

Saint Francis de Sales
SEMINARY



Salt *of* *the* Earth

A Saint Francis de Sales Seminary Communication
Spring 2025



FORMING PRIESTS WITH ZEAL FOR THE LORD'S HOUSE

Truth, Goodness, and Beauty Matter

The Seminary community gathers in Christ King Chapel for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.



A Word from Our Rector

“I am the vine, you are the branches.”
(John 15:5).

Fr. Luke Strand welcomes Archbishop-Designate Jeffrey Grob to the Seminary on the morning of the announcement.

Dear Friends,

With gratitude to His Holiness Pope Francis, we are blessed to welcome the Most Reverend Jeffrey S. Grob, successor of the apostles, as the 12th archbishop of Milwaukee.

The founder of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, Fr. Joseph Salzmann, compared our seminary to a garden: “A garden is to be planted...of whose trees your children and your children’s children will enjoy the fruit of life, the knowledge of truth.”

As divine providence would have it, Archbishop Grob’s personal coat of arms not only contains an antique plow – to prepare the garden of the Salesianum for more planting – but his episcopal motto, *Jesus the Vine*, acknowledges that we are branches connected to a vine, a tree, within a garden that gives us life. We are humbled that the Lord has chosen



We are blessed to welcome the Most Reverend Jeffrey S. Grob as the 12th archbishop of Milwaukee.

Archbishop Grob – as president of the Salesianum, and himself a farmer from Cross Plains, Wisconsin – to tend the garden of the Salesianum which is bearing such great fruit.

We are grateful for the 15 years that Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI worked the fields of the Salesianum. Much of the fruit that is being harvested today is the result of his efforts. Thank you, Archbishop ListECKI!

We also remember and pray for the repose of the soul of our 13th rector, the Most Reverend Richard J. Sklba, who died November 21, 2024, at the age of 89. Bishop Sklba’s compassionate and gentlemanly leadership will not be forgotten. He was a man connected to the vine, the Lord Jesus, and taught us how to remain united to him.

Our hearts are filled with gratitude – for a new archbishop, for the witness of faithful ‘gardeners’ who have inspired us, and for all of you. The renovation and restoration of Henni Hall, Kiley Hall, and our historic campus continue at a feverish pace. The *Zeal for the Lord’s House* campaign has exceeded \$55 Million. And the Seminary community is preparing to move out of our beloved home for 18 months during construction. Thank you for making all of this possible! Thank you for your sacrificial generosity and love. We are praying for you, please pray for us!

From this corner of the garden,

Fr. Luke N. Strand
Rector

In Memoriam

With great sadness the Seminary community acknowledges the passing of Bishop Richard J. Sklba. Sklba served with distinction as rector from 1976 until his ordination as auxiliary bishop of Milwaukee in 1979. Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord!



Fr. Richard Sklba during his time as rector.



Bishop Sklba attends an event at the Seminary in 2014.



Welcome, Archbishop Jeffrey S. Grob!

The Seminary Is the New Archbishop's First Stop

Archbishop-Designate Grob greets the men of the Salesianum the morning of the announcement.

On November 4, the Holy Father named Bishop Jeffrey S. Grob the 12th archbishop of Milwaukee. Classes were canceled for the morning as the Seminary community gathered to welcome the archbishop-designate to the Salesianum for the announcement. The Seminary bell pealed

and the men applauded enthusiastically from the front steps and balcony as Archbishop-Designate Grob approached. Smiling broadly, he shook hands with the rector and faculty before entering Christ King Chapel. After a private prayer, he offered words of encouragement and a blessing to the seminarians.



Archbishop-Designate Grob offers a blessing to the seminarians.



The seminarians enjoy the archbishop-designate's sense of humor.



The newly appointed Grob speaks to the press from the Seminary Commons.



Honoring Our Patron Saint

Priests Come Home for the Solemnity of St. Francis de Sales

Many priests gather on the special day.

Our January 24 feast day took on added excitement this year as Archbishop Jeffrey Grob presided at Mass in Christ King Chapel for the first time. 100 priests came to the Salesianum for the beautiful Mass, reception, and luncheon. Archbishop Grob was generous with his time, spending the afternoon at the Seminary getting to know his priests and seminarians. The day ended with a spirited game of basketball between priests and seminarians.

This was the last celebration on the Solemnity of St. Francis de Sales before the construction begins!



What a gift it is to welcome priests home on our feast day!

Fr. Luke Strand



Archbishop Grob genuflects during the procession of his first Mass in Christ King Chapel.



Archbishop Grob returns to the chapel after Mass to greet seminarians and priests.



Fr. Strand presents the archbishop with a brick dated 1896 from the old laundry building.



Seminarians and priests enjoy catching up during the reception.



Seminarians serve an elegant lunch to the priests.



The seminarians' swarming defense does not give Fr. Matthew Colle (Green Bay) room to maneuver.



Fr. Strand and Archbishop Grob cheer for both teams.



The priests are good sports after being soundly beaten by the Shoremen 64-27.



Celebrating with Our Benefactors

The Salesianum Thanks Those Who Make Priestly Formation Possible

Fr. Stand presides at Mass with our benefactors in Christ King Chapel.

The patronal feast day celebrations continued Sunday, January 26 when 200 benefactors joined us for Mass and a luncheon. In honor of our patron saint, the seminarians prayed a novena to St. Francis de Sales for the intentions of our faithful supporters.



The schola cantorum adds beauty to the Holy Mass.



Benefactors are served by grateful seminarians.



Seminarians carefully plate the food for our guests.



On behalf of all the men, Deacon Brady Gagne (Milwaukee) thanks those gathered for their generous support.



Fraternitas

Building Fraternity Over Christmas Break

Seminarians take in the beauty of St. Mary Church.

A new year pilgrimage to the Holy Land was sadly still not safe, so the men of the Salesianum planned an alternate excursion instead. The highlight of the three-day Fraternitas was celebrating Mass at the stunning St. Mary Church, Most Blessed Sacrament Parish, in Oshkosh, WI. The historic church was originally planned and designed as a cathedral for the Diocese of Green Bay.

Following Mass, gracious Seminary donors invited the men to their Fond du Lac home for boot hockey and a campfire on Lake Winnebago. The seminarians finished the day with dinner hosted by the always-supportive priests at the Holy Family Parish rectory.



Fr. Strand preaches from St. Mary's magnificent pulpit.



Lake Winnebago provides the ultimate outdoor rink for the seminarians.



The fire was a welcome treat after hockey

Zeal for the Lord's House

The Seminary's Inaugural Capital Campaign Continues to Flourish

As the momentum of our capital campaign continues to grow, we are humbled and blessed to report that more than \$55 million has been pledged! We are grateful for every gift and every prayer offered in support of restoring, expanding, and renovating our historic campus. We will continue to press on, however, so that all the critical restoration work can be accomplished. We will need support from the entire community if we want to complete the project.



ZEAL
FOR THE
LORD'S HOUSE
Inaugural Capital Campaign

Over the last few months, the campaign has expanded as 20 parishes across the Archdiocese of Milwaukee have generously hosted receptions on our behalf. At these gatherings, the community is given the opportunity to learn more about the campaign, ask questions, and join the mission. It has been exciting to see the enthusiasm grow, led by so many supportive priests throughout the archdiocese!

The campaign's reach will extend even further with a Commitment Weekend during Masses on March 29-30. That weekend, every parish in the archdiocese will share the vision of this initiative, explain the urgency, and invite its parishioners to make a pledge of support. Finally, a follow-up brochure will be mailed, offering another opportunity to participate in this historic effort.

We are pleased to announce that the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's Faith In Our Future Trust has offered a challenge grant of up to \$250,000 in support of *Zeal for the Lord's House*. They will match any gift of up to \$5,000 made during this phase of the campaign, so the impact of your donation will be doubled!

If you would like to contribute to this campaign of Christian service – and thereby ensure priestly formation can continue at Saint Francis de Sales – please visit sfs.edu/Zeal or scan the QR code below. The Church needs good and holy priests, and the Seminary needs your help to prepare them! Please consider a sacrificial gift towards this important project.



The gathering at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist listens to Fr. Tim Kitzke speak highly of the Seminary.



The reception at St. Clement Parish in Sheboygan is filled with people interested in supporting the Seminary.



Lumen Christi's Fr. Michael Courchaine gives full endorsement of the formation taking place at the Salesianum.



Sharon deGuzman and Mary Ellen Stanek host a reception at the Wisconsin Club in December.



Parishioners begin to gather at the reception hosted by Lumen Christi Parish in Mequon.

Preparing for Growth

Honoring the Past as We Look to the Future

One of the first steps to prepare for construction was to take down an old, unstable building. Before its current use as a maintenance shed, the Cream City brick building served as a laundry building and even a coach house back in the day.

The Seminary would have loved to save the building, but the cost was prohibitive. So, with a touch of sadness, the men held a final prayer service inside before demolition began. They prayed in thanksgiving for the many years the Seminary was blessed to have use of the building. They prayed for everyone who is contributing to our *Zeal for the Lord's House* campaign that is paving the way for our future. And they prayed that the work ahead would give glory to God.

We may not have been able to save the building, but we did save the Cream City bricks! The building was taken down carefully, and the bricks were stored for use when the expansion of Henni Hall begins.



The Seminary community gathers in the building for a farewell blessing and celebration before the former coach house is taken down.



Commonly referred to as the old laundry building, it is thought to have been the first building on the campus.



The building is carefully deconstructed, saving the Cream City bricks for use in the expansion project.



Moving with the Lord

Adapting to Change

Alex (second from right) and his resilient class hangs out in its crowded space on the south wing of Henni Hall in 2022.

Alex Becker (Milwaukee)

Mt. 8:19-20 – “A scribe approached and said to him, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus answered him, “Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head.”

This scripture passage from the Gospel of Matthew has come true in a very literal way for the men of Configuration III here at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary. Since moving into the Salesianum back in the fall of 2020, we have moved 4 times, and this spring will be our fifth move as we embark on the long journey through the woods surrounding Saint Francis to the Mary Mother of the Church Pastoral Center. (The entire Seminary is moving out so construction can start on Henni Hall.) One final move for our class; another way for our Lord to humble us and teach us more and more what it means to follow Him! Though moving is never an easy part of life, our class has taken each of these moves in stride and allowed them to be an adventure and a lesson to rely on Him more than ourselves.

After settling into Henni Hall and getting acquainted with the daily life of the Seminary, we were asked to move over to Meyer Hall for our second year known as the spirituality year. This move to Meyer Hall separated us from the rest of the house physically, but instead of focusing on that, we all saw it as an opportunity for even more growth. During the first couple of months, we renovated the chapel with Fr. Luke Strand and Fr. Ariel Orozco, ripping out the carpet, sanding the wooden floor, and bringing in pews to make the space more prayerful. We hosted the rest of the house for a couple of nights of prayer



One final move for our class; another way for our Lord to humble us and teach us what it means to follow Him!

throughout the year, including the beginning of the All Saints Day candlelight vigil which has become an annual tradition and something the house looks forward to every year.

I think God was looking upon us, however, and thought we were getting a little too comfortable having a building to ourselves. Because halfway through our spring semester in 2022, we were asked to pack all our belongings in Meyer Hall and move to the second floor of the south wing. All eight of us moved into small rooms the size of most walk-in closets and shared two bathrooms and a living space. We struggled together and grew in fraternity in the close quarters. The next year we moved a final time to our current rooms on different floors of the Seminary, each floor with its own identity and fraternity.

This same mentality will be important to have as we move later this spring. Placing our trust always in Christ who reminds us that He is with us always:

Deut. 31:23 – “Be brave and steadfast, for the Lord your God goes with you. He goes before you; there is nothing you need to fear.”



A Major Step

Understanding the Transitional Diaconate

Redmond and his classmates are instituted into the Ministry of Acolyte in November of 2023. Eleven men will be ordained transitional deacons this spring, including four for the Diocese of Madison and one for the Diocese of Green Bay.

Redmond Tuttle (Milwaukee)

On April 26, six of us will be ordained transitional deacons for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, in preparation for ordination to the priesthood in May the following year. Many do not know or talk about the diaconate or its importance in the life of the Church, so our class has enjoyed the opportunity to dig deep within the history, theology, and practice of the diaconate in the Church.

The English word “deacon” comes from the Greek word *diakonia*, which is commonly translated “ministry” or “service.” It was in Acts 6 that the Apostles established the diaconate in response to the Greeks complaining that their widows were not being taken care of as the Hebrews’ widows were. A multitude of disciples chose “...seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. These they set before the apostles; and they praying, imposed hands upon them. And the word of the Lord increased; and the number of the disciples was multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly” (Acts 6:3-4). And so, this April we will join those seven: Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolas, and the long line of ordained deacons after them, including St. Francis of Assisi and Alcuin of York, who were ordained deacons but never priests.

When we began theological studies after completing philosophy, we were first admitted to candidacy. Similar to an engagement, we made a commitment to finish seminary. Then we were instituted lectors, focusing on proclaiming God’s word. Next



Redmond (directly behind Archbishop Grob) serves at his teaching parish. Photo courtesy of Holy Family Parish in Fond du Lac.

followed being instituted as acolytes, focusing on serving Mass and exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament in adoration. These steps drew us deeper into the mysteries of God that we will be celebrating as deacons and priests. Now, in April we will be admitted to the clerical state – to Holy Orders – the first of which is the diaconate, then the presbyterate, and to those called, the episcopacy. This summer

and occasionally during our last year of seminary, we will live and serve as deacons in our teaching parishes where we have spent the last three years learning as seminarians.

Our class has been looking forward to this for a long time. When we entered seminary, the diaconate seemed so far away, five years in fact. Now, it all seems to have happened so fast. Soon we will baptize, preach, bless, celebrate marriages, funerals, committals, Benediction, proclaim the Gospel, and assist in the acts of service in the parish. And yes, we are nervous about this awesome responsibility! Your continued prayers are much appreciated.

A common phrase among clerics is “Once a deacon, always a deacon.” This diaconate year will set the foundation of service which will undergird our entire priesthood. The diaconate is a visible sign of service, of who the Church really is. Especially as clerics, it is our right and responsibility, our duty and honor, to serve the laity in so many capacities. It is Jesus Himself, often titled the High Priest, but who is also the ultimate Deacon, who shows us how to serve you, how to be part of your lives, drawing you into the mysteries that God has drawn us into through Saint Francis de Sales Seminary.



An Inspired Catholic Fraternity

The Phi Kappa Theta Founding at UW-Madison

*The Phi Kaps at UW-Madison.
Michael is center in the front row.*

Michael Hess (Madison)

“Michael, you need to start this fraternity. It has to happen.” These were the words that God spoke to me. Audibly. As real as my voice would be to you, God’s words were to me. They were commanding, yet compassionate. Though said in the imperative, they were nevertheless delivered as an invitation. It was a Thursday night in the early part of the 2013 spring semester. I was deep in prayer one evening in front of the tabernacle at Saint Paul’s on the campus of UW-Madison when I heard His voice. The chapel was silent, and no one was near me. Upon hearing it, chills ran up and down my spine, extending throughout my entire body, accompanied by a profound peace. It was something that I had never experienced before, but without a doubt, I knew it was divinely spoken.

All this occurred after six months of deliberations between me and my friend, Stephen, who had originated the idea of starting a Catholic fraternity on campus. He and I were afraid of committing to the large undertaking, given we were sophomores at the time and over-involved in other extracurricular activities and studies. This endeavor was something that would require sacrifice and dedication. Nevertheless, it was an idea that excited me as it had the prospect of extending the Gospel message to an area on campus that could truly benefit from it. Namely, the Greek life.

My excitement sprang from the profound renewal of my spiritual life, which was sparked a year and a half earlier by attending the 2011 World Youth Day in Madrid, Spain, and was further sustained by immersing myself at Saint Paul’s Catholic Student Center right away my freshman year. My involvement in the largest Catholic young-adult conference in the world (about 2.5 million pilgrims) and participation in the sacramental life of the Church on UW’s



Michael (right) holds the Phi Kappa Theta charter with his friend Stephen.

campus led me to a deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit’s guidance, calling me to live a life that was in the world, not of it.

Not long after hearing God’s voice, Stephen and I decided to move forward with the venture, shedding our other responsibilities to focus entirely on chartering a Catholic fraternity on campus with the mission of being a light to Greek life. With zeal and trust in the Lord’s Providence, we pressed on and soon interest in our mission began to grow. By the fall of 2014, we had become a colony with 18 members. What typically takes around two years, to transition from a colony to a fully chartered

chapter, we accomplished in just eight months—officially chartering on May 2, 2015, with 36 brothers, having doubled in size. Not to mention that UW-Madison had originally told us that we wouldn’t be allowed on campus until 2018 at the earliest! All this to say: God’s Providence was undeniably at work.

As I reflect on this experience, I more fully realize that a simple ‘yes’ given to God is what produces the greatest fruit. As we approach the 10-year anniversary this year, I am humbled to say that the fraternity maintains an active brotherhood of about 40 members who are committed to growing in their Catholic faith while sharing it far and wide. From our brotherhood, one has been ordained a priest, another will be ordained this May, nearly ten others are currently in seminary formation for various dioceses and religious orders. The rest, and by no means the least, have remained steadfast in their Catholic identity throughout the tumultuous years of college and are now faithful husbands and fathers, professionals in the workplace, and dedicated to sharing the Faith wherever they go. Additionally, several priests and even two bishops have been initiated as honorary brothers.

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam!

Vocation Office News



Fr. Malucha welcomes young men to the St. Andrew Dinner.

“Come, Follow Me”

Vocation Office Hosts St. Andrew Dinner for Young Men Discerning Priesthood

Vocation Director Fr. Michael Malucha hosted our largest St. Andrew Dinner to date at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary. The event – held on the feast of St. John the Evangelist (December 27), patron saint of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee – welcomed 120 young men, 36 priests, and our Milwaukee seminarians for Mass with Bishop James Schuerman followed by dinner and a program.



The annual vocation event is a great support to men discerning a call to the priesthood.



Dozens of priests concelebrate the Mass on the feast of St. John the Evangelist.

Save the Date –

Upcoming Vocation Office Events

Please invite young men who may be called to the priesthood to any of these events.

Come and See

March 28-30

Saint Francis de Sales Seminary

Ages 18-35

Camp de Sales

Middle School

Day Camps

June 21, July 19, August 5

High School

Wojtyla Day

Marian Pilgrimage

April 12

High School Overnight Camp

June 15-18

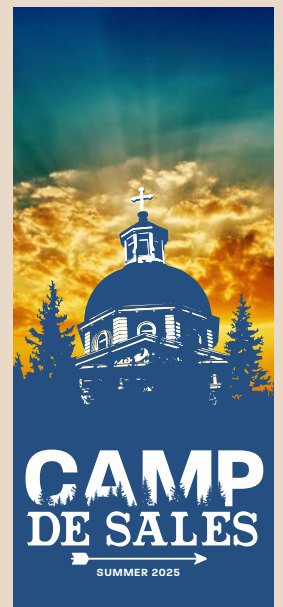
High School Day Expedition

August 4

All camps are hosted at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary.

Visit thinkpriest.org/events for more information and to register.

Contact vocationoffice@sfs.edu or 414-747-6437 with any questions.





Scenes from the Salesianum

Ten men are instituted into the Ministry of Acolyte by Bishop James T. Schuerman, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, on November 16. Front row: Carl Oman (Superior), Nicholas Emsing (Gary), Adam Widder (Milw), Michael Hess (Madison), Jacob Bruns (Milw), Scott Pederson (Superior). Second row: Scott Zarling (Milw), Timothy Heyrman (Milw), Jacob Bovee (Green Bay), Gilbert Kimaro (Albany). Back row: Fr. Luke Strand, Bishop Schuerman, Bishop Edward Scharfenberger of the Diocese of Albany.



The all-night vigil for the Solemnity of All Saints is breathtakingly beautiful.



Seminarians pray in our cemetery for those who have gone before us on All Souls' Day.



Vocation Director Fr. Michael Malucha inspires the women of de Chantal who gather to pray for vocations to the priesthood.



The Schola Cantorum enchants a full chapel of guests during the Festival of Lessons and Carols in December.



James Gilpatric (Milw), Scott Pederson (Superior), Zephyrinus Ogbenna (Albany), Fr. John Baumgardner, and Nathan Budde (Green Bay) support the St. Leonard's Turkey Trot in November.



Patrick Mazza (Milw) and Andrew Frey (Spokane) serve at the Ames Romero House in Ames, IA during a month of poverty immersion.



The Propaedeutic Stage seminarians pose outside of St. Peter's Church during a Catholic heritage excursion. The historic building was the first Cathedral in Milwaukee.



Fr. Justin Kizewski blesses the throat of Dino Piccinini (Green Bay) on the feast of St. Blaise.

2025 Events



Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, Inc.
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St. Francis, WI 53235

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Annual Seminary Dinner

Friday, Oct. 3 • Baird Center

On October 3, we will gather with 2,000 faithful Catholics to celebrate the mission of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary. The annual event promises to be one of great joy as we lift up the men who are answering the Lord's call. We hope the inspirational evening will draw you closer to Jesus as well. Invitations will be mailed in August. We encourage you to respond promptly to secure your table! Once the ballroom reaches capacity, we will offer a standing-room option. Visit sfs.edu/Dinner for more information.



Seminary Golf Outing

Monday, June 23

Wisconsin Country Club

Put away the shovel and get your golf clubs out, because the Seminary golf outing is quickly approaching! We will hit the links at the beautiful Wisconsin Country Club on June 23. The fabulous day of golf is a fun way to support the formation of priests. If you don't golf, plan to join us for the cocktail reception and dinner afterwards. It will feature scores of friends and a new and improved format for your dining pleasure. We hope to see you there! Visit sfs.edu/Golf for more information.



Support the Seminary!

Be part of our mission to form priests in the image of Jesus Christ.



Please pray for us and keep Saint Francis de Sales Seminary in mind as you plan your charitable giving. Checks made payable to *Saint Francis de Sales Seminary* can be mailed to: 3257 S. Lake Drive, Saint Francis WI 53235

Secure online contributions can be made at sfs.edu/donate or using the QR code.

Every gift is appreciated by the men who will serve as your priests!

For more information or to support the mission of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, visit our website at www.sfs.edu. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and X to keep up to date with the latest news and photos.

414- 747-6400