



## Adopt a Seminarian



### Tools for Vocations

As parish-level efforts, **Adopt a Seminarian** programs are a grassroots means for the faithful to encourage, pray for, and provide for the material needs of priests in training. The programs can be a great way for families to get involved in supporting seminarians.

## Summary

Many dioceses around the country have brought about special programs—often called 'Adopt a Seminarian' or some derivation thereof—to accomplish the aim of supporting priests-in-training at the parish level.

These programs vary in their operational specifics; however, one rather common format involves dioceses asking their respective parishes to encourage their families and schools to pick a seminarian from their diocese for whom to pray and with whom to correspond on a regular basis.

Adopt a Seminarian programs are not necessarily limited to spiritual support for priests-in-training. In some cases, Adopt a Seminarian programs include means of supporting seminarians both spiritually (prayer) and materially (such basic living needs as toiletries and laundry items). In other cases, similar programs even provide financial assistance to seminarians.



# Adopt A Seminarian

## Program Outline

- Adopt-a-Seminarian
- Parish-level programs
  - Designed to support priests-in-training
- Programs vary in operational details
  - One common format is as follows:
    - Having parish families and schools pick a seminarian and pray for them and correspond with them regularly
- Programs not necessarily limited to spiritual support
  - Some programs support seminarians with material needs and even provide financial assistance



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## Adopt A Seminarian

### Program History, Development, and Additional Resources

Encouraging men who are studying for the priesthood is a key component of supporting vocations. Many dioceses around the country have brought about special programs, often called 'Adopt a Seminarian'—or some derivation thereof—to accomplish this aim.

Adopt a Seminarian programs vary in scope and specifics of operation, but one relatively common way of proceeding in these programs can be seen in the example provided by the Archdiocese of Saint Louis (MO), which encourages all families—and also its parochial elementary schools and secondary schools—to choose a seminarian whom they will “spiritually adopt” and pray for (and also correspond with) on a regular basis.

In tying its 'Adopt a Seminarian' program into its similarly structured 'Adopt a Priest' program, the Archdiocese of Saint Louis (MO) writes the following basic instructions for use in local Catholic schools:

#### ***Choose a seminarian and/or priest for each classroom***

- Pray daily for your seminarian and for seminarians throughout the world (Mass, rosary, [Holy] our, Adoration, our own words, etc.)
- Send a note, picture, or card on special feast days or holidays
- Pray about and ponder your own personal vocational call

Adopt a Seminarian programs are not necessarily limited to spiritual support for priests-in-training. The program at one particular parish within the Ft. Wayne-South Bend (IN) diocese, for example, provides both spiritual and material bolstering for diocesan seminarians. Interested parishioners would, after attending Mass, receive information sheets for each diocesan seminarian—sheets which would, among other things, list that person's housing-related needs, such as laundry and toiletry items; parishioners could then send the items along to their 'adopted' seminarian at the seminary. In another case, at a parish in Louisiana, the lay faithful invite seminarians into their homes for meals, games, and Christian fellowship. These expansions of the Adopt a Seminarian concept have been warmly received by both the laity and the seminarians of the dioceses involved.



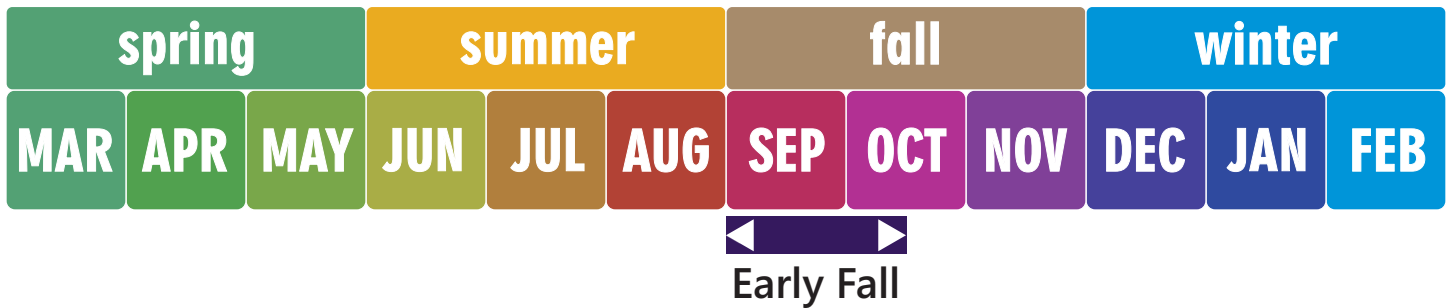
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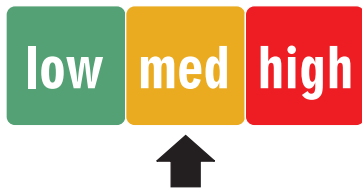
## Adopt A Seminarian

### Implementation

#### Time of Year



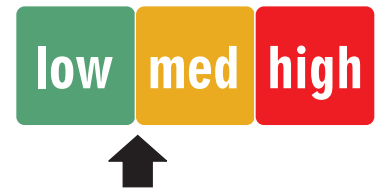
#### Lead Time



#### Effort



#### Cost



#### Using Serrans / Volunteers

Serrans could be relied upon for such things as purchasing toiletries and laundry items to be sent to seminarians.

Prayer for seminarians is important and volunteers should be solicited for prayer commitments.



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### Additional Resources

#### Additional Resources

Article from The Catholic Connection, the monthly publication of the Diocese of Shreveport (LA); the article contains an inset PDF document (just click on it, and it will appear full-screen) which pictures all 8 of the diocese's seminarians from a recent academic year AND their home parishes, seminary of attendance, and other information for parish correspondence purposes; could be a good best-practice idea for a document to distribute in your parish as part of a new Adopt a Priest program:

<http://www.thecatholicconnection.org/?p=1816>

PowerPoint presentation (in PDF form) from the Diocese of St. Petersburg (FL) focusing on 'Creating a Culture of Vocations' at the parish level; includes a slide regarding adopting seminarians; could be a good resource for overall vocations promotion at the parish level:

<http://dosp.org/vocations/wp-content/uploads/sites/42/Promoting-Vocations-101.pdf>

Page from the Diocese of Oakland (CA) with a list of seminarians—their names are all linked to prayer cards designed specifically for each of them; these cards were distributed within the Diocese for use in its Adopt a Seminarian effort:

<http://www.oakdiocese.org/ministries-pastoral/worship/eucharistic-devotion/seminarian-prayer-cards>

Article from the National Catholic Register about the Adopt a Seminarian program's success in a large archdiocese:

[http://www.ncregister.com/site/article/adopt\\_a\\_seminarian](http://www.ncregister.com/site/article/adopt_a_seminarian)

PDF from the website of the Diocese of Brooklyn (NY) containing an outline of the parameters for Adopt a Seminarian programs within the diocese and a registration form used by parishes to sign up and create their own programs:

<http://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Adopt-a-Seminarian.pdf>

Adopt a Seminarian page from the website of the Catholic Women's Group of Charlotte (NC) with directions for school participation:

<https://www.charlottecatholicwomensgroup.org/apostolic-projects/adopt-a-seminarian/>

Adopt a Seminarian page from the website of the Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest, which contains ideas on how the laity can support seminarians:

<http://www.institute-christ-king.org/vocations/adopt-seminarian/>



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### Additional Resources



#### Additional Resources

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Webpage for 'Families Inviting Seminarists Home'—a program at St. Peter Church in Covington, Louisiana, wherein parishioners invite seminarists into their homes for meals, etc.:

<https://stpeterparish.com/news/adopt-a-seminarian-fish-program>

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Easy-to-follow, one-page PDF put together by the Diocese of Las Cruces (NM) – this outlines the diocese's Adopt a Priest program, what it entails, and even boasts a ready-made sign-up slip at the bottom of the page for interested families to cut out, fill in, and return in order to sign up.

<http://www.dioceseoflascruces.org/documents/2016/1/adopt.pdf>

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Page from Knights of Columbus site regarding the ways in which its councils, assemblies, and circles encourage seminarists with financial and moral support via a program similar to parish-based Adopt a Priest programs:

<http://www.kofc.org/en/members/programs/vocations/refund-support-vocations-program.html#/>

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Adopt a Seminarist page from the website of the Diocese of Oakland (CA) with activity suggestions:

<http://www.oakdiocese.org/ministries-pastoral/worship/eucharistic-devotion/adopt-a-seminarian>

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