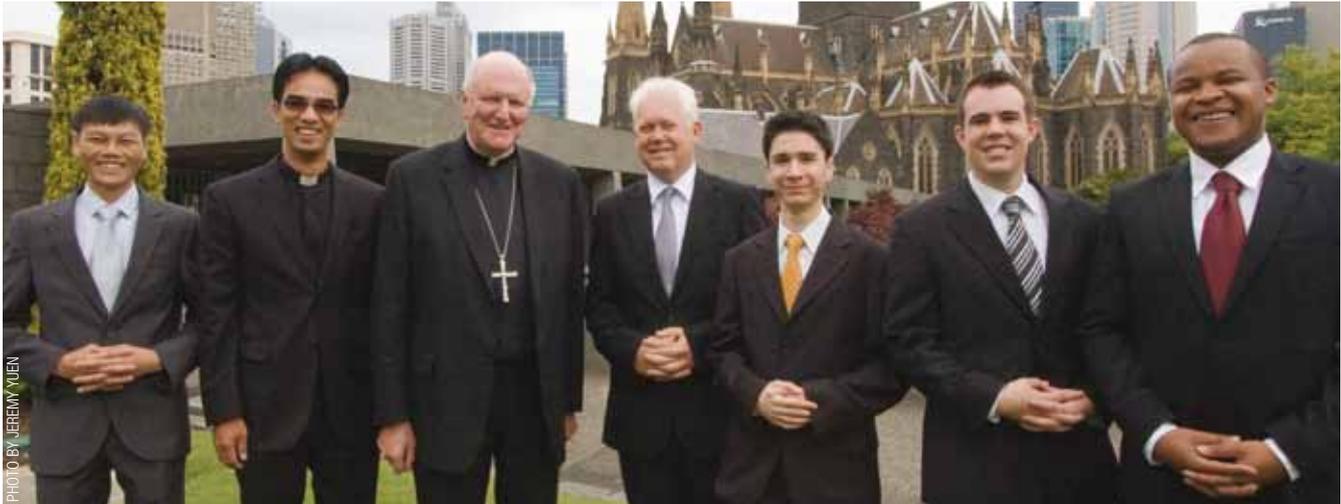

VOCATIONS NEWS



Director of Vocations and Archbishop Denis Hart with new seminarians for 2011

THIS ISSUE

- 2 From the Director "Excuses, Excuses!"
- 3 Doing "a good thing"
- 4 Profiles: First year seminarians
- 6 WYD Madrid 2011
- 7 Plans for 2011
Vocations Monstrance
New hours of operation
- 8 Calendar for 2011



ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

AUTUMN 2011
VOL 6 NO 1

EXCUSES, EXCUSES!

I want to be happy. I'm not smart enough. I'm afraid of being alone.
 I am not holy enough. I've made mistakes.
 I want a good life. I am not talented enough.
 I want to have a family.
 I am afraid of making a commitment. I am afraid I will fail.

AS THE VOCATIONS DIRECTOR FOR THE Archdiocese of Melbourne, it is such a privilege to meet and journey with the many people who are considering the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood or religious life.

Inevitably, somewhere along the process of discernment, many candidates, directly or indirectly, come up with good reasons why they should not pursue their vocation or call to priesthood or religious life. Fears set in, doubts set in and there is always something that is holding them back.

Certainly, whatever these reasons may be at the present, they are perhaps legitimate and need to be considered. There may be family concerns, financial debts to pay off or a strong desire to finish schooling or training in a professional field. When these reasons surface, they sometimes may require the candidate's personal plans or consideration of a vocation to priesthood or religious life to be put on the 'back burner' for a while.

Yet sometimes they may be just 'excuses'! And 'self-centred' excuses are not God orientated. Excuses that flow from some fear that one may have regarding a call from God may be real but not worth

considering. How do we know if our reasons for not considering a call from God are good reasons or just excuses? Where can we get help? A good spiritual director, the vocations director or your local priest can help with this.

Below are some popular excuses and God's response to these excuses:

1. *'I want to be happy.'*
Check out: Psalm 37:4; Matthew 5:1-12; Mark 10:28-31; John 10:10.
2. *'I'm afraid of being alone.'*
Check out: Exodus 3:4-22; Luke 1:28-38; Matthew 28:20.
3. *'I'm not smart enough.'* Check out: 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; Exodus 4:10-17.
4. *'I am afraid of making a commitment.'*
Check out: Ruth 1:15-17; 1 Corinthians 25:5-10.
5. *'I want a good life.'*
Check out: Mark 10:17-31; Matthew 13:44-46; John 10:10.
6. *'I want to have a family.'*
Check out: Genesis 12:1-3; Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 1:28-31.

7. *'I am not talented enough.'*
Check out: Luke 1:26-38

8. *'I've made mistakes.'*
Check out: Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 7:36-50; John 21:15-23.

9. *'I am afraid I will fail.'*
Check out: Exodus 14:10-31; Luke 15.

10. *'I am not holy enough.'*
Check out: Isaiah 6:1-9; Luke 5:1-11

In a humorous way, these 'excuses' are real. They can be paralysing. They can make it impossible for us to go on with our life. They need to be reconciled. You can take comfort that they arise in the hearts and minds of everyone who considers a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. You are not alone!

These 'excuses' undoubtedly had been in the minds of our new seminarians for 2011, whose short bios are elsewhere in this Vocations News. All of them had to put their 'self' aside and trust in God. God wants us to be happy in our lives. Happiness comes from trusting in God. Perhaps, you need to do it!

Rev. Binh Le
Director of Vocations

DOING "A GOOD THING"

IN HIS *LETTER TO SEMINARIANS* published four months ago, Pope Benedict XVI said, "You, dear friends, have decided to enter the seminary and to prepare for priestly ministry ... You have done a good thing." Both the Archdiocese of Melbourne and the Church beyond, concur with our Holy Father in saying to these six men, you are, indeed, doing a good thing.

Along with five others, these six men will begin their training to become what is commonly known as a 'man of the cloth'. Pope Benedict, in his letter, put it more specifically, when he said, "Anyone who wishes to be a priest must be first and foremost a 'man of God'." It is from this essential decision to be such a man that all further decisions ought to flow.

Coming to the seminary suggests coming from somewhere else. That somewhere

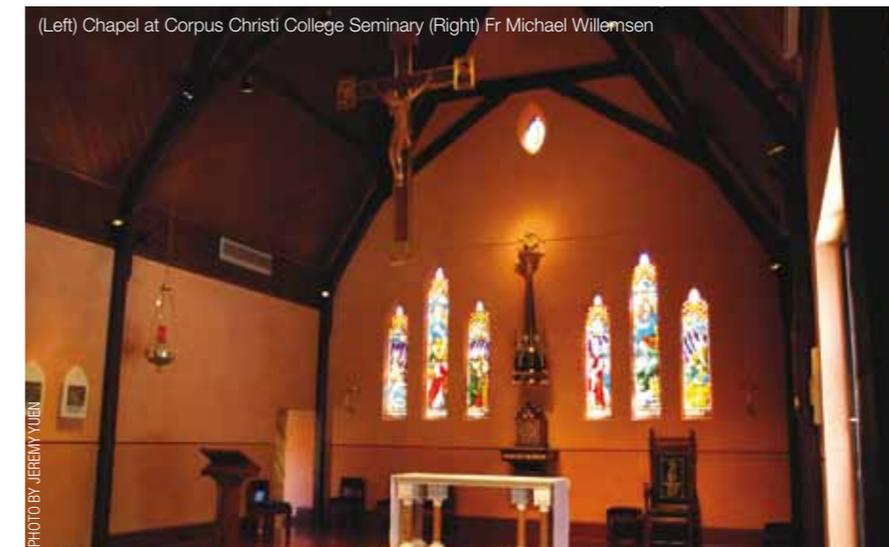
else is the world. These men have left behind a former life, so as to respond more fully to what God is calling them towards. The seminary policy of no internet in the first year building, no mobile phones and no cars, is part of the framework to support the integral change in the lives of these men. They will devote themselves to prayer, study and community life as the authenticity of their call is further discerned. Spiritual direction will assist each individual in his ongoing discernment, as will the half a day per week in the wider community doing pastoral work.

The first year seminarians have fewer academic subjects and a separate timetable to the rest of the community, which adds further evidence of a year that is designed to be "quite distinct to the years of formation which follow in the seminary"

(*Ratio Nationalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, 2007). Of the four pillars of formation spoken of by Pope John Paul II in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992), particular emphasis is given to the human and spiritual dimensions in the first year program. The intellectual and pastoral dimensions are included, of course, but these are given more weight in the years that follow.

For the eleven men beginning priestly training in 2011 at Corpus Christi College, there are both exciting and challenging times ahead. It is important that we all acknowledge that whatever becomes of them, by taking this step, they have truly, "done a good thing".

Fr Michael Willemsen
First Year Formator



(Left) Chapel at Corpus Christi College Seminary (Right) Fr Michael Willemsen

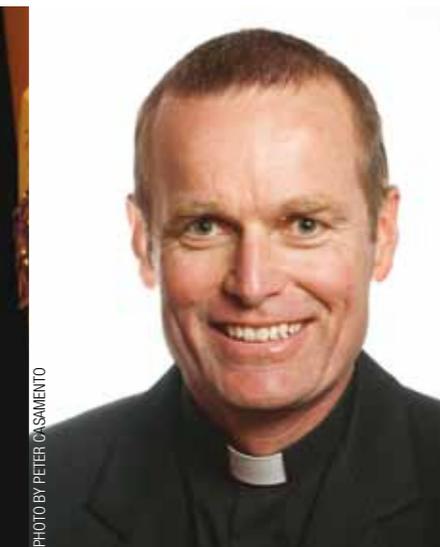


PHOTO BY PETER CASAMENTO

FIRST *year* SEMINARIANS



Geoffrey
MCILROY

I am Geoffrey McIlroy, 48 yrs old, the elder of two children. My home parish is Resurrection Parish in Keysborough and I also spent some years at St Josephs in Emerald Vic. Before I entered the seminary I was employed for 24 years as a quality assurance manager in a therapeutic product manufacturing company. After the death of my sister and father in 2008, I saw the priest in a different light; it opened my heart to the thought of the priesthood and I was rewarded with a strengthening of faith and a greater passion for serving Christ.



Fabio
MANGIAPANE

My name is Fabio Mangiapane. I am 23 years old and have an older sister. Since high school I've been attending the parish of St Gerard's, Dandenong North and last year I obtained a Bachelor of Engineering from Monash University. As I began to gain a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith through private study, I had a desire to share my understanding with others; this is what caused me to consider the priesthood. Furthermore, John Paul II's "theology of the body" has made me see with greater clarity the purpose and significance of the vocation to celibacy.



Toan
NGUYEN

My name is Toan Nguyen. I was born in 1981 in Dong Tam, Vietnam. I am the eighth in a family of nine children. The faith of my family, in particular my parents, has been an ongoing inspiration for my decision to study for the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. I experienced the call to the priesthood during my high school years. Through daily prayers and spiritual guidance from my spiritual director, the call to the priesthood continues to grow. I thank God every day for this special gift. I actually moved into Corpus Christi College last year as a propaedeutic student and will be very pleased to commence first year studies this year.



Joseph
THO TRAN

My name is Joseph Tho Tran. I am 29 years old and I came from Hanoi diocese in Vietnam. I am the youngest in a family of two girls and two boys. I graduated from Hanoi University in 2006 and then I studied at the Archbishop's house while preparing to enter the seminary. I moved to Melbourne in August 2008 and stayed at St Brendan's Parish in Flemington while studying English at RMIT University. My purpose in coming to Australia was to study for the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. I want to become a priest to serve the Church of God. I started at Corpus Christi College last year while improving my English language and am looking forward to starting studies for the priesthood this year.



Peter
THUAN NGUYEN

My name is Peter Thuan Nguyen. I am 32 years old, the sixth of nine sons. I spent my childhood with my family in a country village of Vinh Diocese, Vietnam, where the crop of vocations is quite rich. My thoughts of the priesthood came through my experience of serving at the altar and became stronger when my third brother became a seminarian. Before arriving at the seminary in Melbourne, I had completed my university education and lived a couple of years in a religious seminary in Vietnam. It was there that I started realising that my call is not to serve in my homeland, but overseas instead.



Mark
O'SHEA

My name is Mark O'Shea. I am 22 years old, the third of five children. Much of my childhood was spent in Brisbane and the Riverina district of New South Wales before my family settled in Melbourne, where I belong to Good Shepherd Parish in Wheelers Hill. Before entering the seminary, I completed a degree in Arts/Primary Education at Monash University. My call to further discern my vocation came through the example of a number of faithful priests, as well as my involvement in parishes as an altar server.

CONTINUED ON PG 6 ►

WYD 2011 MADRID



Benneth
OSUAGWU

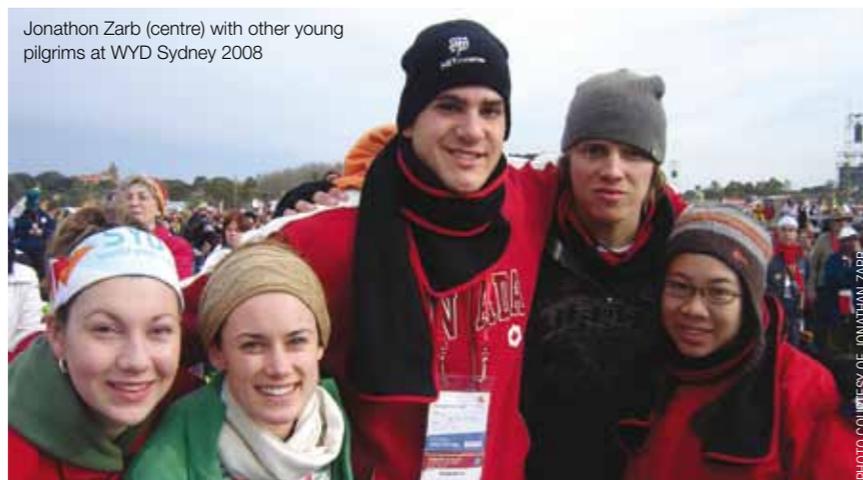
My name is Benneth Osuagwu. I was born in 1974, the fifth of six children – three boys and three girls – in a town called Aba in Abia State, Nigeria. I began my seminary training at Bigard Memorial Seminary in Enugu, Nigeria in 1995. I then studied at the Angelicum in Rome from 2003 until 2006, and finally at St Patrick's College, Maynooth in Ireland from 2007 until 2010. Since arriving in Melbourne I have been made to feel very welcome and believe that I am finally where God wants me to be. As Christians we are all called to serve and I feel especially called to serve as a priest – to give myself as a servant of the faithful, in particular as a special dispenser of the Eucharist.

IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IT HAS been three years this July since the Church of Australia hosted World Youth Day Sydney 2008, which brought thousands of international youth from every corner of the globe together in prayer for a week of pilgrimage, challenging all involved physically, mentally, socially, emotionally and spiritually. We in Australia are still seeing the fruits of this international event blessing our schools, parishes and personal lives through the young people who took part in past World Youth Days living out the call to be in love with Jesus and with our Mother Church.

Every WYD has a theme given by the Pope. The theme for World Youth Day 2011 is *Planted and Built Up in Jesus Christ, Firm in the Faith* (Col 2:7). WYD offers something for everyone – from silent prayer to Masses to big concerts and cultural events. At WYD, youth discover

that they are not alone with their thoughts and questions about faith. Young people from all over the world are practising their faith in so many ways and the Pope invites them to come together as one. It is also at World Youth Day that young people are given the space and time to truly open themselves up to discerning their God-given vocation. Through the years World Youth Day has blessed our culture with many married couples, religious brothers & sisters, priests and committed single people who have dedicated their lives to God and the Church. Please continue to pray for the success of the gathering and for the millions of pilgrims especially the hundreds from the Archdiocese of Melbourne who are beginning their personal and group preparations for this life changing event to be held in Madrid, Spain in August of this year.

Jonathon Zarb
Special Projects Officer



Jonathon Zarb (centre) with other young pilgrims at WYD Sydney 2008

PHOTO COURTESY OF JONATHAN ZARB

THE DIRECTOR AND STAFF OF CATHOLIC Vocations have many plans for 2011. At the end of last year Fr Binh wrote to all parish priests offering to visit parishes on one weekend per month this year to celebrate or speak at all Masses. Within days of the letter going out all the dates for 2011 had been booked! Many parishes contacted us too late to secure one of the available dates so these parishes will be amongst those offered a seminarian to speak at all Masses for Good Shepherd Sunday (14/15 May).

Visits to secondary colleges will continue, but this year Fr Binh will be accompanied by a seminarian who will be doing pastoral experience with our office. Coincidentally it was in 2007 when Fr Binh was himself a

senior seminarian that he accompanied Fr Denton on visits to many schools in the Archdiocese!

This year we plan to redesign our series of Vocations brochures – these won't be ready until later in the year, so in the short term you will again be offered supplies of the existing brochures, but stay tuned for new ones. And, as every year, we will produce new posters for World Day of Prayer for Vocations and for Vocations Awareness Week, as well as an Ordination poster.

In August, Fr Binh Le will travel to Madrid for World Youth Day as one of the archdiocesan chaplains to youth groups, and Jonathon Zarb, our Special Projects Coordinator, has also applied to go to

PLANS for 2011

WYD as a Youth Leader. This would be an excellent year to have Fr Binh and Jonathon visit and get to know your Youth Group before they all meet up in Madrid!

Our core activity of accompanying young men who are discerning a vocation to the priesthood will continue with the monthly *Quo Vadis?* discernment evenings and the annual Retreat for young men. See the calendar for dates and ring or email for more details.

Please contact the office if you require more information about any of these initiatives or if you have any suggestions for promoting vocations.

VOCATIONS *Monstrance*



DURING THE YEAR FOR PRIESTS WE HAD another successful pilgrimage of the Vocations Monstrance around the parishes of the Archdiocese. This was a wonderful opportunity for the people to gather before the Real Presence and give thanks for the selfless service of their parish priests. As St Jean-Marie Vianney, Patron Saint of Priests, said: "The priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus. When you see the priest, think of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

As you know, the Monstrance was purchased with the help of our friends in Serra Australia, and personally blessed by Pope Benedict XVI for prayers for vocations in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. That means that anytime a parish wants to pray for vocations this Monstrance is available as a focus for their prayers. Not just when there is a special pilgrimage, arranged by the Vocations Office, but whenever you would like to have the Monstrance for your parish, school or prayer group just give us a call on **03 9926 5733**.

NEW hours of OPERATION

AS FROM THE BEGINNING OF 2011, the Vocations Office is closed on Mondays. We are open 9am – 5pm Tuesday to Friday. You will find us at the Cardinal Knox Centre, behind the Cathedral, or on **03 9926 5733**.

If you happen to ring when we are not available please leave a message on our voicemail and we will get back to you at the earliest opportunity. Alternatively, you can send an email to:

vocations@cam.org.au

or to Fr Binh personally at:
director@melbournepriest.com

Our website is always available at:
www.melbournepriest.com

CALENDAR FOR 2011

FEBRUARY

- 10 New seminarians lunch
with Archbishop
- 19-20 Parish visitation
St John Bosco, Niddrie
- 20 New seminarians commence
- 27 *Quo Vadis?*
discernment evening for young men

MARCH

- 6 First issue of *Vocations News*
- 19-20 Parish visitation
St Andrew's, Clayton South
- 27 *Quo Vadis?*

APRIL

- 9-10 Parish visitation
St Martin de Porres, Laverton
- 16-17 Vocations booth
@ family conference, Xavier College
- 22 Good Friday
- 24 Easter Sunday

MAY

- 14-15 Parish visitation
Good Shepherd, Mulgrave
- 15 World Day of Prayer for Vocations
- 29 *Quo Vadis?*

JUNE

- 8 *Vocations News*
- 10 Enquiry Day
at Corpus Christi Seminary
- 18-19 Parish visitation
Sacred Heart, Kew
- 26 *Quo Vadis?*

JULY

- 16-17 Parish visitation
Our Lady's, Craigieburn
- 31 *Quo Vadis?*

AUGUST

- 1-7 Vocations Awareness Week
(Melbourne)
- 16-21 World Youth Day, Madrid, Spain

SEPTEMBER

- 7 *Vocations News*
- 23-26 Vocations Retreat

OCTOBER

- 15-16 Parish visitation
St Gerard's, North Dandenong
- 23 *Quo Vadis?*

NOVEMBER

- 19-20 Parish visitation
St Joseph's, Chelsea
- 27 *Quo Vadis?*

DECEMBER

- 7 *Vocations News*
- 16 Vocations Office closes
- 17-18 Parish visitation
Sacred Heart, Preston



CONTACT US

Catholic Vocations
Cardinal Knox Centre
383 Albert Street (PO BOX 146)
East Melbourne VIC
Australia 8002

03 9926 5733
vocations@cam.org.au

catholicvocation.org.au