

The path to the priesthood

There are two vital forms of service when it comes to supporting our seminarians: prayer and finance.

The value of the prayerful support shown again and again by the people of southwest Kansas cannot be over-estimated.

As for financial support? At approximately \$38,000 per seminarian, per year, your help is deeply appreciated, to say the least.

Your prayers, your cards, and your financial support are not taken for granted by our seminarians.

John Stang, 27, Pre-Theology II
St. John Vianney, Denver

"I really appreciate all the cards that we get," said John Stang. "We get a lot of cards from people that have monetary contributions, prayers; around Christmastime people offer Masses for us. And everyone's very appreciative of that. It's very edifying to have people who are willing to really reach out to support us, most of whom have probably never met us on a personal level. It's great to know that we have all that support from all over the diocese."

As for the financial support, he said, "It's really nice not have to worry about that. It's just really generous on the diocese's part, especially in the last several years as the economy has struggled off and on. That's really nice."

Eric Frieb, 20, Pre-Theology I
Conception Seminary, Conception, Mo.

"It's honestly very humbling," said Eric Frieb. "For those people to rally around the cause for the sake of supporting seminarians is very humbling and very supportive."

"When parishioners say that *we're praying for you, we have your back*, it's very encouraging. For a lot of seminarians, they say that's what keeps them going. The support of their people, it keeps them on the right path, focused. It's a reminder of why you're here; It's not only so I can be blessed and have my hands bathed in oil and all that. It's not just for me, it's for them as well."

Pictured top to bottom are: John Stang, Eric Frieb, Austin Habash, Esteban Hernandez, and Tyler Saucedo

Austin Habash, 24, Pre-Theology I
St. John Vianney, Denver

Austin Habash, who is in his second year of studies, said that "It's absolutely inspiring that the parishioners across the different parishes and the diocese would sacrifice in charity, whether spiritually or in monetary ways for us, most of whom we have probably never met, and also for some of us who, God willing, will be a priest, but whom may never be *their* priest. It's a real witness of Christ's love in our diocese."

Esteban Hernandez, 38, Spirituality Year
Conception Seminary, Conception, Mo.

"Their support is a big blessing for me," Esteban Hernandez said. "The people of the diocese are a gift. I know a lot of people make this money with very hard work. I am very grateful and thankful to the people for sharing with us seminarians. I can't find the words to thank all these people who are sharing their gifts from God."

"Their prayers for me are powerful. I can't do this only by myself. Thanks to all these people from our diocese, their pray, they support us all, they send a letter. This encourages me. They encourage me to keep going. Sometimes I feel down, but when I receive a letter, I feel and know people are praying for me, they give me power to keep going."

Tyler Saucedo, 26, Spirituality Year
St. John Vianney, Denver

"Grateful is probably the word I'd use," said Tyler Saucedo. "I'm very grateful to have this opportunity, thanks to the donations of individuals and everyone who gives. When they're contributing to Vibrant Ministries, they know it's going right to the diocese. The diocese can then invest back in itself. It's kind of a building -- everyone helping each other build a stronger [diocese]. I know our diocese is pretty blessed to be able give this opportunity to young men. I know they'd love to give more!"

How will funds from the appeal help seminarians?

- Seminarian Education – *tuition, room and board*
- Seminarian support – *health insurance*

