



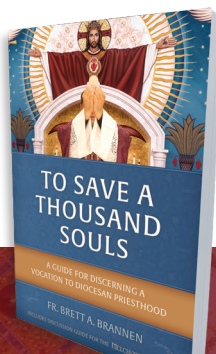
"I MYSELF WILL BE THE SHEPHERD OF MY SHEEP, SAYS THE LORD." ~EZEKIEL 34:15

Seminarians Need Our Prayers

"These last four years have been incredible, but they haven't been easy." That's how one seminarian from the Midwest, now preparing for ordination, described his time in seminary.

"The academics are tough, sure. But for me—and I think for most of the other guys—the hardest part is abandoning yourself to formation, to admit there's stuff you need to work on personally, and to put a hundred percent into growing in virtue." He laughs, "Thankfully seminary formation works! When I visit home, my brothers say I've lost my edge on Xbox, but I can tell I've become a stronger Catholic man... Honestly, my classmates and I are just eager to be ordained, get into the parish, and start bringing Jesus to people."

Because we Catholics care so deeply about the quality of our priests, we need to redouble our prayers for seminarians. They are striving to be faithful to daily prayer, discern the gift of celibacy, serve part-time in hospitals and schools—all while doing master's level coursework. On World Day of Prayer for Vocations, will you adopt a seminarian to pray for daily?



Clarity for the Called

Many seminarians credit Fr. Brett Brannen's *To Save a Thousand Souls* for helping them discern the priesthood. On the occasion of the book's new tenth anniversary edition, Bishop Robert Barron called it a "classic of the genre." Available at vianneyvocations.com



Forming Men Fully Alive in Christ

Seminaries have a rigorous program that focuses on four interconnected dimensions of formation:

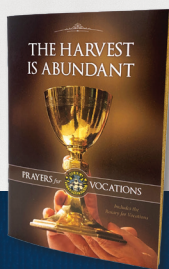
- **Human:** forming Catholic gentleman
- **Spiritual:** falling deeply in love with the Lord
- **Intellectual:** mastering the truths of the Faith
- **Pastoral:** serving God's people with charity

The goal of seminary formation is to raise up men to be virtuous leaders, humble servants, and devout men of prayer who are eager to give their lives fully to Christ and His Church.



I PROMISE TO PRAY *Invisible* Monastery

Want to make a firm commitment to pray for vocations? Enroll in the Invisible Monastery, a website launched in 2014 that includes every English-speaking diocese in the world. At invisiblemonastery.com select your diocese, then choose whether you'll pray daily, weekly, or monthly.



If you're wondering exactly *how* to pray for vocations, a good place to start is with *The Harvest is Abundant*. This well-written treasury of forty prayers will help you intercede for priests, sisters, and seminarians.

From Serra International, serrastore.org



Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia

The Beauty of Prayer

Sister Maria Karol grew up in Poland but joined the Nashville Dominicans after her family moved to the States. Part of what solidified her vocation was a profound attraction to the Liturgy of the Hours: "I was totally mesmerized by its beauty and the singing of the sisters, who in their white habits and flowing veils resembled celestial choirs praising the Lord." She professed final vows in 2006.



St. Ignatius in Comics

We often talk of people "discerning their vocations," but the art of spiritual discernment is for everyone! Mindy Indy, an NYC-based artist, is bringing to life St. Ignatius' "14 Rules for the Discernment of Spirits" through cute-but-deadly-serious cartoons. The idea is to make profound spiritual truths accessible to young audiences, but honestly, adults will benefit just as much. Available at vianneyvocations.com

'Best Job in the World!' says Priest to Servers

A now-retired priest in Florida is famous for the number of vocations that he inspired from his parishes. Father Jacob Monteleone has served for decades in the Tampa Bay area and is well-known for his warm, friendly persona and ability to guide young people as they launch into life. Some have even called him the "Godfather of Vocations." In fact, last year both of the diocese's ordinations were men he mentored.

Of all the wisdom Fr. Jacob passed on to young men, perhaps best remembered (at least by his altar servers) were the words he would say at each Mass during the *lavabo*, or washing of hands before the Eucharistic prayer. As he dried his hands on the towel offered by the server, he would ask quietly, with a twinkle in his eyes, "Do you what the best job in the world is?" The boys would reply, "Being a priest!"



Altar servers have a front-row seat to the greatest miracle in the world: the Eucharist. It's no surprise, then, that 78% of newly-ordained priests were altar boys growing up. Traditionally, serving at the altar has been seen as a stepping-stone toward seminary—and there's no reason altar boys can't still be invited to consider a priestly vocation. So when you pray for vocations, pray for your altar servers!