



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SEMINARY

WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Behold, how good and how pleasing it is for brothers to dwell as one.

Psalm 133:1



Left to right: John Paul Bickerstaff, Diocese of Winona- Rochester, Andrew Beine, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Thomas Kollasch, Diocese of Sioux City

Letter from the **Rector**

Prior to the year 2020, it seems that the term “twenty-twenty” enjoyed a largely positive connotation, referring primarily to clarity of vision, whether that vision be literal or metaphorical. After the events of recent months, I imagine that “twenty-twenty” has taken on gloomier overtones, and understandably so. And yet, perhaps there is some lesson to be gleaned from this linguistic phenomenon of one term indicating both a year of trial and clarity of vision.

Throughout the course of the semester we have just completed, I have worked to remind both myself and the seminarians that along with the challenges brought by COVID-19 come opportunities. The implementation of certain protocols and procedures has occasionally been awkward, often artificial, and sometimes downright annoying. At the same time, when I try to take a 20/20 look at these measures, I see them as opportunities to exercise care for others and show societal responsibility. I see a chance to break through my own myopia and get a sense of the bigger picture.

Above all, though, I detect the Lord summoning both me and the seminary community to a renewed spirit of hope and trust as we fix our eyes on the Risen One who assures us a share in his victory over all that diminishes life, including COVID-19. Jesus has already conquered the powers of darkness and has assured us that life has the last word. Each day as the seminary community has gathered around the altar, we have been able to plunge ourselves anew into the mystery of Christ’s dying and rising; while the trials of the year 2020 have certainly provided us with a concrete way in which to unite ourselves to the Lord’s cross, our faith also provides us with the 20/20 certainty that the cross, when taken up in union with Jesus, always gives way to new life.



Congratulations to alumnus Monsignor Jeff Burrill on his election as general secretary of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)! Monsignor Burrill is a priest of the Diocese of La Crosse who graduated from IHM in 1994 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1998. As general secretary, he carries the responsibility of coordinating the administrative operations of the USCCB and overseeing the work of the committees and staff of the conference.

Rev. Robert Horihan
Rector

Alumni SPOTLIGHT

Fr. William Thompson | Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, Diocese of Winona-Rochester



I was ordained in 2008 and initially served as parochial vicar at the parish of St. Francis of Assisi in Rochester for two years. I then became pastor in Dodge Center, West Concord, and Claremont for another two years. During these four years, I was chaplain and a teacher at Lourdes High School. In 2012, I became the Director of Vocations for the Diocese as well as a faculty member at IHM Seminary. I served in these capacities for five years, while also administrating various parishes off and on. In 2017, I became the pastor of Pax Christi in Rochester, and served there until 2020 when I was transferred to Lewiston, Altura and Wilson while also serving as the Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia. In 2018, I earned a Masters in Bioethics and Health Policy from Loyola University-Chicago and am currently working toward a Canon Law degree.

How did your experience at IHM Seminary help you prepare for priestly life?

First of all, IHM taught me how to pray. I was not familiar with anything beyond recited prayers and did not have much in terms of regularity in prayer before entering seminary. Another key point that was addressed at IHM was the need to grow in confidence. The priests and other seminarians helped me to identify my gifts as well as those of others, which has helped me in both leading and collaborating with others.

How have each of your assignments helped you grow spiritually?

Parish and vocation work have each impacted me in unique ways. My work in vocations helped remind me of the powerful ways that God worked in helping me to see the possibility of a priestly vocation, and that God still works powerfully in my life. The parish work has helped me grow in two ways. First, seeing the faith of others rubs off on me so that I can see God’s presence in broader and deeper ways. Second, I learned early on that I will never be able to do enough, and that I need Jesus to be the Good Shepherd. I just try to help where I can.

What aspects of ministry are you most passionate about and why?

I greatly enjoy preaching. I find that that is the time when my faith feels most alive and real. It’s a little like spiritual direction, where you start saying things and realize “oh yeah! God is at work!” I may also be a bit unique in that I enjoy the 3rd munera of the priesthood: governing. This aspect of the priesthood might be most frequently connected to administration and meetings—that’s part of it. I find that meaningful and purposeful meetings can have wonderful impacts on parish life. I also see this side of the priesthood as identifying and calling forth God’s gifts in others to build up the Church.

Who have been some of the most influential people in your life?

I should probably credit my brothers (I have five) for teaching me humility. I would also say each of the priests and faculty in seminary played strong roles in shaping me, and my first pastor after ordination, Fr. Tim Reker, taught me a great deal about living the priesthood. While not a person, I would also say that serving as spiritual director on over 20 Kairos and TEC retreats has shaped my approach as a priest.

What advice would you give to young men contemplating a vocation to the priesthood?

Do not start by considering what life might be like 10, 20, 30 years down the road, and the challenges you might face. That is all hypothetical. Instead, I would share the moment when I decided to enter the seminary. While looking out over a lake on a beautiful day, I prayed: “God, if you made all of this, I think I can trust you.” Later, I realized I must trust in God! Focus on that, not the “what-ifs.”

Pastoral Year

Michael Churchill

What is a pastoral year?

A pastoral year is an internship for seminarians, designed to give seminarians an experience of parish life throughout a full year. It gives seminarians an opportunity to get a clearer idea of the daily life of the parish priest while continuing discernment and formation.

In what parish did you serve your pastoral year? Where did you live?

I was assigned to the Redeemer Saints community, serving St. Charles Borromeo in Saint Charles, Holy Redeemer in Eyota, and St. Aloysius in Elba. I lived at the Rectory in Saint Charles with the Pastor, Fr. Tim Biren.

What did your daily schedule look like?

The daily schedule of the pastoral year shifted around quite a bit, as a parish priest is always going with the flow of changes in parish life. My days always consisted of daily Mass and prayer and some time at the office. On a consistent basis I was visiting our homebound people, attending meetings and sacramental preparation, teaching, or helping with Faith Formation, and just sharing in life experiences with our parishioners.

How did this experience aid in your formation for the priesthood?

This experience has aided in my formation to the priesthood in numerous ways. I have gained a lot of confidence in teaching and sharing the faith with others, I have a deeper understanding of the daily life of the parish priest (with its joys and challenges), and I have recognized the love the people of God have for their priest. This year has allowed me to share my gifts and talents with others and recognize areas for continued growth. I have also received so much love, support and encouragement from our people which will help me keep the course on difficult days.



Insight into the Seminary:

Community Council

Ryan Mann, Senior, Diocese of Peoria



The community council exists to serve as an advisory board to the rector and to foster a sense of fraternity amongst their brother seminarians. Every year, each class at IHM elects one of their brothers to serve as their class prefect.

Led by the Head Prefect, who is elected by the entire community, the prefects serve as members of the seminary's community council. While it is true that prefects do not necessarily play a vital role in the actual operation of the seminary, I believe that these positions can be very impactful in the formation of the men who hold them. I have been blessed to serve as both a class prefect and, for the past year, as the seminary's Head Prefect. These roles have been very formative for me, as God has used these opportunities to deepen the spirits of generosity and service in my heart. Prefects have the chance to serve their brothers in numerous, often unseen ways and learn to develop a deeper sense of prayerful charity for those whom they serve.



REFLECTING on this past year...

Loving God, we arise today to face the challenges on the road ahead. It is clear that our current situation needs us to be steadfast and persistent in our response to COVID-19; as this is a marathon, not a sprint.

Be with us now O Lord!



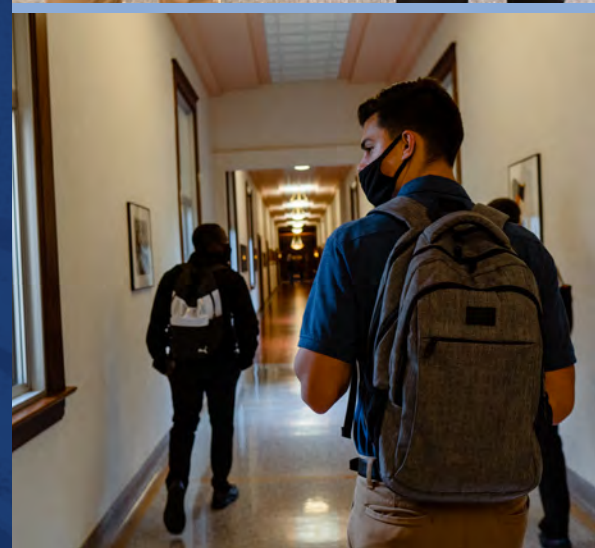
A Freshman Perspective

Andrew Beine, Freshman, Archdiocese of Milwaukee

My first semester at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary has been primarily full of grace. As a first-year college seminarian straight out of high school, amidst a global pandemic, one can imagine how daunting the task of balancing spirituality, fraternity, studies, and health can be! However, God unceasingly seeks us out in all the chaos and noise of the world to pull us closer to Him. With this in mind, I have been able to intentionally participate in formation and begin to deepen my relationship with Christ.

One specific way Christ calls us to Him is by asking us to love as He loves. At IHM, we are challenged to fearlessly engage formation. This means much more than committing to daily prayer; it includes being vulnerable with one another, entrusting our studies to God, and doing what we can to serve one another as brothers. These ways of living are centered around the love Christ has for us and helps us to find those areas in which we must ask Him to teach us how to love. This intentional lifestyle of love fosters the roots from which we will one day draw from to, God willing, serve as priests.

This first semester has continuously reaffirmed God's providence for me, and I am confident that my brothers feel the same. It can be a challenge to find the plan God has through the various protocols, disappointments or seemingly lost opportunities of fraternity, but I see this community growing stronger and stronger every day, as one body seeking the path to holiness. I am sincerely thankful to be a part of this brotherhood and look forward to experiencing how God will mold me and my brothers as his sons in the coming years.



My Vocation Story

I grew up on a farm near Fulda, MN, which is in the southwest corner of Minnesota. I have seven siblings, and have been blessed with parents who passed on the Catholic faith. Due to living in a small community, I went to a Lutheran school through eighth grade and attended a non-denominational youth group throughout high school. My parents always made sure to answer any questions that arose as to why Catholics believe and practice what the Church teaches. Due to this background, my faith in high school largely consisted in simply believing the Catholic Church to be the one true Church and doing my best to understand its teachings.

Being at a loss as to what to do after high school, I can remember both being excited about understanding the Catholic Church to be the one true Church with completely reasonable teachings, while at the same time being very anxious about what to do with my life after high school. I can remember one night laying in bed and having the thought "I could be a priest" and immediately telling myself "Nope, no way. That is not possible." I had always had a strong attraction towards what priests do and have many vivid childhood memories of priests, but this was the first time that it occurred to me that priesthood was an option for myself. From then on, the possibility of priesthood remained in the back of my mind, and I did my very best to ignore it.

I attended Saint Mary's University for one and a half years before accepting my desire to enter seminary. Three core groups that I was blessed to find myself part of were the cross country team, a group that prayed Night Prayer daily in the chapel, and a discernment group. In each of these groups, which God providentially brought me into through the invitation of others, I was blessed by friends that pushed me to grow spiritually. In that time, I can simply say that the more that I grew in prayer, the harder it became to turn a blind eye on seminary. My desire and curiosity about both seminary and priesthood steadily increased. Although I had plenty of fears about priesthood, I gradually came to see that God was calling me to leap into the unknown and trust Him rather than lean on my own understanding and ability. The pivotal point when I was able to say "Yes!" to truly discerning with openness of heart what God wanted me to do with my life came during a three day retreat called LIFT, which focused on both community and prayer. After encountering the love of Christ and others for me, I realized just how deep of a desire I had to give myself back to Christ and others. I had plenty of fears, but I finally had enough courage to trust that God would provide me with everything that I needed, even if I could not understand how.

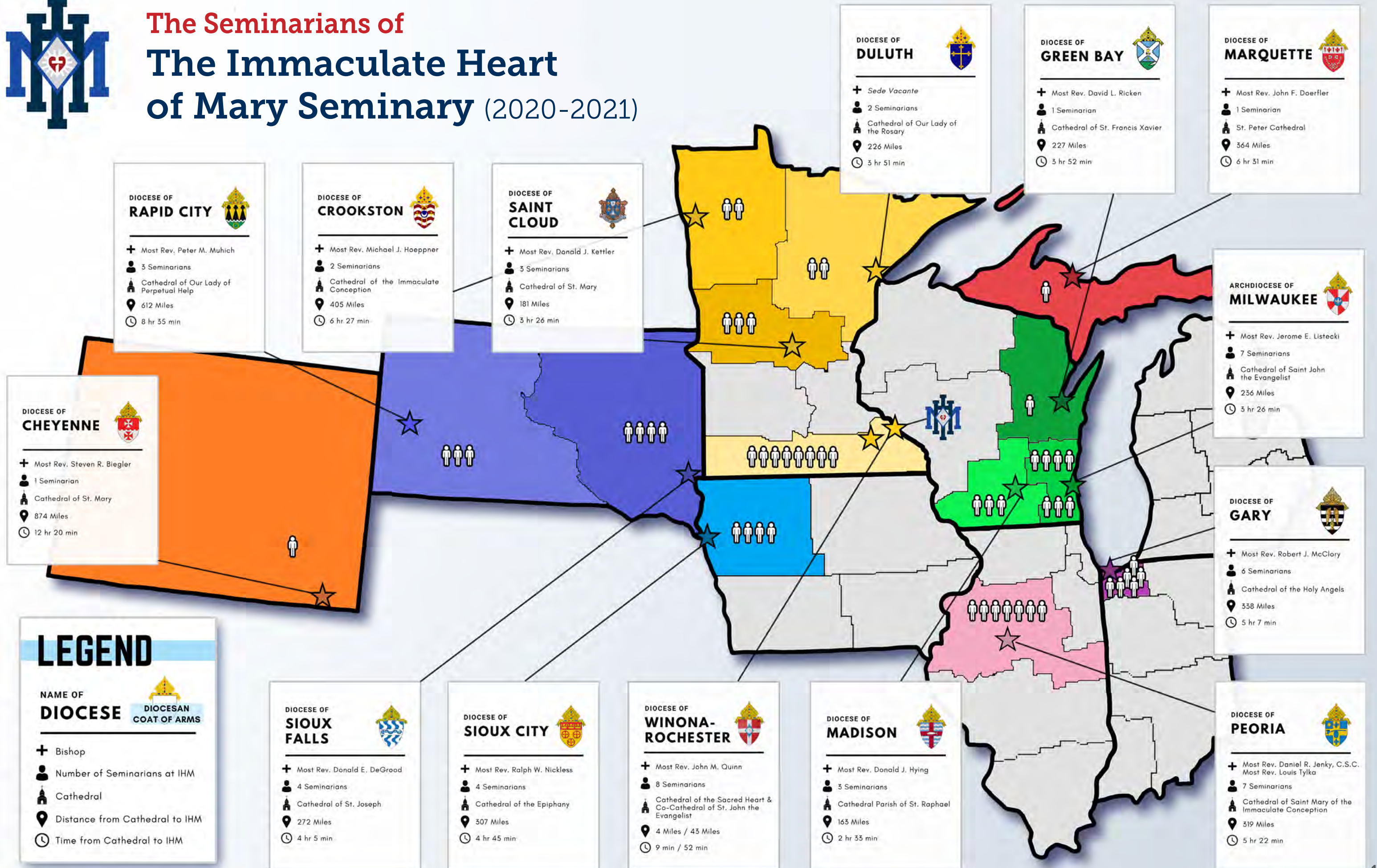


Isaiah Olsem
Senior
Diocese of Winona-Rochester

"I was blessed by friends that pushed me to grow spiritually."



The Seminarians of The Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary (2020-2021)

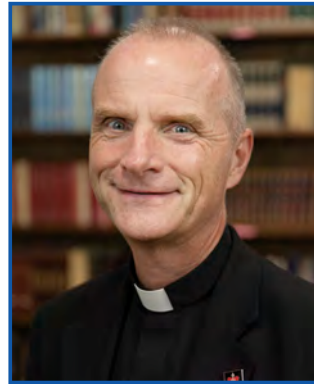


2020/21 IHM Seminary Faculty and Student Body

FACULTY



Fr. Robert Horihan
Rector



Fr. Martin Schaefer
Vice Rector
Dean of Formation



Fr. Jeffrey Dobbs
Director of Spiritual Life



Fr. Jason Kern
Vocation Director

PRE-THEOLOGY 2



Alexander Kouris
Diocese of Gary

PRE-THEOLOGY 1



Alexander Peters
Diocese of Winona-Rochester



John Vrchota
Diocese of Winona-Rochester

SENIORS



Ivan Alatorre
Diocese of Gary



Brady Gagne
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



Alexander Leschisin
Diocese of Sioux Falls



Ryan Mann
Diocese of Peoria



Teagan McDermott
Diocese of Winona-Rochester



William Murray
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



Isaiah Olsem
Diocese of Winona-Rochester



Ryan Ruhle
Diocese of Madison



Ben Schoonmaker
Diocese of Peoria



Francis Strong
Diocese of Peoria



Joseph VanDenheuvel
Diocese of St. Cloud



Maxwell Vetch
Diocese of Rapid City



Timothy Welch
Diocese of Winona-Rochester

JUNIORS



Riley Becher
Diocese of Winona-Rochester



Nathan Budde
Diocese of Green Bay



Peter Danner
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



Jacob Freund
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



Joshua Johnson
Diocese of Crookston



Thomas Kollasch
Diocese of Sioux City



Elliot McLarty
Diocese of Sioux City



Barry Meinholz
Diocese of Madison



Andrew Mullaney
Diocese of Sioux Falls



William O'Donnell
Diocese of Gary



Luis Reyes
Diocese of Madison



Anthony Richter
Diocese of Cheyenne



Peter Specht
Diocese of Duluth



Chase Stevens
Diocese of Peoria



Todd VanderMay
Diocese of Rapid City



John Waters
Diocese of Sioux City

SOPHOMORES



Jacob Bruns
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



Robert Budzius
Diocese of Gary



Zavior Franck
Diocese of Duluth



Josiah Hanson
Diocese of Rapid City



Scott Kahler
Diocese of St. Cloud



Mark Nosbush
Diocese of St. Cloud



Luke Olson
Diocese of Peoria



Paul Rupert
Diocese of Peoria



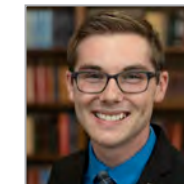
Gabriel Rysavy
Diocese of Winona-Rochester



Joseph Shlanta
Diocese of Sioux Falls



Collin van Waardenburg
Diocese of Gary



Ethan Wilcox
Diocese of Marquette



Lawrence Wirries
Diocese of Crookston

FRESHMAN



Andrew Beine
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



John Paul Bickerstaff
Diocese of Winona-Rochester



Michael Milam
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



Apolinaire Mugisha
Diocese of Sioux Falls



Anthony Vera
Diocese of Sioux City



Thomas Williams
Diocese of Peoria



BEHOLD,
 how good and
 how pleasing it is
FOR BROTHERS
TO DWELL AS ONE.
 Psalm 133:1



Save the Date!

Bishops & Rector Dinner

April 16, 2021
 Rochester International Event Center

Social 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm
Dinner 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Honoring His Excellency
Archbishop Christophe Pierre,
 Apostolic Nuncio to the United States of America –
 2021 Immaculate Heart of Mary Award Recipient

For any questions regarding the dinner, contact Ricardo Rodriguez:
 507-858-1275 or rrodriguez@catholicfsmn.org



UPCOMING EVENTS 2021

January 4-8
 Senior and Junior
 Seminary Retreat

January 18-22
 Sophomore and Freshman
 Seminary Retreat

January 25
 Return to classes at St.
 Marys University

April 16
 Bishops and Rector Dinner

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Please let us know of others who should receive the IHM
 Newsletter or if you have an address change.

Please let us know if you are an alumni of IHM. We are always
 looking for alumni spotlight stories, please share yours!



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IHMS is more than a place.

*It is an experience...an opportunity
for men to follow Christ.*

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary is honored to be represented by the following dioceses, who have entrusted us with their seminarians' formation.

Diocese of Cheyenne, Diocese of Crookston, Diocese of Duluth, Diocese of Gary, Diocese of Green Bay, Diocese of Madison, Diocese of Marquette, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Diocese of Peoria, Diocese of Rapid City, Diocese of Sioux City, Diocese of Sioux Falls, Diocese of St. Cloud, Diocese of Winona-Rochester.

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