



DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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June 1, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today we conclude the Easter Season with the celebration of Pentecost. On this "Birthday of the Church," we remember the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, who were huddled in fear in the Upper Room. The Holy Spirit filled them with courage and purpose as they embarked upon their mission to share the good news of Jesus with the world. This spirit of unity and action is something we are all called to embrace (accept), yet some men in our communities are called in a special way – they are called to the sacred order of the Priesthood.

As Rector of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia, I understood firsthand the need for proper formation for our future priests. These men, once ordained, would lead their local flocks in the faith, administer the Sacraments, and be spiritual fathers. As Pope Leo said: "Walking along the shore, Jesus had called Peter and the other first disciples to be, like him, "fishers of men". Now, after the resurrection, it is up to them to carry on this mission, to cast their nets again and again, to bring the hope of the Gospel into the "waters" of the world, to sail the seas of life so that all may experience God's embrace" (Homily for the Beginning of the Pontificate, May 18, 2025).

Our Diocese is blessed to ordain three men to the priesthood this year. We still need more gifted young men to say "Yes" to God's call. In working with Vocation Ministries this past year, it is estimated that our Diocese will need roughly 35-40 men in seminary formation to maintain our current level of priest staffing for our parishes as older priests retire or are affected by health challenges. The journey to the priesthood is a challenging and transformative one. It requires dedication, sacrifice, and a deep commitment to the calling that God places in the hearts of those chosen to serve. However, the financial reality of this journey can be daunting. The annual cost for one man in formation for the priesthood exceeds \$46,000.

Our support of these men does not stop once they are ordained. After a lifetime of service to the Church and our Diocese, our retired priests also have needs during their twilight years. Priests living in the Retirement Residence enjoy safe, comfortable housing and freshly prepared meals, among other nominal amenities, at little cost to them.

You can support our future priests, and our retired priests, through your prayers and your generous financial gift to our annual **Pentecost Collection**. By contributing to this collection, you are affirming the importance of vocations and the clergy in our parishes and communities. You are helping to foster an environment where young men can pursue their calling without the burden of financial stress while enabling priests to enjoy retirement after a lifetime of service.

Please prayerfully consider how you can contribute to this important collection and join me in prayer for our clergy, who dedicate their lives to serving us. Pray for those young men who are discerning their call to the priesthood, that they may find the courage and clarity they need to take the next step, and for our retired priests, that they may enjoy their days of relaxation after a life of service.

To make a secure gift online, please visit <https://www.hbgdiocese.org/giving/pentecost-collection>, or mail your gift to your parish or place your gift in your parish collection basket the weekend of June 8th.

Thank you for your time, your support, and your unwavering faith. May God bless you and may Saint John Vianney, the patron of parish priests, pray for us.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Timothy C. Senior
Bishop of Harrisburg