



# FISHER'S NET

Diocese of Arlington Vocations *E-Newsletter*

Winter, 2007 - Vol. 3, No. 1

Visit our Web-Site: [www.arlingtondiocese.org/offices/vocations](http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/offices/vocations)

The *Office of Vocations 'Fisher's Net' E-Newsletter* is a periodic update of informative, inspirational and insightful news concerning aspects of discernment and formation to the priesthood and consecrated life, particularly among men and women from our diocese.

*See end for subscribe and unsubscribe information.*

## Upcoming Events:

- 4/5: Chrism Mass  
w/Presbyterate  
& Bishop Loverde
- 4/22: Women's Group  
Spring 'Nun Run'
- 5/9: Men's Group  
Dinner w/Bishop
- 5/30: Women's Group  
Dinner w/Bishop
- 6/8: Holy Hour: Vigil of  
Ordinations
- 6/9: Priesthood &  
Diaconate  
Ordinations

*See Web-Site for Details*

## HEADLINES:

- SEMINARIAN WINTER RETREAT/SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD
- WOMEN'S DISCERNMENT RETREAT
- UPDATES FROM NEWLY ORDAINED PRIESTS
- EIGHTH GRADE VOCATIONS MASS
- CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE VOCATION CONFERENCE
- VOCATION REFLECTION

---

## SEMINARIAN WINTER RETREAT/SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD



The annual retreat for our seminarians was held at the Dominican Retreat House January 3-5<sup>th</sup>. It was a time of prayer and fraternity; a time for the priests of our diocese to share the wisdom of their experience with the men in formation who may one day serve the people of Arlington alongside them. Fr. Robert Rippy, rector of the Cathedral of St. Thomas More gave the opening conference setting the theme of priestly spiritual fatherhood. The morning conference was given by Fr. Jim Hudgins. He underscored the essential role of prayer in his

mission as a spiritual father to his parishioners. Father Jamie Workman saw prayer as a powerful means of helping him to draw those in his care to a truer understanding of the responsibilities of their faith. Thursday evening Bishop Loverde gave his thoughts about spiritual fatherhood from his perspective as bishop. The final conference was given by Father Thomas Vanderwoude who again stressed the importance of prayer and a daily Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament. The main celebrant for the closing Mass on Friday was Msgr. Frank Mahler.

Thursday evening a number of the men discerning a vocation to the priesthood were invited to join our seminarians for dinner and to hear the talks given by two of them. Jason Burchell, in his first year of pre-theology at Mt. St. Mary's, focused his talk on the beginnings of his vocation discernment—how he had felt the presence of the Lord working in his life and the ways in which He taught him when he gave Him his full attention. While discernment is not easy and there can be many obstacles and wrong paths along the way, Jason encouraged the men to stay focused on the Lord in order to discover their true calling and to give of themselves fully and unselfishly, "The Church needs real men to do this," Jason noted, "and if you are called, your life will be one of true

joy and peace.” Second theologian Steve Schultz of St. Charles Seminary spoke about his journey to the seminary and highlighted some of the experiences he has had since he was first accepted into the formation program by Bishop Loverde almost four years ago. He was grateful to the Holy Spirit for guidance in his talk and to Father Bashista for the opportunity to have addressed his brother seminarians and the men in discernment.

---

## WOMEN’S DISCERNMENT RETREAT

The weekend of February 9-11<sup>th</sup> the Office of Vocations hosted its annual Women’s Discernment Retreat at the Seton Retreat Center in Emmitsburg, MD. Several of our diocesan seminarians were on hand Friday evening to help the participants with their luggage. It was welcome assistance for the 19 women discerners and 18 religious sisters from 10 visiting orders. Also participating were the Daughters of Charity who run the retreat center and the cloistered Discalced Carmelite nuns of Port Tobacco, MD whose video of their contemplative life was viewed during the retreat.



Rev. Fred Miller from Mount St. Mary’s Seminary gave the retreat conferences. His theme and intention was to praise Mary for her vocation as virgin, bride and mother. These three dimensions of Mary’s vocation and mission continue to be the image and inspiration of consecrated religious life. Father Miller encouraged the women on retreat to entrust their vocation discernment to our Lady. He recommended that they consecrated themselves to Mary at every level—in their thinking about discernment, in their emotions about discernment and in their relationship with the Blessed Trinity.

---

## UPDATES FROM NEWLY ORDAINED PRIEST

It has been nine months since the diocese welcomed its newest priests. Our prayers for them are bearing good fruit as the following updates from a few of them attest.

**Father Phillip Cozzi**, parochial vicar at St. Leo the Great remarks that “These past months as a Catholic priest have been the most fulfilling of my life. There is an immense feeling of satisfaction knowing that your labors uniquely affect the salvation of souls. Becoming a priest causes one to grow up fast, kind of similar to becoming a father I suppose. The people actually listen to me and take me seriously which was surprising at first, but I suppose that comes from knowing that the priest can confect the sacraments, which for any Catholic who takes their faith seriously, immediately changes their perception of a man. I am so thankful that God called me to be a priest and gave me the courage to respond.”



**Father Bjorn Lundberg** who is assigned to the Cathedral of St. Thomas More writes that “Our parishioners are very kind and welcoming, and have included me in the life of the parish. It is humbling to offer Mass and hear Confessions. I much more appreciate the work of all priests, now that I see the demands on their time. The

entire school has been extremely welcoming, and the kids are hilarious. They have questions, comments, and theological insight! Thanks to everyone who prays for us and supports our first steps in the parish. Time flies when you are newly ordained!”

From St. Philip Church, **Father Joseph Vu** comments that “Being a priest is always a challenge; however, it is rewarding because you know that you are loved and accepted as the way you are. Everything is good here, the people, the priests and, of course, strangers. Learning new things every day makes you humble. In a few words, I still learn to be a better priest every moment.”

Blessed Sacrament parish is home to **Father Jamie Workman** who reports that his experiences during his first year of priesthood have brought him an amount of peace and joy that is beyond words. “As I fulfill my priestly obligations of administering sacraments, visiting the sick, evangelizing, teaching the faith, marriage preparation, and pastoral counseling, I understand that this is what I was made to do. And although the life of a priest, especially celebrations of the sacraments and prayer, is supernatural, it feels quite natural to me. I cannot imagine ever wanting to be or do anything else.”

*Please pray for all the priests who serve the people of the Diocese of Arlington and for holy vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life.*

---

## 2007 EIGHTH GRADE VOCATIONS MASS

On March 6<sup>th</sup> Bishop Loverde celebrated his annual Mass for Vocations for the eighth graders of the diocese. Gathering again this year at Holy Spirit Church were students from 30 area schools. Concelebrating the Mass with Bishop were Fr. Brian Bashista, Director of Vocations, and eight diocesan priests. Students from Holy Family School proclaimed the readings and the petitions were read by Oakcrest students. Presenting the offertory gifts were students from All Saints School while the ushers and altar servers came from Holy Spirit. The Youth Choir of the Cathedral of St. Thomas More, under the direction of Mrs. Pamela Fitzgibbons, led the singing and Dr. Richard Gibala was the organist.



---

## CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE VOCATION CONFERENCE



In years past, Christendom College had held a Vocations Day each fall during which men and women from a variety of different consecrated religious communities came to campus to witness to their lives of following Christ in vowed poverty, chastity and obedience and to invite students to consider such a call from the Lord of the Harvest. But this year a more comprehensive and in depth approach to fostering vocation awareness took form. Over the weekend of February 23-25, 2006, Christendom College held its first Discernment Weekend

for students and families which encompassed all vocations, including marriage and the consecrated single life. Students gathered in record numbers with priests, religious, consecrated singles and married couples from across the country for a time of discussion and prayerful reflection.

Bishop Loverde, celebrating the opening Mass on Friday, told the students, "You are here to listen attentively to the Lord-to listen to what God wants you to do." Saturday morning, Fr. Frank Pavone spoke on dealing with uncertainty in discernment in his opening address *Master, Where Do You Stay?* He said that "If you get close to God, you are going to want to run away. We have to understand this dynamic if we're going to understand discernment. Somebody feels the initial call, the attractiveness of a vocation...then they start to walk toward this and then they suddenly feel I am not worthy.... Any journey of discernment is going to have that tension in it... What this tension means is that I am called to be purified and to accept something of which I will never be worthy...."



The afternoon breakout sessions addressed all Christian states of life. Students were able to hear their choice of talks on marriage, consecrated virginity, consecrated religious life, consecrated single lay persons, cloistered contemplative life, diocesan priesthood and the permanent diaconate. At various times throughout the day, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for adoration and benediction in the Chapel of Christ the King. The day concluded with a panel discussion followed by a social hour with music provided by some very talented students.

---

## VOCATION REFLECTION



Where do we go, if we say "yes" to the Lord's call? The briefest description of the priestly mission - and this is true in its own way for men and women religious too - has been given to us by the Evangelist Mark. In his account of the call of the Twelve, he says: "Jesus appointed twelve to be with him and to be sent out" (3:14). To be with Jesus and, being sent, to go out to meet people - these two things belong together and together they are the heart of a vocation, of the priesthood. To be with him and to be sent out - the two are inseparable. Only one who is "with him" comes to know him and can truly proclaim him. And anyone who has been with him cannot keep to himself what he has found; instead, he has to pass it on. Such was the case with Andrew, who told his brother Simon: "We have found the Messiah" (*Jn* 1:41). And the Evangelist adds: "He brought Simon to Jesus" (*Jn* 1:42). *Excerpt from a homily of Pope Benedict XVI, September 11, 2006*

---

## **MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH AND MOTHER OF VOCATIONS, PRAY FOR US!**

---

**DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON**  
**Office of Vocations**  
**200 North Glebe Road, Suite 901**  
**Arlington, VA 22203**  
**(703) 841-2514**  
[vocations@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:vocations@arlingtondiocese.org)

---

**SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE:** The Office of Vocations *E-Newsletter* is free. If you know of others who would like to receive this periodic electronic newsletter, please respond to [vocations@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:vocations@arlingtondiocese.org) providing the new subscribers e-mail address. If you would like to unsubscribe, please respond to this e-mail by writing 'UNSUBSCRIBE' either in the body of the e-mail or on the subject line.

---