



Spring 2004

"Training men for the priesthood for over 100 years."

The Herald

A Newsletter for the Alumni and Friends of Kenrick-Glennon Seminary



Kenrick-Glennon Seminary welcomes Archbishop Raymond L. Burke, installed on January 26, 2004, as the ninth bishop and eighth archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

What Kenrick Seminary Has Meant to My Priesthood

By Fr. David A. Richter
Diocese of Bismarck, North Dakota



I was ordained a priest in May of 2000 following four years of formation at Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. Currently, I serve as pastor to three separate parishes in the diocese of Bismarck, North Dakota (St. John the Baptist in Beach, St. Mary's in Golva, and St. Mary's in Medora) as well as overseeing the spiritual program at the "Home on the Range" facility for troubled teens. To sum things up, I am a very busy priest in the early part of a challenging, enjoyable, and enriching

priesthood. In all honesty, I would not be the priest I am today without the wonderful environment and caring people at Kenrick Seminary.

So what makes Kenrick Seminary so special? There is a multi-layered answer to that simple question, but here is the bottom line: Kenrick Seminary gave me the gift of knowing myself and accepting myself as a man of God. The seminary afforded me the time and the resources to discern God's calling; it allowed me to become the person God wanted me to become.

From a spiritual aspect, Kenrick offered a strong routine of prayer. Twice a day every day all of the seminarians gathered together to pray the Office. Morning and evening prayer has become a staple of my spiritual life and that was solidly established at Kenrick Seminary.

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Mission Statement

Kenrick-Glennon Seminary forms priests who are *simple* men, who are *wise* men, who are *gentle* men, who are *holy* men—after the image of Jesus Christ, the One Priest in whose Priesthood every Priest shares.

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Faculty Profile: Fr. Michael Witt, Professor of Church History



Fr. Michael Witt has served Kenrick Seminary as a Professor of Church History and spiritual director since 1998. Fr. Witt teaches Church History to first year theologians and the History of the Catholic Church in America to deacons. Electives in Church History include Papal History

Since 1945 and Church in Turmoil 1274-1555, among others.

Church History is an important component to the formation of men for the priesthood, says Fr. Witt, because "it offers a framework for all of that seminarian's theological studies. The seminarian can see his historical studies in the context of that framework and grasp the de-

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Two other areas of my spiritual life that I hold dear—Eucharistic adoration and the sacrament of reconciliation—are still stressed at the seminary, much to the benefit of the men who are formed within its walls.

Another area in my life that was once a huge challenge—counseling, working with people in a manner of intimate communication—developed into a strength due to my formation at the seminary. Much of that success is owed to Dr. Susanne Harvath and the Department of Pastoral Theology. My ability to counsel people in need, to listen to these people and know them where they are in their relationship with God, is a gift that has been aided so much by my formation at the seminary. I am blessed by God to be able to share such intimate moments



Bishop Paul Zipfel of Bismarck, North Dakota, installs Fr. Richter as pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in July of 2002

with His people and serve them in a manner that benefits their spiritual development.

Academically, Kenrick provides a solid, accurate, orthodox picture of our Catholic faith. What I learned at Kenrick Seminary are those things that I needed to learn if I was to serve God as the best possible priest I could be. The faithfulness to ortho-

doxy amongst the faculty is a direct reflection of the seminary's president-rector and the archbishop of St. Louis.

Generally speaking, the atmosphere of Kenrick Seminary is what makes the whole experience so conducive to discerning God's will in the seminarian's life. Practically, the city of St. Louis has such a rich history and unique tapestry of different people and a variety of ways to serve those people as a member of the seminary.

The year I spent serving a parish as a transitional deacon allowed me to develop into the type of preacher I

"What I learned at Kenrick Seminary are those things that I needed to learn if I was to serve God as the best possible priest I could be."

never thought I could become. I preached every Sunday and came to know what it meant to serve the people of a parish before I was officially ordained a Catholic priest. That deaconate year was invaluable to my development.

Anytime I speak to a bishop about what seminary he can send his men to, I recommend Kenrick Seminary as the ideal seminary any young man discerning his calling should attend.

("Faculty Profile," continued from page 1)

velopment of Church dogma and the ecclesial institution with the overall framework as a guide."

Reflecting on day-to-day life at Kenrick Seminary, Fr. Witt notes that the dynamic of an orthodox, committed faculty intermingled with nearly 100 seminarians who share a love for the Church and a passion for learning make for an invigorating environment. "The ratio of faculty to students at Kenrick allows for the kind of one-on-one study you just don't find in other institutions. It is so rare that a professor can dedicate one and sometimes two independent studies per semester to the benefit of his students' academic development. That kind of in-depth study benefits a seminarian so very much."

Fr. Witt continues: "So why study Church History? I'm often asked this question. What does it benefit the future of the Church to look into its past? I always answer the same way: We can hold great confidence and hope from studying the history of our Catholic Church. We can better shoulder what we've been through due to the frailty of our human leadership once we realize that the Holy Spirit finds strength in our weakness. The Church has been through more tumultuous periods than we now face, and we can have the confidence and assurance that—just as we emerged from the struggles of the past—the Holy Spirit will guide us though this difficult period as well."

Seminarian Spotlight



Looking back on the 2003-'04 academic year, what special events in which you participated were especially meaningful to you? Which pastoral or ministerial efforts moved you?



Tim Bannes, Theology II / Archdiocese of St. Louis / Home Parish: St. Gerard Majella

“This past January the seminarians had the opportunity to take part in the Life Matters pilgrimage organized by the St. Louis Office of Youth Ministry. Together we joined tens of thousands of other people from across the country for the March for Life in Washington, D.C. In spite of the somber mood marking the anniversary of legalized abortions, it really was quite exciting to see so many people standing up for the Pro-Life cause, especially the youth! It definitely gives me hope for the future that we will be able to turn around the culture of death which currently surrounds us.”

Stephen Hansen, Theology III / Diocese of Jefferson City / Home Parish: St. Peter

“This year has been interesting from the perspective of focusing on preparation for the Diaconate (May 15th, 2004). I made it a goal to focus on prayer and the internal spiritual life, and service as acolyte with less outside activities (which I am prone to do, like praying at the abortion clinic). It has actually been an enlightening semester from that perspective. It is good to quiet down at times, I have learned. I look forward to, God willing, being called to and ordained to the Order of Deacon in May.”



Aaron Nord, Pastoral Internship / Archdiocese of St. Louis / Home Parish: Incarnate Word

“The Pastoral Internship program is a great part of the seminary curriculum. It is a ten-month immersion into parish life. Earlier this year, I helped with the Thirty-Hour Famine, a retreat with God’s Gang, the youth group of St. Blaise and St. Lawrence. On it, God taught me that sometimes numbers don’t matter. You see, I was disappointed that only twelve teens could come on the retreat. That disappointment quickly disappeared when I saw teens transformed by their experience of the Thirty-Hour Famine! So I learned in ministry that the focus is on conversion, not numbers.”

Philip Niekamp, Theology III / Diocese of Jefferson City / Home Parish: St. Peter

“As a third year theologian I spend a great deal of time preparing for the diaconate and priesthood, spiritually and academically. Spiritually, we continue to pray, and learn what being a Deacon is all about, both in a pastoral setting and liturgically. Academically, third year theologians are writing their Master theses, depending on their interests. The seminary is a great place to be, whether you’re twenty-two or forty-two, or perhaps younger or older. Where else can you meet a Supreme Court Justice, Stan Musial, and more Bishops and Cardinals than you could shake a stick at!”



Adam Henjum, Theology I / Bismarck, North Dakota / Home Parish: St. Leo’s

“Part of my ministry this year involved working with the Missionaries of Charity in their after-school program. Most of the young people I taught were African-American, from broken homes, and poor. I had never worked with minorities before so this was a very challenging experience for me. I have a whole new appreciation of the need for support and encouragement of young people. I see that they are very much in need of education, self-esteem, and strong role models. The program in which I participated is just one aspect of what the Church is doing for its people in ministry.”

Kenrick Basketball Team Captures Tourney Championship

By Gerald Blessing,
Theology III
Archdiocese of St. Louis

Twelve seminarians from Kenrick Seminary traveled to the Pontifical College Josephinum seminary in Columbus, Ohio during the weekend of January 30 thru February 1, 2004, to participate in their annual seminary basketball tournament. A total of seven seminaries from the Midwest participated. The tournament is a way for seminarians to connect with one another through competition. It is also a way to express a sense of pride in their seminary.

The Kenrick Lions, who take their name from the former Archbishop of St. Louis, Peter Richard Kenrick, whose motto was, "Beware of the Lion," took first place in the tournament. The Lions played four games, one on Friday evening

against Sacred Heart Seminary from Detroit, then on Saturday against the Josephinum theology team, followed by St. Meinrad seminary from Indi-



The 2004 Champion Kenrick Lions

ana, and finally on Sunday morning against St. Charles Borromeo/St. Mary's Seminary from Cleveland for the championship. All of the games were tight contests. Three of the four were come from behind victories, while one went into over-time.

The members of the team were Paul Eberle, Jack Gardner, Russ Kovash, and Andy Schmidt, from the Bismarck, North Dakota diocese, Jason Kurth, from the Des Moines, Iowa diocese, Gerald Blessing, Bob Hamer, Michael Houser, Chris Martin, and Joe Post, from the archdiocese of St. Louis, Steve Fowler, from the diocese of Springfield/Cape Girardeau, and Kevin Muniz from the diocese of Springfield, IL.

The championship trophy stands proudly in the Kenrick-Glennon Seminary student lounge.



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