This fall, 10 men from the Diocese of Marquette entered or returned to seminary on their path to the priesthood.

We thank you for your gifts and your prayers to help these men continue their discernment and their education.

There has been an amazing response to the Challenge Gift for YFS 2020. We appreciate everyone who has given! Funding our vocations program is hard work and we continue to need your help. To date, we have raised more than $87,000 or 87% of the $100,000 goal!

With your help reaching the $100,000 goal for immediate needs will earn the $25,000 match for the Seminarian Endowment. Your generosity helps us to pay for vocations promotion and seminarian education right now and also build up the Seminarian Endowment to provide sustainable funding into the future.

Bill Beaune, a parishioner at St. Francis in Brimley, supports Yoopers for Seminarians. “These young men are doing a great service for our diocese,” he says. “We need to help them out when we can whether it’s financial help, spiritual prayers, or Mass offerings.”

Bill says he has gotten to know some of the seminarians through the years by corresponding with them and when they have interned at parishes near him. “It takes a very dedicated and special person, like the group of seminarians we have, to go into this vocation. We need these young men to go into seminary to become priests and to serve our parishes and the Church.”

There is still time to make a gift this year and to take advantage of this generous matching challenge! Your gift will help us to build a culture of vocations as well as to educate our seminarians now and in the future.

BECOME A MEMBER OF YOOPERS FOR SEMINARIANS 2020. LEARN MORE. YOOPERSFORSEMINARIANS.ORG

Thank you for your gifts and your prayers to help these men continue their discernment and their education.

By God’s grace, our 10 seminarians are in school studying away, despite all the obstacles. I have no doubt this is due to your prayers of intercession. Please keep praying for our men!

We are blessed this year to have three good men beginning their studies: Mark Beukema, Mark Kowalewski, and Drew Langton. They come to priestly formation after years of working in other fields, and they bring a wealth of experience and faith to our diocese.

Please also pray fervently for men who are discerning priesthood! Ask God to give you the courage and opportunity to ask a young man the big question, “Have you considered the priesthood?” So often God works through that invitation!

We need your help to get to the $100,000 goal by Dec. 31! Please help us support our seminarians both now and in the future!

Fr. Ben Hasse
Vocations
Director

YFS 2020
Coming Down the Home Stretch

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After 9/11, Mark joined the Army and served within the intelligence field for 11 years, stationed at various locations stateside and deployed twice to Iraq. During his final years in the military, he became a practicing Catholic and began to discern priesthood or married life. "While finishing my degree, I took my discernment to prayer and sought the guidance of a spiritual director. My desire to serve our Lord as a priest continued to grow as doors continued to open."

Mark was born in Heidelberg, Germany and most recently lived in Greenville, R.I. He followed his older brother, Fr. Michael Kowalewski to the UP, his new home. Mark’s parents live in Rhode Island, and he is the youngest of two.

After serving in the military, Mark studied at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., before transferring and finishing a degree in philosophy at Northern Michigan University.

Hobbies: Running and going to the symphony

Favorite books: The Holy Bible, Philokalia, Happy are you Poor by Fr. Thomas Dubay, Healing by Dr. Mary Healy, and The Gulag Archipelago

Spending time with Companions of Christ the Lamb in Paradise provided the silence necessary to discern God’s call, Drew says. “Following what I believe to be God’s plan for me and the shepherding of our Bishop John Doerfler, I am now at seminary trusting the path on which the Lord is leading me.”

Drew says he first heard the call to pursue the priesthood in high school. “I didn’t like the sound of it. I tried to act like I didn’t hear it, and I tried to block out that voice with music, movies, people, and noise. I heard the call again more clearly than before in silence before the Blessed Sacrament.”

He grew up in South Rockwood, Mich., and he graduated from Xavier University with a B.A. in Art, concentrating in graphic design. He grew up Catholic and is number four of six kids and has 17 nieces and nephews.

Hobby: Playing the guitar

Favorite books: The Holy Bible, The Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis and Searching for and Maintaining Peace by Fr. Jacques Philippe

Growing up as a member of the Anglican Church with his grandfather as a priest, Mark says he loved asking him questions about history and faith.

The call to priesthood came during Mark’s senior year in high school but he let someone talk him out of it and he pursued education, teaching English as a second language in South Korea for 10 years. During that time, he also joined the Catholic Church.

When he received a cancer diagnosis there, he was drawn closer to Jesus. “He truly meets us where we are. I immersed myself in the Gospels, and they brought me such joy and comfort during this difficult time. I found myself experiencing a familiar feeling—my calling to the priesthood had re-emerged.”

Originally from Davisburg, MI, Mark studied English at Oakland University and earned his master’s degree.

Hobbies: Bike riding, reading, watching movies, listening to music, and writing poetry.

For the past two summers, Matthew has been “soaked in silence with God,” spending about 38 days of the past two summers in silence. During those times of quiet, he says he was struck by the scripture: “Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but the sinners.” (Mt. 9:13). “God was teaching me the beauty of receiving His mercy. This is the mercy He has for all of us. He wants us to see ourselves as He sees us, God uses us in our fullness. It is when we know ourselves that we come to know God. God shows us how He loves us, and in return we learn more about who God is by experiencing Him or remaining with Him.”

By entering into a 30-day silent retreat (offered through the Institute for Priestly Formation), program, Matthew says it allowed him to get to himself in the light of God’s love for him. “Silence offers a lot of time to just remain with God, to learn how He loves us, and to see how He is revealing Himself to us. It is through this relationship with God that a priest loves, cares, and teaches those whom he is assigned to, so any opportunity to grow in that relationship is only going to aid in my formation toward the priesthood.”

The Institute for Priestly Formation is located on the campus of Creighton University in Omaha, NE, serving seminarians by providing a setting in which they can fall more deeply in love with God. IPF programs like their summer program for seminarians and their 30-day silent retreat aim to assist seminarians with tools that will help them to safeguard their relationship with the Trinity during their seminary years and beyond into active priestly ministry.
ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW OPEN TO THE PRIESTHOOD?
Contact Fr. Ben Hasse, benhasse@yahoo.com or (906) 290-2434 to talk or to learn more about upcoming events.

Seminarians gather with Bishop John Doerfler for their annual group photo during the Summer 2020 Seminarian Retreat.