

February 2020

INTO THE DEPTHS

Office of Priestly Vocations
Catholic Diocese of Peoria

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MEET OUR SEMINARIANS



Austin Bosse

Birthday: October 15

Home Parish: St. Matthew,
Champaign

Year Entered Seminary: 2015
Ordination Class: 2021

Studying at: Mount St. Mary's
Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD

Why did you enter seminary?
After college, I began to develop

a solid prayer life and began to immerse myself in the sacraments by going to regular confession and daily Mass. After a couple of subtle moments of hearing God calling me, I began to investigate and read about the priesthood. It wasn't until going on a retreat and opening my heart to do the will of God that I was able to hear with certainty that God wanted me to be his priest. It has been a long journey, but I have come to realize that I will never be truly happy or satisfied until I am doing the will of God, and for me that means going to seminary in order to further my discernment.

What did you do before entering seminary?

I worked as an operations manager for Frito-Lay for four and a half years.

What is an interesting fact about you?

I grew up on a feedlot in northeast Kansas and enjoy hunting and snowboarding.

Which saint(s) are you closest to and why?

I have several saints who I invoke daily to pray with and for me. They are men and women whom God has brought into my life at various times for various reasons. For example: St. Teresa of Avila; her feast day is my birthday and her writings on Carmelite spirituality are deeper than I could handle out of the gate, so she introduced me to St. Elizabeth of the Trinity whose writings drew me deeper into the abyss of God's love. St. Augustine is where my name stems from and we shared a rocky path toward coming to do God's will. His writings have helped me experience the love and mercy of God. St. Sebastian was my confirmation saint and he has been helpful in showing me that it takes courage to do God's will and we must trust in him.

The movie 1917 is a fictionalized account of two young enlisted men in the British army during World I tasked with carrying a message across enemy territory to a commanding officer in order to save a regiment of 1,600 men. One officer in that regiment is the brother of one of the two messengers, Corporal Blake. As Blake is about to crawl out of the trenches into "no man's land," his older friend, Schofield, tries to slow him down. "You'll never make it!" he shouts, to which Blake says simply and defiantly, "Yes I will." Blake is moved not simply by the number of men to be saved, but by the fact that his own brother is among them.



Watching this movie gave me a renewed gratitude for those who risked and sacrificed their lives in World War I. But it also reminded me of the young people that I work with. The film's writer specifically wanted "no-name" actors to play the young enlisted men in order to portray the heroism displayed by ordinary young men of the time. The current generation of high school and college students is surrounded by narcissism, noise, and superficiality. Yet, when called to some great self-sacrificial act, they too respond.

Each of the men in seminary formation for the Diocese of Peoria has felt that call to a great, self-sacrificial act. They know how their peers suffer from the wreckage of the self-serving, throwaway culture that we live in. And they want to respond in a heroic way to participate in Jesus' salvific mission, and even to cross "enemy territory" to save souls from the grasp of sin. That is why they have entered seminary, and I am immensely proud of them. Like Peter who was told by Jesus to "set out into the depths," these men obediently went into the deep waters of prayer and discernment with our Lord. And many of them will hear *Continued at top of next page...*

Jesus call them into the priesthood, to be “fishers of men,” who bring souls into new life with Christ.

We are beginning this newsletter again in order to connect with all of you, the supporters of the Priestly Vocation Program. Your prayers, encouragement, and financial support enable these men to set out into the deep knowing that God provides for them through you. I hope the title of this newsletter is a reminder that each of us is called into the depths of daily prayer, growth in virtue, and self-sacrifice. I know that priesthood isn't the only vocation, nor is it necessarily the most sacrificial (however one might measure that). But I also know that all of us, no matter what our vocation, need the sacraments. Without priests there is no Eucharist, no confession, no Church. But thankfully the Lord is giving us good men, and many of them!

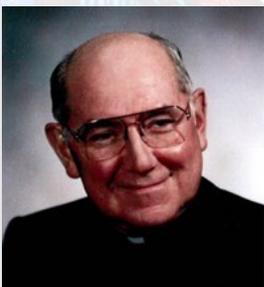
Thank you for your support of these men. Because as they put daily effort into becoming the kind of priests who can cross enemy territory and save thousands of souls, the world says, “You'll never make it.” But your prayers and support say to these men, “You *will* make it, with the help of God.”



A REFLECTION FROM ST. JOHN VIANNEY:

If we had not the Sacrament of Orders, we should not have Our Lord. Who placed Him there, in that tabernacle? It was the priest. Who was it that received your soul, on its entrance into life? The priest. Who nourishes it, to give it strength to make its pilgrimage? The priest. Who will prepare it to appear before God, by washing that soul, for the last time, in the blood of Christ? The priest—always the priest. And if that soul comes to the point of death, who will raise it up, who will restore it to calmness and peace? Again the priest. You cannot recall one single blessing from God without finding, side by side with this recollection, the image of the priest. Go to Confession to the Blessed Virgin, or to an angel; will they absolve you? No. Will they give you the Body and Blood of Our Lord? No. The Holy Virgin cannot make her Divine Son descend into the Host. You might have two hundred angels there, but they could not absolve you. A priest, however simple he may be, can do it; he can say to you, “Go in peace; I pardon you.” The priest cannot understand the greatness of his office till he is in Heaven. If he understood it on earth, he would die, not of fear, but of love.

CAN YOU SUPPORT OUR SEMINARIANS?



The **Msgr. George A. Carton College Seminarian Scholarship Fund** helps fund our college-level seminarians by providing money for their tuition, room and board.

Our college seminarians must pay their own tuition, room and board, so those who cannot afford it and can't find scholarships elsewhere can turn to the Msgr. Carton Fund to help cover those costs. To donate to the Msgr. Carton Fund, [click here](#).



The **St. Therese Fund** pays for the tuition, room and board for theologians — those seminarians who have already graduated college (either a university or a college seminary).

It also covers the salaries, office costs and marketing expenses that help keep our seminarian program afloat. To donate to the St. Therese Fund, [click here](#).



The **Seminarian Aid Fund** helps our seminarians in the event of an emergency. If a seminarian suffers a sickness or injury and needs medical

help, or they need to travel home for a death or other family emergency, the Seminarian Aid Fund can help them out. It also helps needy seminarians pay for routine medical expenses that may not be covered by insurance, and can even be used to pay for more basic things like clothes, should the need arise. To donate to the Seminarian Aid Fund, [click here](#).