

Hello St. Pats!

It has been a while since I have written anything for the bulletin. Since Fr. Rogers is away, he asked me to write something in place of his pastor's column. I thought I would tell you about how things are going at the seminary so far this year.

It is already about 2 months into the school year. My classes are going well. This semester, the things we are learning are very practical. I have two classes on the sacrament of marriage, two psychology classes focused on pastoral counseling, Catholic Social Teaching, and homiletics. Next semester, my classmates and I have our comprehensive exams on everything we have learned in theology up to that point (5 semesters). This is the last step in getting our master's degrees in theology. After that is Diaconate ordination in May, which I am very excited about.

We just had a number of big events at the seminary. Monday 9/27 was the seminary golf outing at Philadelphia country club and Gulph Mills country club. This is one of our major fundraisers for the year. I was one of the workers at the check-in table. The donors are definitely lucky that I wasn't playing in the outing, since it would have been unfair for them (cue laughter). Thursday 9/30 was the seminary's 150th anniversary at our current campus. Over 200 priest alumni came for Mass with the Archbishop and then for a celebration afterwards. Although the seminarians were not invited to the "official" alumni party, we had our own party and bonfire which was probably just as fun. This anniversary was a historic moment; but it was also a sad moment because in a few years the seminary is moving to a new location. The seminary has sold its current property in Wynnewood and bought a smaller property from Gwynned Mercy University, which is planned to be ready by the 2024-25 school year. Friday 10/1 and Saturday 10/2 were "Cassock Day" for our new seminarians in both the college and theology divisions. This is a tradition which goes back a long time. Prior to cassock day, new seminarians wear a suit and tie. It is a big deal when they receive their cassocks for the first time. As the saying goes, on Cassock Day the new seminarians join the "long black line" of seminarians who have gone before them (at St. Charles, that goes all the way back to 1832). I remember my own Cassock Day in 2015, which doesn't feel like it was that long ago. Finally, Sunday 10/2 was our seminary open house. We had a lot of visitors who came for tours and to pray Evening Prayer with us. I was one of the tour guides.

Things aren't always this busy at the seminary. Just like life in general, there are busy times and slow times, ups and downs. But through it all, we are being formed to be the best priests we can be—and this is what really matters.

Please continue to pray for me and all the other seminarians at St. Charles. I look forward to seeing all of you as much as possible throughout the rest of the year!

Seminarian Randy

