Jan. 29-31

Mundelein Seminary Basketball

April 22

Bishop and Rectors Dinner

April 29

IHM Open House

May 6

IHM Baccalaureate Mass

May 7

SMU Commencement

May 9-13

IHM Formation Workshops