



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH:

Renewing Our Commitment to Child Protection, Victim Assistance, and Priestly Integrity

Bulletin No. 5

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Introduction

This is the fifth in a series of periodic bulletin inserts developed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to provide information to parishioners. Each bulletin insert will focus on action steps the Archdiocese has taken to advance the protection of children, assist victims and ensure the integrity of the Priesthood.

In forming men for the sacred Priesthood, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia renews its commitment to preparing men to proclaim the Gospel and serve the Church faithfully, selflessly, and prayerfully in the person of Jesus Christ.

Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary: An Overview

- Since 1838, the fundamental mission of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary (www.scs.edu) has been the formation of Catholic men of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and of other dioceses and religious communities for pastoral service in the Roman Catholic Priesthood of Jesus Christ. Located in Wynnewood, Montgomery County, Saint Charles Borromeo is committed to providing a unified college and theology program of formation in priestly spirituality, pastoral ministry, celibate witness, emotional maturity, intellectual integrity and physical wellness. This program is based upon the Word of God and the Sacraments of the Church and is complemented by personal and community prayer, a comprehensive academic program of liberal arts and theological studies, and a program of pastoral preparation designed primarily for parish ministry. In addition to preparing seminarians for service as priests in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary also educates seminarians from 13 dioceses and religious communities from around the country. Our seminary carefully continues to follow and fulfill the directives of the Holy See regarding the formation of priests.

Recent Developments in Seminary Formation

- In 1971, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued the *Program of Priestly Formation* (PPF), which established standards and guidelines for all seminaries in the United States. The PPF has been updated four times and a new edition is currently under consideration.
- Prior to the mid-1980s, Saint Charles Borromeo and other seminary programs focused primarily on fostering spiritual and academic growth in seminarians. Pastoral formation, the process of helping seminarians apply their knowledge to everyday parish life, was an important but less prominent part of seminary formation.
- Like seminaries throughout the world, the formation process at Saint Charles Borromeo underwent substantial changes after Pope John Paul II's 1992 apostolic exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis (I Will Give You Shepherds)*. In this groundbreaking document, the Pope identified four pillars of seminary formation (human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral) and called for priestly formation rooted in and defined by them.
 - Since 1992, these four pillars have been the standard organizing principles for seminaries, which have developed more distinct human formation programs that are designed to nurture well-rounded candidates for the Priesthood. The programs now include extensive teaching about the value, witness, and meaning of celibacy for the candidate and the Church; proper chaste relationships with those of all ages; and an emphasis on the importance of exemplary moral behavior.
 - These programs also devote increasingly more time and attention to advancing a seminarian's overall formation. Formation advisors, workshops, classes and conferences that focus on affective maturity, community life and priestly virtues are prominent examples.
 - All seminary candidates are required to undergo an extensive psychological evaluation prior to admission to detect any psychopathology as well as identify areas in which ongoing formation and maturation are needed. A feedback interview with the evaluating psychologist is required, as well as the submission of appropriate documentation from civil authorities affirming that the applicant has no criminal background or history of child abuse. Additionally, all seminarians are required to complete the Safe Environment and Mandatory Reporter Training Programs.
- A recent study commissioned by the USCCB (<http://bit.ly/USCCBJohnJayStudy>) and carried out by an independent research team from the John Jay School of Criminal Justice offered this assessment: "Over the past twenty-five years, a remarkable intensification of human formation and deeper understanding of the importance of its role are evident in almost every seminary."

The Four Pillars of Priestly Formation and Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary

Since 1992, there has been an ongoing appreciation for the need to engage each man directly in his human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation. In order to assist him in this process, each seminarian is assigned a priest formation advisor with whom he is required to meet on a regular basis, who provides periodic evaluations, and who helps the seminarian to integrate the four pillars of formation.

Human Formation

- Psychological evaluations and feedback sessions during the application process have produced working relationships with psychologists who have become increasingly effective evaluators of worthy candidates for the seminary.
- Seminarians have attended weekly human formation conferences since 1989 designed to address topics such as personal development, priestly identity, family issues, ministering the sacraments and chaste celibacy. Since 1994, human formation workshops have been offered each semester to the entire Saint Charles Borromeo community with the goal of addressing issues such as sexual maturity, stress management, time management, leadership skills and cultural ministry.

Spiritual Formation

- Seminarians at Saint Charles Borromeo participate in daily Mass, The Liturgy of the Hours (morning and evening prayer every day), weekly Eucharistic adoration, occasional days of recollection and annual retreats. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available every day to seminarians.
- Personal spiritual direction is essential to help seminarians grow in holiness and discern the call to ordained ministry. From an approved list of priests, a seminarian chooses a spiritual guide with whom he is required to meet at least once every three weeks.

Intellectual Formation

- Saint Charles Borromeo offers a college program, a pre-theology program and a theology program. Seminary students who complete the college program obtain a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy, while the pre-theology program provides prerequisite philosophy, language, and theology courses to those who have completed college outside of the seminary. The theology program leads to a Master of Divinity after three years of study. Upon completion of additional requirements, students can earn a Master of Arts in Theology prior to ordination.
- Saint Charles Borromeo is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Scheduled visitations by the accrediting bodies occur on a regular basis.

Pastoral Formation

- All seminarians except college freshmen are assigned to a pastoral internship (apostolate assignment), making weekly visits to parishes, elementary and high schools, hospitals, prisons, nursing homes, or shelters. This apostolate experience allows the seminarian to “work in the field” while learning and growing in priestly identity and honing his pastoral skills.
- At the end of each semester, apostolate supervisors provide an evaluation of each seminarian. In recent years, the Director of Pastoral and Apostolic Formation speaks regularly with apostolate supervisors about the men they oversee. Seminarians are also required to provide self-evaluations and discuss them with their formation advisors.

The Seminary, A Center of Learning for the Entire Archdiocese

- Through the Graduate School of Theology and the Program of Catholic Studies (www.study catholictheology.com), Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary offers a Master of Arts in Theology as well as accredited undergraduate courses, and non-credit certificate programs to any clergy, seminarians, religious, or laity interested in pursuing these studies.
- The programs serve as a firm foundation for doctoral work, provide enrichment in the field of theology, and serve to further professional growth for those serving the Church in parishes and institutions.
- In addition, the Seminary is also home to the Permanent Diaconate Division, which provides for the authentic human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation of those discerning a vocation to the Permanent Diaconate.

To view the first four editions of the "Moving Forward in Faith" bulletin series, please visit www.archphila.org