

DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

2110 Broadway • Sacramento, California 95818-2541 • 916/733-0258 • 916/733-0195

OFFICE OF PRIESTLY &
RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS

To: Pastor, Director/Coordinator of Religious Education, Knights of Columbus, Parish Vocation Committee, Parish Secretary, Youth & Young Adult Ministers

From: Fr. Guillermo Hernández *OK Fr. Memo* Sr. Maria Campos, RSM *L.M.C.*
Director of Vocations Seminarian Formation Coordinator

Date: October 6, 2023

Subject: National Vocation Awareness Week Information

National Vocation Awareness Week is from November 5-11, 2023. We are preparing for National Vocation Awareness Week in November, please consider including an ad in your bulletin to help create awareness for vocations

The following is the suggested bulletin ad:

"National Vocation Awareness Week will be celebrated in our country November 5-11, 2023. Please ask Our Lord for more dedicated, holy priests, deacons, and consecrated men and women. May they be inspired by Jesus Christ, supported by our faith community, and respond generously to God's gift of vocation." (www.usccb.org)

The following are other tips and ideas for you:

- 1) Holy Hour for Vocations during National Vocation Awareness Week:** We encourage Parish Vocation Committees to organize a Holy Hour for vocations for the youth at your parish with the support of your pastor. If there is not a Parish Vocation Committee ministry at your parish, we invite the religious education program, youth ministry and/or altar server ministry to consider organizing this event.
- 2) Rosary for Vocations:** We encourage Parish Vocation Committees or religious education programs and youth ministry to organize these.
- 3) Priests,** this is an opportunity for you to share your vocation story. Young people love hearing, why you are a priest!
- 4) Vianney Vocations Insert:** We are including a Vianney Vocations Insert for your parish bulletin for National Vocations Awareness Week.

You may find more resources at the <https://www.usccb.org/committees/clergy-consecrated-life-vocations/national-vocation-awareness-week>, <https://nrvc.net/274/publication/4171/article/18685-national-vocation-awareness-week-november-7-13>, www.vocationnetwork.org, www.vocationsandprayer.org; www.vocationministry.com and www.vianneyvocations.com.

If you have any questions, please contact us, or visit our webpage (www.scd.org/vocations).



NATIONAL VOCATION AWARENESS WEEK BULLETIN FOR NOVEMBER 5-11, 2023

LABOURÉ TO THE RESCUE STUDENT DEBT? NO PROBLEM

What if a young Catholic feels called, but has too much student debt to enter the seminary or convent? It's a serious problem that has put the brakes on many vocations. A young woman with \$50k in student loans simply can't expect a religious order to assume her debt.

Fortunately, there's a solution. The Labouré Society is responsible for rescuing hundreds of vocations, helping young men and women who otherwise could not have pursued God's call.

Labouré doesn't simply pay off student loans. Instead, they organize young people into "classes" and train them how to fundraise as a group. Depending on the level of debt, it can take six months to a couple of years of fundraising. Graduates of the program say it didn't just help them enter formation; it solidified their call and taught valuable lessons about working within the Church with all kinds of people.

If a young man gives seminary a try and later decides to "discern out," the donations he received go to other candidates, which satisfies both the donors and the IRS. To learn more or make a donation, visit rescuevocations.org.



180-DAY DISCERNMENT CHALLENGE

"As I worked with young men, I began to see that they needed more structure in their lives, especially while they're seeking to know their vocations," said Fr. Greg Gerhart, the Vocation Director for the Diocese of Austin. To help men on their journey, Fr. Greg created Discernment 180, a "rule of life" for six months of deep discernment, with daily readings and specific spiritual practices. "It's already borne incredible fruit in our diocese," he said. "Three of our new seminarians completed D180 before entering." Now the program is free for anyone to use at discernment180.com



U.S. SEMINARIES

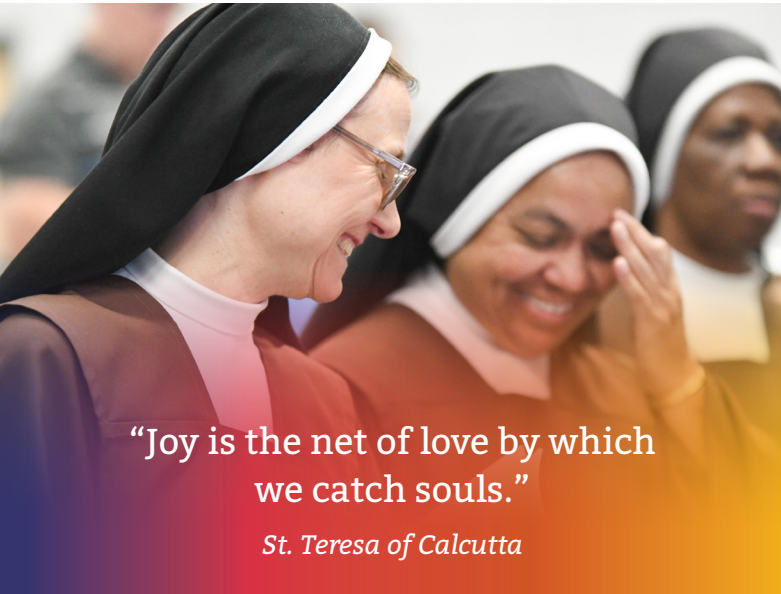
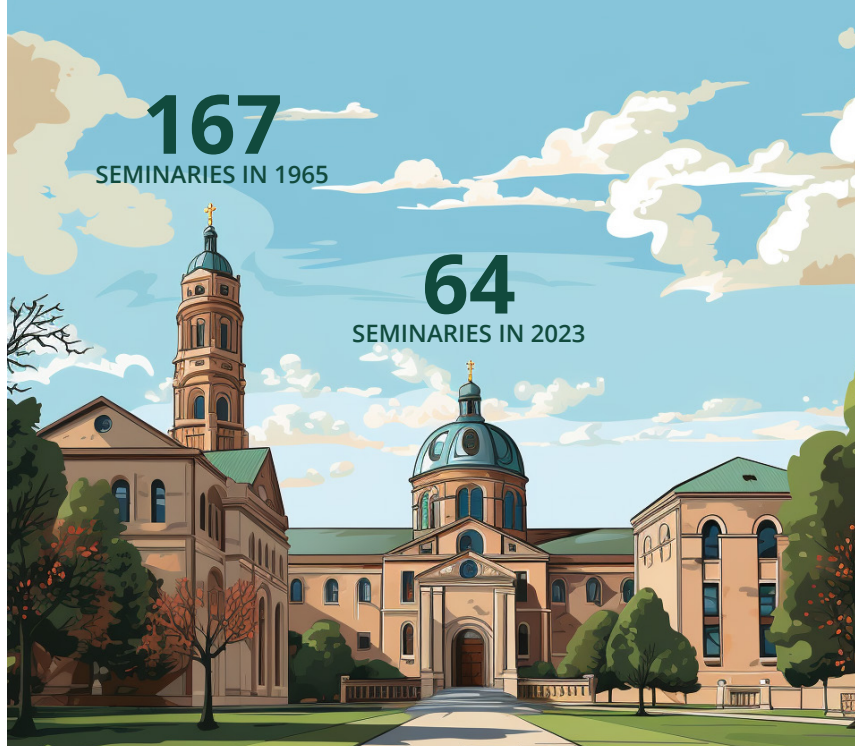
FEWER BUT STRONGER

We sometimes hear that seminaries in the U.S. are nearly full, which is true of many—but mainly because we have a hundred fewer seminaries than sixty years ago.

The Church envisions that in ideal circumstances, every diocese would have its own seminary. But fewer men in formation and scarce resources mean that most seminaries operate as regional institutions.

Ask any seminary rector, and he'll tell you that the scarcest resource is not money, but *personnel*—in particular, diocesan priests who are released by their bishops to leave parish ministry and serve in the seminary as spiritual directors.

Please pray for our men in formation and for the generous priests who serve as their mentors.



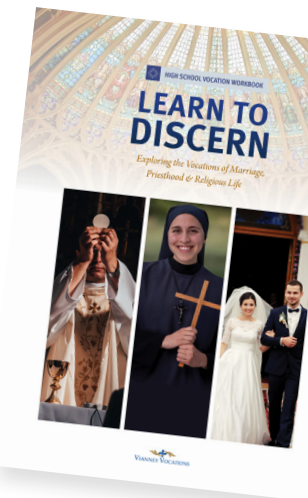
“Joy is the net of love by which we catch souls.”

St. Teresa of Calcutta

TEACHING VOCATIONS

REACHING TEENS

Many catechists have lamented that Confirmation is often a “last chance” to reach the hearts of young Catholics. Acknowledging this, several dioceses are using the “Learn to Discern” curriculum in Confirmation classes to offer solid advice on growing in holiness and discerning a vocation to marriage, priesthood, or consecrated life. vianneyvocations.com



50 YEARS OF FATHERLY ADVICE



Fr. Jerry Dowling (right) is renowned in Australia for hosting the country's longest-running radio program, where he has provided fatherly advice to callers for over five decades. His show, “The Family Counsellor,” was credited by one reporter to have “saved the lives of hundreds of people and brought comfort to thousands of others.”

Priests like Fr. Dowling are an inspiration to all clergy who are engaging people through new media to spread the Gospel of Christ.

