



Collection for Seminarian Education

Diocese of Gaylord • 611 W North Street • Gaylord, Michigan 49735
www.dioceseofgaylord.org

Things You Should Know – Interesting Facts and Figures

- The Diocese of Gaylord currently has 10 seminarians enrolled this fall.
- Two of our seminarians will be studying at North American College in Rome; three will be at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois; five will be at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio.
- The Diocese of Gaylord has cover 77 parishes spread across 21 counties encompassing more than 11,000 square miles.
- Currently we have 45 active diocesan priests, 4 religious order priests and 19 priests serving from other dioceses or who have retired to our area from other dioceses and are so generously assisting us. Several of the diocesan priests serving in parishes are past retirement age.
- We are extremely blessed that many of our retired priests and those who are currently eligible to retire continue to serve in our diocese!
- Most of our Pastors serve more than one parish, with some serving as many as four parishes.
- The diocese joyfully celebrated two priestly ordinations in May 2017, that of Fr. Nick Cooper and Fr. Brad Nursey.
- Preparation for the priesthood is a long process, typically requiring at least eight years of education beyond high school, including a college degree followed by four or more years of theological study at a seminary.
- The average annual cost for tuition, books, room and board and health insurance per seminarian is approximately \$34,000 per year; which will total approximately \$340,000 this year for our seminarians. While this is obviously a great expense, the quality of our seminarians remains high and we intend to continue to encourage others who are discerning a vocation to the priesthood for the Diocese of Gaylord.
- Without the financial and prayerful support of parishioners, many of our seminarians would find it impossible to pursue their vocation. We would never want to have to turn away gifted and qualified potential seminarians simply because we lack funds to support them.

Things You Should Know – Interesting Facts and Figures, *continued*

- The Diocese of Gaylord's annual Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) does fund vocations efforts, but is not sufficient to fund all of the need without increasing each parish CSA target respectfully. In addition, a number of factors determine the Vocations office budget each year, including the number of seminarians returning and new candidates accepted to seminary in the fall. This number can be fairly unpredictable from year to year. It would be difficult to rely solely on CSA to cover all of the Vocations budget with so many working parts, which is one of the main reasons why in 2012, the decision was made to bridge the funding gap with the special collection for the Seminarian Education Fund.
- To help with seminarian education expenses, an endowment fund was set up within the Northern Michigan Catholic Foundation specifically for this purpose. The principal donations remain in the fund for perpetuity and we may use the interest to help fund seminarian education. The amount of interest available in any year is unpredictable due to the economy. Individuals wishing to make a contribution directly to the Seminarian Education Endowment Fund within the Northern Michigan Catholic Foundation may contact Christie Perdue at 231.922.9070.
- The Diocese of Gaylord has continued to seek and receive grant funding to assist with seminarian education and the continuing formation of priests. The Diocese intends to continue those efforts, but once more, we do not know if funding will be available or in what amount from year to year.
- We know economic times have been tough in recent years and giving may be a sacrifice, but God calls each one of us to support His Church in a variety of ways. Gifts of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$500 or more to the Collection for Seminarian Education make a huge difference now — and for the future of the Catholic Church here in northern Lower Michigan. If parishioners are unable to give financially at this time, they can still be of great help and support through their prayers.
- Any amount received in excess of this year's need is set aside and reserved solely for education of seminarians. Many parishes have included an envelope in parishioner offertory envelopes for this yearly special collection while others make a separate envelope available for the collection dates. A quantity of envelopes has been sent to each parish (based on parish counts) and we have a limited supply of extra envelopes here at the Diocesan offices available upon parish request. Donations may also be made online by going to the diocesan website and clicking on the "Make a Gift" link and noting the gift is for the Seminarian Education Fund.