

Reaching Out Wednesdays

Topic: Seminarian Education Funding Societies

Question: We are looking into starting a “society” that would fund seminary education. Do you have one in your diocese and if so what is it called and how does it function?

Diocese of Fresno: We don't have any “society” to fund sem. ed.

Diocese of Rochester: We don't have a “society” to fund seminarian formation. We have generous Knights of Columbus who support our seminarians once or twice per year to help with their books and other necessities. Our Bishop Emeritus Matthew Clark worked hard on a campaign several years back to raise money for seminarian formation and to support our senior priests. That campaign has raised about 10 million dollars to date.

Archdiocese of Denver: 1. We have the Serra Trust Fund for Vocations in Denver. They assist the seminarians with paying for books (when the men have real needs), and extraordinary expenses when the expense would limit their ability to respond to God's call to the priesthood. As far as educational costs - those monies are raised by the diocese.

Diocese of Arlington: We have the SEEF, Seminarian Education Endowment Fund.

We just started it about a year ago. Goal is to raise 1million, it will perpetually train 1 seminarian. We are already at 700k simply by have a few matching donors who would match what others have and then doing basic networking.

The final big help is pitching it at every parish I visit as vocation director. I preach all the masses at a parish twice a month. Rotating around to all the parishes in the diocese. While there I describe SEEF and as if anyone is interested to take a flyer. I get one or two good donors per parish. Every parish has one parishioner that give a few thousand if asked.

