



S S P X



Holy  
Angels  
novitiate



His Excellency Bishop Tissier de Mallerai admonishes the brothers before they take their vows, at the seminary. “Consider one more time the dignity and the sublimity of the religious state and the obligation that is put onto you to tend always to the perfection of the Christian life by the practice of the vows...”



# Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the Brothers Novitiate. Time passes by quickly. It was October of 2016 when the Brothers of the Society of Saint Pius X took possession of the former seminary (St. Thomas Aquinas) of the Society here in Winona, Minnesota. Since then it has been hard work and great blessings.

Our work is the formation of religious vocations, that is, religious brothers in particular. Father Kenneth Dean has been the Novice Master for the brothers for ten years, who held down the fort, since the departure of the seminarians, working to keep up the buildings and the spiritual life of the brothers. Father Daniel Dailey and Father Andrew Dwyer aided in the training of the brothers when not serving their assigned chapels. It was last November that Fr. John Young and I joined the staff to aid in the formation of the Brothers.

Be sure to read Father Dean’s excellent article, in this newsletter, on A Religious Vocation. We are always eager to receive new vocations. If you know of someone who may be interested in a religious vocation please pass to him this letter.

There are three years of formation of the brothers: one for the postulants and now two years for the novices, with classes throughout the morning schedule outside of the summer season. There are currently nine Professed Brothers, four Novices and two Postulants. There are brothers of the Society spread out in various priories and retreat houses in the U.S.

Over the last two and a half years the upkeep of the Winona property has been a high priority: sealing the sandstone walls, replacing two hundred steam traps for our boiler system, curing water damage, refinishing and repainting sixty rooms, taking down sixty ash trees (infected by the emerald ash borer beetle) and replanting sixty maple trees in their place, just to mention a few special projects.

The brothers of course, have many regular duties such as caring for the grounds, general cleaning and upkeep besides prepping and serving for the priors meetings, priests meetings, boys’ camp and now summer retreats.

I am hoping to give you greater insight, through this newsletter, of the work and vocation of the brothers. As always the brothers of the Society depend on your support. Now that they have their own exclusive location they need your direct aid. We currently need to raise substantial money for repairs of the roof, elevator, front steps of the church, and sealing of the basement of the old convent building which will cost a grand total of eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000.00). This operation is worthy of your support. A great deal is accomplished by the brothers materially and spiritually. They pray daily for the priests and their benefactors.

Fr. Charles Ward  
Rector



# A Religious Vocation

By Fr. Kenneth Dean

I think most of us understand what a vocation is – that it’s a calling from God. That’s not the question here. That’s not the thing foremost in our mind. What usually is foremost in our mind is the “how”, not the “what”. How does God call someone? Are there any rules here? Are there any telltale signs to know His calling? Is there anything that can be said about the manner of this calling?

First of all, to the question of how God calls souls to the religious life, we reply that there are no rules. God calls whom He wills, and in the manner He wills. Period. The frustration one might feel at this answer is misplaced. Think about it. We might say that God breaks the mold in dealing with each soul. And that’s because He breaks the mold in making each soul. Just as there are no cookie-cutter souls out there, so there is no rubber stamp way of passing out religious vocations. Each person is unique. Created uniquely by God, He alone knows what makes each one of us tick. And He alone knows the way to treat each one. So while there may be some fairly common traits in religious vocations, there are no real rules.

What then does the calling to religious life consist of? There is a call to everyone to this higher state of life. Jesus said, “If you will be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come follow me.” This general call to everyone is enough. No special, particular call is needed for a religious vocation. The call is already there. Anyone can answer it. The religious vocation, then, comes down to the response of the soul to this call already given by Christ. Of course grace is needed to respond to the call. However, no extraordinary grace or manifestation of God’s call should be sought. Souls who desire such an extraordinary manifestation of God’s will are probably going to be disappointed. God does not normally give this kind of thing. We should not seek it. We should rather seek to know God’s will by meditating on Our Lord’s words, and our true purpose in life. Christ says, “He who can take it, let him take it.”



Many souls worry about whether or not God is calling them to religious life. Their worry is not needed. It’s very good if they want to do God’s will, but God does not want them to be anxious about this. They should only desire to please Him. If they want to follow Our Lord more closely, then let them follow Him. The door is open. He has already sent His invitation; why wait for another one?

It is interesting to note that this concern for “having a vocation” to a state of life, is focused almost entirely on the religious state or priesthood. Fr. Richard Butler says, “Objectively, the married state presents many more difficulties and, as St. Paul says, divides a man’s concern between creature and Creator. There are more dangers and fewer safeguards in seeking Christian perfection through this state of life. Yet I have never known of any young person fretting over whether or not he (or she) had a vocation to marriage. The obvious implication is that we have shrouded the religious state with a veil of mystery that frightens a potential candidate. On the other hand, we apparently have neglected to show the married state in its true light of sacrifice and solemn



Brother Columba, having just received the brothers’ habit and his new name in religion, is given the kiss of peace by His Excellency Bishop Tissier de Mallerais at the seminary. “By its simplicity, its gravity, and its uniformity, may your religious habit be for you a constant invitation to the practice of the virtues which must specially adorn your soul: poverty, humility, chastity, obedience, and charity.”



The Novitiate brothers visited St. John Vianney Parish and Academy to familiarize the parishioners with the brothers and their vocation.

obligation. The average youth, therefore, tends, in his mind, to overemphasize or exaggerate the hardships of religious life and to minimize the burdens of marriage.” Perhaps this tendency to overemphasize the sacrifices of religious life is at the source of many anxieties about a religious vocation. If one sees only the sacrifices of a particular vocation, one pulls back from such a path. Meanwhile, the sacrifices of the married state are easily forgotten or diminished.

This is no doubt due to the nature of the quite obvious goods of marriage. In religious life then, what should be stressed are the goods proper to that life. These goods make the sacrifices all worth while. The first and foremost of these goods is happiness. The religious life normally brings peace and happiness to the soul. This is something that cannot be repeated enough. We all seek happiness. We seek it in this life, at least to a certain extent. It is the generous acceptance of sacrifice that brings happiness. And here we must be reminded of a very basic truth. It is this – that God knows how to make us happy. Whatever He commands, whatever He forbids, whatever He counsels, He is thinking of our true happiness. Those He calls to religious life He has the power to make happy, even extremely happy. Is this happiness not part of the hundred-fold promised to those who leave everything for Christ?

The “discernment” of vocations to religious life has a lot more to do with love and trust of God than it does with anxiously “trying to figure out God’s will”. God wants us to love Him, dear friends. If we allow ourselves to trust Him completely, His love will grow in us. This is the needed condition to correctly perceive a religious vocation. Jesus tells us to drop our anxieties and learn to trust. “Therefore I say to you, do not be anxious for your life... look at the birds of the air: they do not sow or reap, or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of much more value than they? But which of you by being anxious about it can add to his stature a single cubit? ...But seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be given you besides.”



Brother Peter Joseph applies a new coat of paint to the walls of the Novitiate basement.



The Holy Angels Novitiate celebrated the 70th anniversary of the laying of the building’s corner stone on Memorial Day weekend. The weather was beautiful and the dandelion-covered lawns were graced with two processions in honor of Our Lady in addition to a variety of games for children and adults alike. Fr. Ward gave two conferences which were a call to work in the Redemptive plans of God with the weapons of Our Lady.

## SSPX Brothers Around the World

### North & South America

United States: 23  
Canada: 4  
Columbia: 1  
Chile: 1  
Argentina: 6

### Australia:

Australia: 5  
New Zealand : 2

### Africa & Asia

South Africa: 1  
Zimbabwe: 1  
Philippines: 7  
Sri Lanka: 1

### Europe

Belgium: 1  
England: 1  
France: 34  
Germany: 19

Italy: 3  
Poland: 4  
Switzerland: 12



Total: 128 Brothers



Holy Angels Novitiate is the House of Formation for the Brothers of the Society of St. Pius X in the United States.

The Brothers of the Society are religious dedicated to the glory of God through the service of His priests. They accomplish this primarily through the observance of the three Vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience – the foundations of Catholic religious life through the centuries – by their prayers, and by their example. They also assist the priests of the Society in their apostolates in many different ways, according to the needs of each individual priory. Brothers are currently engaged in teaching catechism, serving Mass, maintaining sacristies, and directing choirs; as well as caring for the material needs of the priests by cooking, performing maintenance, accounting, and completing innumerable small but useful tasks.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, founder of the Society of St. Pius X and its Brothers, recognized the dignity and value of the brothers' vocation when he exhorted them to be the "guardian angels of our communities." It was his wish that each priory of the Society would eventually have a resident religious brother; a wish which can only be realized through the selfless response of many souls to Christ's call, together with the generosity of our benefactors. God will certainly reward both of them abundantly.

#### **Donation Information**

Please make out checks or money orders in US dollars only to: "Holy Angels Novitiate"  
The mailing address is:

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