

Cycle A 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Sunday November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017

This week the Church in the United States is celebrating National Vocations Awareness Week. We are blessed to have with us today 2 seminarians Jeff Stegbauer and Anthony Marcelli, who will share with us a message about vocations to the priesthood. A vocation to the priesthood is all about being of humble service to Christ and His Church.

A vocation to the priesthood does not form apart from the local Church. Rather, a vocation to the priesthood is formed within the local Church. In the introduction to the Rite of Ordination of Priests, we find the following instruction: It is the duty of all the faithful of the diocese to assist the candidates for the priesthood by their prayers. This duty is fulfilled principally in the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass and in the intercessions of Vespers. (That is Evening Prayer) And we must not forget our Archdiocesan Prayer for Vocations. Your prayers for vocations to the priesthood are important. Your prayers have caused a housing crisis at our seminary Mt. St. Mary's Seminary of the West. Now we are starting the construction of new housing at the seminary. All thanks to your prayers. Here at St. Antoninus we have raised up two seminarians. Deacon Jacob Willig who will be ordained a priest this coming May 2018, and Michael Willig who is in First Theology.

I am very impressed with all of the seminarians that we have. What a difference from my time in the seminary. Today's seminarians are much smarter, much more holy, and much younger.

Not only is it important to pray for vocations to the priesthood it is also important to pray for all priests. I do appreciate your prayers and I need your prayers because I am weak sinner who just wants to be a good priest for Jesus and His Church.

Finally, we must pray for holy marriages and holy families. It is in the context of marriage and family that the first seeds of a vocation are planted. Whether the call is to priesthood, religious life, marriage the chaste single life or as a permanent deacon, family life is important in the formation of all vocations.

Today we thank the Lord for the many vocations to the priesthood. May many more men answer the call.