



# IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY SEMINARY

## SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER



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

Psalm 133:1





## Letter from the **Rector**

In the Markan account of the calling of the Twelve, we are told that Jesus selected these particular men “that they might be with him, and he might send them forth to preach and to have authority to drive out demons” (Mark 3:14b-15, NABRE). It is striking that, prior to mentioning their mission of preaching and exorcising, the evangelist mentions that Jesus chooses the Twelve to “be with him.” The deliberate inclusion of that phrase—so simple, yet so rich—is an elegantly subtle reminder that being with Jesus stands at the root of the apostolic mission. In the final analysis, all our activity as Christians flows from having first encountered the Christ, an encounter in which we are animated and enriched by his profound love for us.

While many elements contribute to the overall work of discernment and formation taking place at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary, the vital and indispensable core is time spent with Jesus. The more time any of us—seminarian or not—spends with Jesus, the more we will be able to savor his care and tenderness, the more we will follow him as he leads us to the Father’s rich and abundant love, and the more we will be able to detect his voice summoning us to that specific vocation by which he wishes us to preach his goodness and combat the darkness present in the world. And thus, as the men here develop the life of authentic prayer which leads to greater intimacy with Christ, they learn to adhere more closely to his summons, wherever it may lead them. I invite your own prayers for them, that they may always be eager to be with Jesus, thereby discovering the vocation he has marked out for them.

*The more time any of us—  
seminarian or not—spends  
with Jesus, the more we will  
be able to savor his care and  
tenderness...*

---

Rev. Robert Horihan  
Rector



# 2023/2024 Seminarian Graduation

# '24

For my three years in seminary, graduation has been a profound and intimate moment: profound in how God's glory becomes so strikingly manifested in my brothers who are graduating and intimate because of the effect each individual personality has had on the IHMS community. One of the great blessings of living at IHMS is the opportunity to struggle and grow closely with others. From this experience, many of us develop deep friendships, becoming more able to love others and ourselves. Thus, the seniors' graduation marks more than completing an academic degree or formation program. It symbolizes all aspects of life at IHMS: growth in virtue, inquiry into truth with awe and wonder, beginnings of lifelong friendships, learning to love the Lord, and encountering His merciful love back.

As my friends graduate, I am reminded of my time in seminary and all the blessings Christ has performed in my life. Moreover, I am filled with hope as I see the goodness that God has poured into myself and all my brothers, especially the seniors! Hope is an apt word

to describe graduation. We in formation are filled with hope for the Church's future and our own vocations as we witness our brothers graduate and continue their journey.

This year will be especially meaningful to me since I have journeyed with these graduating seniors for three years. I have witnessed their growth into men of faith and the increase in their ardent love for each other, God, and God's people. This is the true celebration of graduation. Love of Christ is what compels men to surrender their lives to Him, and it is only through this surrender we in formation receive God's love most abundantly. Thus, in the IHMS graduation, we joyfully celebrate the surrender God has grown in the seniors. In light of the parable our Lord gave us in Matthew 13, we celebrate the fruitful plants of love that have sprung up in the docile soil of the seminary, the seedbed of the Church.

— Paul Guertin, Discipleship II, Diocese of St. Cloud

# 2024 BISHOPS & RECTOR DINNER

The annual Bishops and Rector Dinner was held on Friday, April 12th, honoring Bishop Andrew Cozzens of the Diocese of Crookston, MN. Bishop Cozzens has led the National Eucharistic Revival since 2022, leading the Church of the United States of America along its tenth Eucharistic National Congress, which also happens to be the first Congress of its type in this nation in over eighty years.

The evening began with guests arriving for a social hour. With over 500 guests in attendance, the Rochester International Event Center soon became a bustling and lively place. The social hour was accompanied by live music from the IHMS Immaculate Jazz band led by the group's Senior, Anthony Vera, on bass guitar. As the social hour came to a close, Bishop Robert Barron began the evening with introductions and words of gratitude to the several bishops in attendance: Bishop Emeritus Donald Kettler from the Diocese of St. Cloud, Archbishop Jerome ListECKI of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, and Bishop Dávid Bartimej Tencer all the way from the Diocese of Reykjavík in Iceland. After supper, the IHMS a cappella group Schola Cantorum, directed by Senior, John Paul Bickerstaff, sang two pieces of sacred music. Fr. Horihan, the seminary's Rector, formally introduced Bishop Cozzens afterward.

Bishop Cozzens, after graciously receiving the Immaculate Heart of Mary Award, began his speech. He spoke eloquently of the integral connection between the Holy Eucharist and priestly vocations. He stressed

the importance of Eucharistic Adoration as one of the primary ways for a young man to prayerfully discern his vocation. Along with the discernment of vocation to the priesthood, Bishop Cozzens discussed the importance of Eucharistic Adoration for all faithful Catholics. For Catholics to have a strong belief in the Eucharist and a close, prayerful connection to our Lord, the Church must encourage Eucharistic Adoration. It was for this reason the National Eucharistic Revival was instituted in 2022, to revive and instill a fervent love for our Lord in the Eucharist. Bishop Cozzens stressed this point, that a great help to increasing priestly vocations is through intentional prayer of the Church's faithful before the Eucharist. Following Bishop Cozzens, a brief video, by Discipleship II seminarian Westin Gourneau, was shown, displaying the joyous camaraderie and daily life at IHMS amongst prayer and academics.

Bishop Barron closed the 2024 Bishops and Rector Dinner with a prayer and episcopal blessing. Thank you to all who supported IHMS through the Bishops and Rector Dinner and to all those that have and continue to contribute to the seminary's mission. Your prayers mean a great deal to us, and we are truly grateful, God bless you all.

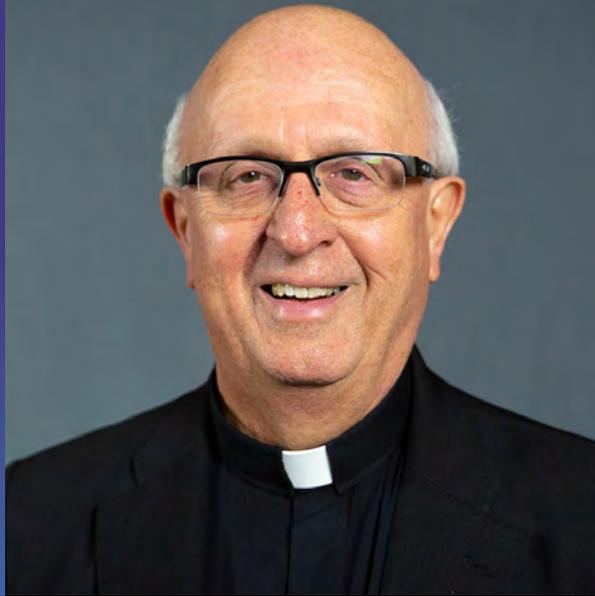
– Jon Stone, Discipleship II,  
Diocese of Crookston



## Save the Date

Please mark your calendars for next year as we will host the **22nd Annual Bishops and Rector Dinner on April 25, 2025.**

We hope to see you there!



# Alumni Spotlight

**Fr. Cimpl**  
Diocese of Sioux Falls

Fr. Charles “Chuck” Cimpl grew up surrounded by people that ultimately led him to the priesthood. Such influences included the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary who taught at his Catholic high school. He was also influenced by the Benedictine priests that served his home parish in the Diocese of Sioux Falls, who ended up spending many holidays at the houses of his mother and grandmother.

“I met many priests and sisters and always thought they were happy, good, fulfilling people; they influenced me to look into the priesthood.” When Fr. Cimpl debated entering seminary or Creighton University in Nebraska after high school in 1970, he received advice from his diocese’s Bishop at the time, Bishop Lambert Hoch. Bishop Hoch had the same deliberation when he was Fr. Cimpl’s age. He ended up choosing Creighton University first before entering seminary. He told Fr. Cimpl if he could do it again, he’d choose seminary first, which secured Fr. Cimpl’s choice to enter Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary.

“People think you must be committed to seminary right away. It’s really the opposite, it’s the formative years of life’s journey. Regardless of where God is calling you in a vocation – religious life, married life, consecrated life – you’re getting a good start at IHMS, whether you continue all four years or not.”

After graduating from IHMS in 1974, Fr. Cimpl continued to theology studies at Saint Paul Seminary in Saint Paul, MN before being ordained in 1978. He then returned to the Diocese of Sioux Falls where he taught for eleven years at a Catholic school. He then was the Director of the Newman Center at South

Dakota State University in Brookings, SD for a time before being called back to Sioux Falls for various parish assignments.

Fr. Cimpl held the position of Vicar General in his diocese for seventeen years, working under four bishops in that time. The Vicar General is second to the bishop in the diocese. When the bishop is unable to function or is out of the diocese, the Vicar General oversees the diocese. Fr. Cimpl officially retired in 2022.

“We’re called by the Church to the priesthood, not just our personal will and desire,” said Fr. Cimpl about his advice for priestly candidates today. “Sometimes we think we have all the answers, but we must be open to where the Holy Spirit is leading us and an openness to want to serve the people of God. It’s not just our own personal holiness, but how we’re going to use that holiness to affect other people.”

**Fr. Cimpl said the best part of priesthood is the interaction with people at various times in their life, some of which are their most crucial and happy times.**

He has taught students whose weddings he’s officiated, whose children he’s baptized, and whose children’s weddings he’s witnessed over his four decades as a priest. “As you go through life with these people, you become part of a bigger family because the Church is a family, a family of God. You get to know them on various levels, and they stay with you through your life.”

– Carlee Shimek, IHMS Communications

# Directors of the Spirit in Seminarian Discernment

with Fr. Andrew Beerman



As part of seminarians' spiritual formation—one of the four dimensions of priestly formation—they meet biweekly with their spiritual director in a session of discernment and prayer. The 57 seminarians are a lot for Fr. Matthew Fasnacht, the Director of Spiritual Life at IHMS, to guide in spiritual formation alone. Thus, he seeks priests across the Diocese of Winona-Rochester to be the seminarians' spiritual directors.

This past formation year was Fr. Andrew Beerman's first time as a spiritual director. He served as the Rector of IHMS from 2008 to 2012. He came from his parishes in Austin, MN every other week to sit down with his three seminarians in individual sessions to guide them through spiritual discernment. Fr. Beerman answered a few questions about the role spiritual directors play in a seminarian's journey.

## What is the dynamic between a spiritual director and seminarian during spiritual direction?

We get to know the person first and build an aspect of trust before they share things in their spiritual life; it requires becoming vulnerable. The Holy Spirit is the seminarians' true director of spiritual life, and a spiritual director like me helps discern with the seminarian how the Holy Spirit is directing them to respond to his message and healing, to discover any obstacles that may prevent the seminarian from responding to the Holy Spirit's direction in life.

## How impactful is a spiritual director's influence on the seminarian's formation?

The director reveals the spiritual life to that seminarian, and they grow in trust that the director cares for them and knows what's best for them when helping to form a life of prayer. Our job is to help seminarians live a life of Christ so they can minister effectively to parishioners.

## What are the qualities a spiritual director should have to be a good guide for the seminarian?

Someone who's going through spiritual direction themselves and taking time for prayer and who understands the different aspects of growing in a relationship with Jesus. It's helpful to know the rules of discernment of Ignatian Spirituality and recognizing how God and the Holy Spirit works in our lives.

They should be able to set aside or be aware of their own spiritual issues or concerns, so it won't unduly influence their relationship with seminarians and their formation in the Holy Spirit's guidance.

## During spiritual direction sessions with your seminarians, what is your method of guidance?

We were taught the relational model of spiritual direction, which is entering prayer with spiritual direction to actively discern the Holy Spirit's words. It's not a spiritual or theological form of direction, it's not even counseling, which is giving advice to others. It's helping seminarians and directors be attentive to the Holy Spirit in the moment and see how he is guiding and responding to us.

## How do you handle a potential spiritual crisis a seminarian might have?

A spiritual crisis is usually due to being separated from God in some way. You resolve that by coming back to Him. It's recognizing obstacles, blindness, or brokenness in the seminarian's spiritual life or life in general and bringing those issues into the light and the relationship with God so He can heal them.

## How has your first year been, as a spiritual director at IHMS?

I've enjoyed it. Seminary formation can be intense because seminarians are called to grow quickly in a short period of time, but there's joy in seeing God's grace in their lives and the healing that takes place. It happens in all dimensions of priestly formation – human, pastoral, intellectual – but it's more intense in the spiritual dimension.

## What is the best part of being a spiritual director?

Recognizing the Holy Spirit's actions and Christ's grace in the lives of others. The privilege to witness it at a close and intimate level with seminarians causes me to rejoice in my heart at the goodness and glory of God and give gratitude that He has called me to participate in this ministry.

– Carlee Shimek, IHMS Communications

# Apostolic Work at the Developmental Achievement Center

**James Nelson**

Discipleship I, Diocese of Sioux Falls

This past school year, I had the wonderful opportunity to spend two mornings a week at the Developmental Achievement Center (DAC) in Winona, MN. The mission of the DAC is to foster the interdependence of individuals within the community. I have witnessed a great sense of joy from all there, staff and individuals with disabilities alike. I see it as a place that gives these individuals a sense of purpose.

My opportunity of serving Christ at the Winona DAC most often was sitting with several individuals to help them accomplish their jobs. Some days it involved talking football with a few of the individuals on days when there was not much work or helping to build a popsicle stick shed with an individual for his tractors. I've learned that these individuals are just like anyone else I've met; they show up to work each day and there's joy in seeing and greeting one another and a desire to work. The staff have been another blessing of my work at the DAC in getting to know these people who show up every day in a different way to serve their community and the lessons they taught me by their example in serving the people of God.

We are all called to serve in our own unique way and by serving others, we are serving Christ. Christ tells us in Matthew 25:40, "Just as you did for one of the least of my brothers and sisters, you did for me." One day as I was sitting with one of the individuals, helping him with his job, a conversation I had with a Jesuit last year came to mind: he was telling me of a time when he was working at a home for those with disabilities and couldn't leave for daily Mass because there were few workers, but that Jesus was in front of him in his work. Jesus is in front of all of us. Life in the seminary can be busy and hectic sometimes, but I believe that is preparing us for the life the Lord may be calling us to. We must learn how to take time out of our busy schedules to serve the community and foster a desire for service as we continue the work of conforming our life to Christ and prepare for a true life of service.



Pictured Above: James and Marshall

# Philosophy with Professor Patricia Calton: The Intellectual Formation of Seminarians



Since its foundation, IHMS has partnered with Saint Mary's University of Minnesota (SMUMN) to enroll seminarians in college alongside priestly formation. A requirement when seminarians enter SMUMN is that they study philosophy. They may minor in other studies such as Spanish or education, but philosophy is important for one of the four dimensions of priestly formation: intellectual.

"At SMUMN, we clarify seminarians' thoughts and logic – how to think about important ideas and engage others who disagree with them," said Professor Patricia Calton, Associate Professor of Philosophy at SMUMN who has taught IHMS seminarians since 1991. "We ask questions like 'is there a philosophical basis for our Catholic convictions of human dignity, do we have the courage to truly look at these ideas and not know the right answer?' But, having confidence to think about these questions will lead us to appreciate who we are, and that natural reason has valuable, powerful insights on faith."

Among other themes, philosophy studies personhood through biological, moral, and spiritual lenses and through major philosophers' models of the person, such as those of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas. Seminarians analyze aspects of human society, such as individualism versus collectivism.

"When seminarians become priests and converse with parishioners, questions will arise – doubts of God's existence and individualistic attitudes," said Professor Calton. "With philosophy, seminarians will have studied not only the pitfalls of individualism and subjectivism but ways to engage these ideas seriously and respectfully, so their parishioners gain the confidence to think things through with them."

Philosophical coursework at SMUMN is impactful to the intellectual dimension of priestly formation and includes

classes such as a history of philosophy sequence, Philosophy of Religion, and Philosophy of the Person.

"SMUMN is very close to what the Church and Program of Priestly Formation asks for in seminary formation. We study logic, philosophy of the human person, epistemology, political philosophy, and we weave in natural theology, instilling the confidence that reason can bring us to the truth," said Professor Calton. "One of the best things we do is give students the courage to question and examine things, and answer, in a nuanced, sophisticated way societal questions about the nature of the person or morality. The students aren't afraid of engaging in those questions but eager to deepen their answers."

The intellectual dimension prepares seminarians to proclaim the Gospels of Christ, and SMUMN teaches communication and philosophical concepts for their future to educate and converse with parishioners.

"We're tasked with challenging seminarians on the intellectual level but also on virtues they develop in their human dimension of priestly formation," said Professor Calton. "Their generosity, ability to engage people when they disagree, and make the thoughtful and virtuous process to a deeper understanding and respect for others. We're lucky to work with students who have human formation at the forefront of their minds."

When seminarians leave IHMS for the configuration stage of priestly formation, they study theology, the study of God and religious belief, as part of their continuing priestly education. Philosophy at SMUMN develops their intellectual capacity to prepare them for their future theology studies.

– Carlee Shimek, IHMS Communications

# Senior Q&A

## Andrew Beine

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

My most memorable moments at IHMS must be the spontaneous fraternity. These took the form of going out for a meal, watching movies, or the "I just have a quick question" visits that turned into meaningful, hour-long conversations. I have come to love unexpected quality time shared among brothers.

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

When the Lord makes His Will clear to you, answer it quickly and generously. Make this response a habit and you will grow leaps and bounds in relationship with the One who loves you.

### What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy for continued priestly formation in preparation for ordination to the diocesan priesthood.



## John Paul Bickerstaff

Diocese of Winona-Rochester

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

My most memorable moment at IHMS is probably during the silent retreat of my first year. The Lord inspired in me a prayer to pray to Him that has stuck with me ever since.

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

My advice would be to give yourself over to the work of formation! Gently get over yourself and cooperate with the ways in which the Lord is inviting you to grow.

### What are your plans after graduation?

I'm heading to Saint Paul Seminary in Saint Paul, MN for four more years of formation before, God willing, ordination!





## Bennett Feudner

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

Trying to find a vacuum. My first week, the usual vacuum for the dining room was being used, and I had to find another—I was told to try the 2nd floor closet. Well, that closet is inside the copy room, which I was completely unaware of. Looking at all the rooms, no door led to a closet... but there was one unmarked door. I thought it would surely be the elusive 2nd floor closet, but upon opening it I surprised both Fr. Horihan (our rector) and myself as I discovered the other door to the faculty lounge. Fr. Horihan is very fond of keeping my memory sharp with this one, ha-ha!

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

Find a couple of good friends and stay close and honest to God in prayer. Your friends will be with you through the every-day part of life here, and God will set everything straight through prayer. And what price tag could you put on a couple solid friends, let alone adding God to the deal?

### What are your plans after graduation?

I'm going to attend the Institute for Priestly Formation (IPF) summer program with about 120 other seminarians from various dioceses. It'll help me in my transition to theology studies and the configuration stage of formation at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee, WI in the fall. Before that, I'm going to take a week in the middle of nowhere—hopefully on a lake—and enjoy some time away with a few of my senior classmates.



## Brendan Logan

Diocese of Sioux Falls

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

My most memorable moments at IHMS are the fall Vir in Christo weekend retreats. The weekend feels as if we have fully connected with the new men of the house through the speaker's presentations, football, jumping into a cold lake together, and other fraternal activities.

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

My advice to first-year men would be to dive headfirst into seminary life. Get out of your comfort zone by meeting new people, doing things you have never done before, taking chances, and most importantly being the man God created you to be. Do not put on a persona of what you think other people expect. Men of the house do not want imitation; we want authenticity.

### What are your plans after graduation?

My plans after graduation are to attend the Institute for Priestly Formation at Creighton University over the summer. It will be a time for me to pray about my formation as of now but also to prepare myself for major seminary. Once IPF is finished I will start my journey as a Theologian at Saint Paul Seminary in Saint Paul, MN.



## David Marrone

Diocese of Madison

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

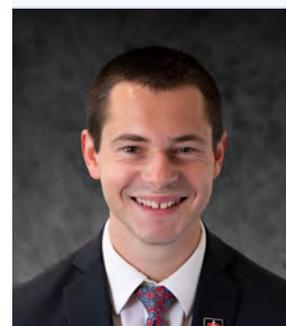
I have a great deal of memories which I will cherish, so it is hard to pick just one. One that I will share because it is more particular to me was my fall break from this last year. I arranged for a group of six seminarians to stay with a family in western Wisconsin on their farm. We enjoyed time with their family, chopping wood and seeing the local area.

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

Do not be afraid! Resist any inclinations to anxiety and restlessness. There are a lot of tasks and things to get done while you are in seminary, but it is important to approach these things from a place of peace. Make sure you give yourself sufficient time for prayer, recreation, and social interaction.

### What are your plans after graduation?

I am moving on to study theology at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee, WI. Over the summer I will be spending time in prayer and formation at the Institute for Priestly Formation's summer program for seminarians.



## Michael Milam

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

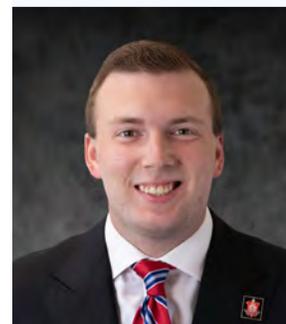
A few of my favorite moments from my time at IHMS have been the Senior/Faculty skits that are put on every year; they're always a wonderful time of fraternity. Also, the annual silent retreats to Broom Tree Retreat Center have been some of the most life-giving experiences I've encountered. Being able to spend that very intentional time with Our Lord in silence and meditation helps me prepare and be oriented for my time in academics and seminary formational work.

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

Take your time! There is often the temptation to want to achieve everything in the work of formation right away once you arrive. Don't fall into this trap! Our Lord is always patient with you, it is your responsibility to be patient with yourself in this great work of formation.

### What are your plans after graduation?

I will be attending the Institute for Priestly Formation in Omaha, NE, a wonderful time of prayer and discernment before entering major seminary. For major seminary, I have been accepted and will attend Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee, WI. Saint Francis is the Provincial Seminary for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, and I'm so looking forward to the next four years of formation there.



# Charles Pomroy

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

## **What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?**

On many Friday nights throughout the year, a bunch of guys will get together and cook dinner. We would share stories, laughs, and food in what were some of my favorite fraternal moments at IHMS.

## **What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?**

Be patient with yourself as the Lord is patient with you. He will guide you along the right path in His time.

## **What are your plans after graduation?**

I will be continuing priestly formation at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee, WI.



# Jarod Raber

Diocese of Peoria

## **What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?**

My most memorable experience at IHMS, though there are many contenders, must be playing in the Saint Francis de Sales basketball tournament this past February, a beautiful time of prayer, fraternity, and good competition. Plus, our team came away with the best record in IHMS history!

## **What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?**

The advice I would give to a first-year seminarian is take every aspect of formation seriously. Nothing you do is a waste; rather, every moment is an opportunity to love! Daily life at IHMS provides the 'framework' for becoming a virtuous man if only one is willing to be obedient.

## **What are your plans after graduation?**

I plan to attend Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, IL, where I will study theology and more intentionally prepare for the priesthood. I look forward to the deepened commitment of discipleship the configuration stage offers.



## Alex Radtke

Diocese of La Crosse

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

The fraternity formed through all the different things my brothers in seminary do. It allowed me to experience new things, as well as invite people to try new things such as duck hunting.

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

Enter with an open heart to what the Lord is willing for you to do. But bring everything to prayer, even the smallest thing as the Lord tends to work in the small ways.

### What are your plans after graduation?

Since graduation, I have been in a parish in Edgar, WI doing a pastoral semester where I have had a deepened call to the priesthood. I do a mix of substitute teaching for a maternity leave teacher, while also assisting the pastor with liturgies and sitting in on meetings/learning the ins and outs of what the priest does on a daily level. I will be continuing to Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee, WI in the fall.



## Charles Tackman

Diocese of Marquette

### What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

The most memorable moment I have had at IHMS is the many moments spent in prayer in Saint John Vianney Chapel. There have been too many immensely important moments with God spent in this seminary's chapel to pick one; they defy words. Altogether and separately, they were the most memorable moments of my time here.

### What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

For first-year students, I give the advice: Pray, pray, pray, and whatever you do, don't stop praying! Prayer is your desire for and relationship with God. He got you here, and He will see you through your studies!

### What are your plans after graduation?

My plans after graduation are to attend the Institute for Priestly Formation workshop in Nebraska during the summer. I will continue my formation for the priesthood at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, MI in the fall.



# Anthony Vera

Diocese of Sioux City

## What's your most memorable moment at IHMS?

The most memorable moment for me at IHMS has to be the 5-day silent retreat we go on as Juniors and Seniors. Encountering God in the long periods of silence was a new level of intentionality and depth that I had not experienced before, and I was able to hear God's will for my life more clearly! The experience was one of the greatest graces I have received and an immense privilege I am grateful for, as many people do not get the privilege of taking a week off to focus on prayer.

## What advice would you give first-year students starting next year?

Pray. We are in seminary to foster a deeper relationship with God, not to get good grades or impress people, and it's through this relationship you develop that you will come to understand where Christ is leading you in your life. Trust that God is holding you throughout the process and take your time to enjoy your time in seminary!

## What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I will be spending time with my family in Georgia before going to Italy for Italian studies. I will then be entering into major seminary formation at the Pontifical North American College in Rome!



# Congratulations to IHMS Alumni

**Congratulations to IHMS Alumni for their Ordinations to the Priesthood and Transitional Diaconate earlier this month:**

**Francis Strong**

**Ben Schoonmaker**

Diocese of Peoria | *Transitional Diaconate*

**David C. Drefcinski**

Diocese of Madison | *Priesthood*

**Jack Swoik**

Diocese of Peoria | *Priesthood*

**Juan Altamirano**

Diocese of Green Bay | *Priesthood*

**Jordan Danielson**

**Benjamin Peters**

**Timothy Welch**

Diocese of Winona-Rochester |  
*Transitional Diaconate*



# Alumni Spotlight

Deacon Jack Swoik  
Diocese of Peoria

**Deacon Jack Swoik grew up surrounded by the Church. He had always been intrigued by the environment and felt something innate drawing him to it.** After attending a retreat camp for vocations awareness where he learned about seminary life, he entered Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in 2017.

"I went to public high school, so IHMS was the first time I was in an environment surrounded by priests dedicated to you. The priests at IHMS are the best I know because they are so dedicated to formation and wanting to help us grow as men and future priests. I was very at peace surrounded by the call to priesthood and came to understand who I am in relation to God, myself, and others."

After graduating IHMS in 2020, Deacon Jack headed to the East Coast for major seminary in the configuration stage at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD. IHMS and Mount St. Mary's Seminary provided Deacon Jack with great experiences, he said, such as visiting Rome on a pilgrimage and meeting so many men across the Midwest and East Coast. Now, all of Deacon Jack's seven years of formation have concluded in his ordination as a priest at the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception in Peoria, IL on May 25.

With his ordination, Deacon Jack feels excitement to know God's Will in being ordained and is looking forward to returning home to Peoria and beginning

priestly duties. Of course, apprehension of an important future is also an inevitable feeling.

**"The priesthood is freeing. I'm already committed after being ordained a deacon last year, this is just the culmination of seven years' work. That's a long time with lots of experiences, but you can't be taught or prepared for everything. In the back of my head is fear of the unknown and what I'll truly experience after being ordained."**

Deacon Jack's favorite part of IHMS was communal prayer and daily Mass. It is a fascinating way to learn to pray, he said, as such a setting doesn't happen anywhere else in life except seminary or religious community. Deacon Jack also enjoyed the brotherhood of seminarians. Having a group of men together with the same goals—to discern the priesthood—from the Midwest and beyond creates lifelong friendships.

"The goal of seminary is to understand who you are in the light of Christ. You take all your history and experience and translate all you learn in seminary on how to be more like Christ, the model of all priests, a man of service, sacrifice, and love. My striving to be more like Christ, even imperfectly, is a daily goal I strain to do as a person and soon as a priest too."

# Traveling With Jesus

## National Eucharistic Pilgrimage to Stop at IHMS



The Catholic Church is gathering this summer as over 100,000 participants prepare for the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage to take place across 6,500 miles of the United States. The Pilgrimage has four routes starting from the north, south, east, and west and all converging in Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress on July 17-21.

The Pilgrimage's Marian Route coming from the north will pass through six dioceses of IHMS seminarians, including Crookston (MN), St. Cloud (MN), Winona-Rochester (MN), La Crosse (WI), Green Bay (WI), Archdiocese of Milwaukee (WI), and Gary (IN). Some IHMS seminarians, such as those from La Crosse or Crookston, will participate during the Pilgrimage's procession through their home dioceses.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary is one of the stops on the Pilgrimage through the Diocese of Winona-Rochester from May 31 to June 7. At each stop along the four routes, the Eucharist is handed off to the next faithful pilgrims to continue the journey until the Body of Christ reaches Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress.

**A pilgrimage is historically a journey made to a location of spiritual significance, a place where God has revealed Himself.**

With the Eucharist along for this trek, a pilgrimage becomes not just a journey *to* Jesus but a journey *with* Him. To all traveling the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage this summer, an ignition of Catholic spirit, IHMS prays for your safety and hopes all grow closer to the Lord on your journey.

– Carlee Shimek, IHMS Communications





**BEHOLD,**  
 how good and  
 how pleasing it is  
**FOR BROTHERS  
 TO DWELL AS ONE.**

Psalm 133:1



## UPCOMING EVENTS 2024

### June 8

Ordination of IHMS Alumni to the Priesthood: Nicholas Gawarecki, Brian Klein, and Joshua Miller, Diocese of Winona-Rochester

Ordination of IHMS Alumni to Transitional Diaconate: Joseph VanDenheuvel, Diocese of St. Cloud; Alexander Kouris and Ivan Alatorre, Diocese of Gary

### July 13

New Propaedeutic Seminarians Move-In

### August 23, 26, 29

Seminarians Return

### September 3

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota Fall Semester Begins

### IHMS COMMUNICATION CONTACT:

IHMS OFFICE: 507-205-9237

IHMS EMAIL: [info@ihmseminary.org](mailto:info@ihmseminary.org)

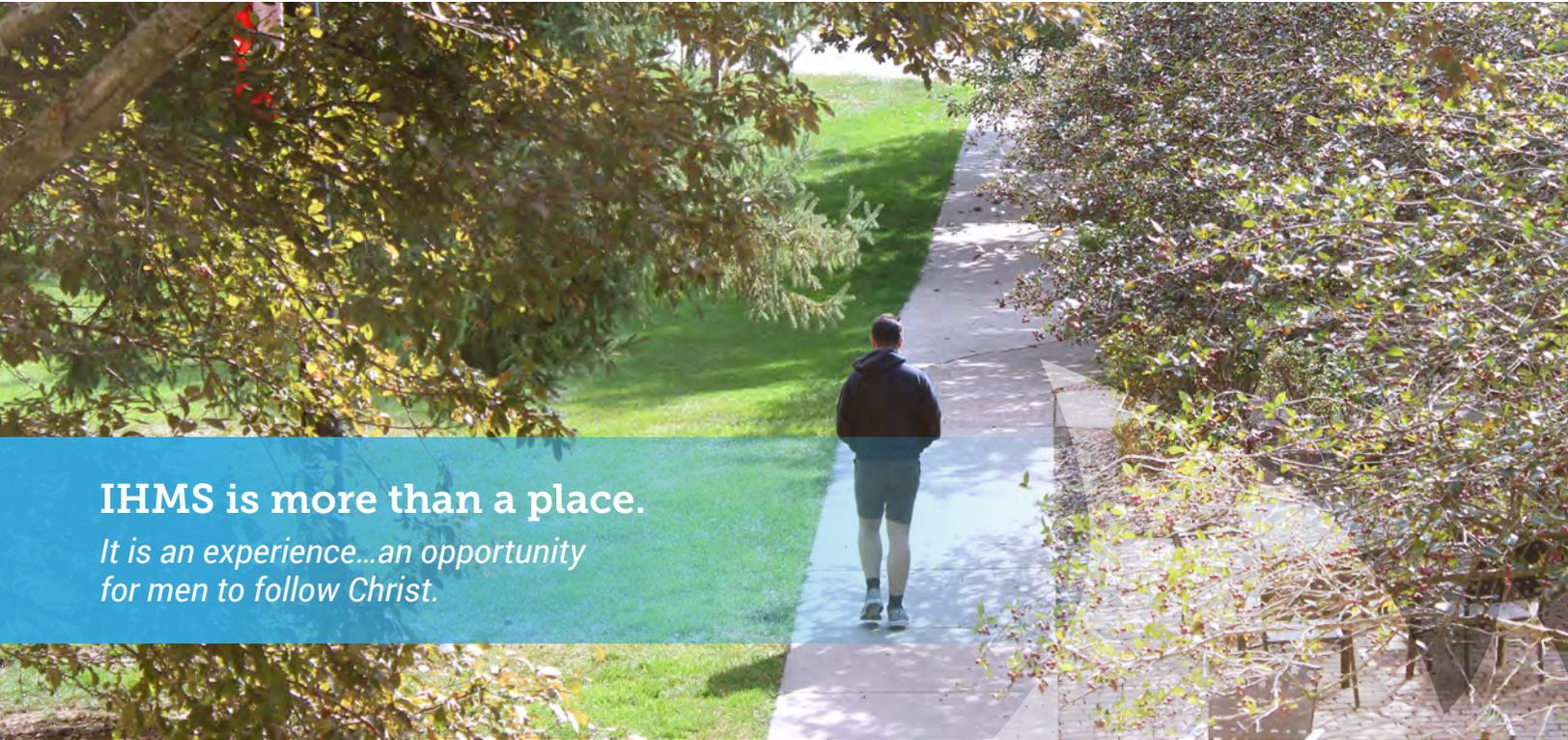
Please let us know of others who should receive the IHMS Newsletter or if you have an address change.

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



750 Terrace Heights | Winona, MN 55987

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TWIN CITIES, MN  
PERMIT NO. 90100



## 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 Gary, Diocese of Green Bay, Diocese of La Crosse, Diocese of Madison, Diocese of Marquette, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Diocese of Peoria, Diocese of Rapid City, Diocese of Reykjavik, Diocese of Sioux City, Diocese of Sioux Falls, Diocese of St. Cloud, Diocese of Winona-Rochester.

**IHMseminary.org**

[facebook.com/ihmseminary](https://facebook.com/ihmseminary)

[@ihmseminary](https://twitter.com/ihmseminary)

507.205.9237 IHMS OFFICE PHONE

507.474.7085 FAX

[info@ihmseminary.org](mailto:info@ihmseminary.org) EMAIL