

SEMINARIAN

What is a seminarian?

A candidate who is discerning and studying to be a priest of Jesus Christ.

Does everyone who enters the seminary become a priest?

No. The seminary provides the best environment for the candidate to discern his vocation to the priesthood. However, some candidates realise during their time in the seminary that they are not called to the priesthood and this is not a cause for shame.

Are there entry requirements?

As well as being a practising Catholic, the candidate needs to be in good health both physically and mentally; able to relate well to others and capable of undertaking tertiary studies.

How long does one live in the seminary?

For most seminarians, it requires seven years. In special circumstances, some candidates do a shorter course, some take longer.

What happens in the seminary?

There are four interwoven areas in the formation of the priesthood: human, spiritual, academic and pastoral. Here is a quick outline of the course:

1st year – preparatory year with emphasis on spiritual foundations.

2nd & 3rd year – emphasis on academic, in particular, philosophy and scriptures.

4th year – emphasis on pastoral; the seminarian lives and works with a parish priest.

5th, 6th & 7th year – emphasis on academic, in particular, theology.

Seminarians, often, will be ordained to the Diaconate at the end of the sixth year and to the Priesthood at the end of the seventh year.

For most seminarians, they will complete a Diploma in Philosophy, a Bachelor of Theology and a Master of Theological Studies by the end of their formation. They also will be trained in public speaking, singing, communication skills and counselling. For more details visit:

www.corpuschristiccollege.org.au

I'm interested, what should I do?

Talk to your parish priest or to the Director of Vocations, Fr Binh Le, at the Vocations Office on **03 9926 5733** or email info@melbournepriest.com

PRAYER FOR VOCATION

Almighty God,

You have made me to know you,
to love you and to serve you,
and thereby to find and to fulfil myself.

I know you are in all things,
and that every path can lead me to you.
But of them all, there is one especially
by which you want me to come to you.

Since I will do what you want of me,
I pray you, send your Holy Spirit to me:
into my mind,
to show me what you want of me;
into my heart,
to give me the determination to do it;
and to do it with all my love, with all my mind
and with all my strength right to the end.

Amen.

WEBSITES

www.melbournepriest.com

www.corpuschristiccollege.org.au

www.vatican.va

www.catholicozvocations.org.au

www.usccb.org/vocations

www.itistime.org.uk

www.calledtoday.com

ARE YOU CALLED TO BE A PRIEST?

Contact your local parish priest or:

Fr Binh Le

Director of Vocations

Cardinal Knox Centre

383 Albert St

East Melbourne VIC 3002

P 03 9926 5733

E info@melbournepriest.com



melbournepriest.com



MICHAEL GALLACHER



Michael Gallacher is a candidate who is discerning and studying to be a priest of Jesus Christ.

I took many steps over a five-year period before entering the seminary. The first I thought about a vocation to the priesthood came when I was in Year 11 at Whitefriars College in Donvale. One day at school, one of the Carmelite Brothers joked with me and a friend about recruiting us to the priesthood. When he said it there was a little flutter of excitement in my heart, which I tried to ignore.

At that stage, I was not going to Mass on Sundays. I believed in God, but only as a far-off person whom I didn't think about much. Besides which, I had my life very well planned. I had plans of being a teacher, perhaps a politician later on, and was pursuing a career as an AFL Umpire. So, I ignored the stir of excitement at the Carmelite's joke and I carried on.

Over the next few years, I couldn't stop thinking about the priesthood. Any time I was with priests, or someone even mentioned the word 'priest',

I would feel excited deep down inside. I kept trying to push it away, but it didn't work. So one day I just decided that I'd be open to a vocation to the priesthood. Once I stopped fighting the call, I felt a real sense of peace. I decided that if God was really calling me to the priesthood then that's what would make me happiest, so I might as well think about it. After plenty of prayer and speaking to good priests, I entered the seminary.

Our programme in the seminary is quite varied. We study philosophy, theology, history and Scripture at Catholic Theological College. We also have in-house sessions run by the resident priests looking at various aspects of life as a priest. The spiritual life of the seminary community includes praying the Divine Office, daily Mass, Exposition, the Rosary and retreats. Half a day a week is spent doing pastoral work, which includes time in schools, hospitals, nursing homes, universities, correction centres, parishes and various other ministries. We also have singing practice, drama and sport each week.

Despite a full programme, we still make time to have a bit of fun. It's handy living only a minute's walk from Lygon St – good coffee is a crucial part of seminary life! Living in close contact with so many others on a daily basis can be very challenging – but worth it! It is fantastic to live with men who share my enthusiasm and excitement about the Catholic Faith and the priesthood and I have built some strong friendships with my future brother priests.

With one day off a week, I have been able to see my family and friends on a regular basis. I've also been able to stay involved in my local footy club during the winter months, and athletics club

during the summer. I still even manage to see the Mighty Blues play a few times each year!

My simple goal while in the seminary is be formed into a holy, faithful priest. I look forward to the day when I will be able to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, hear Confessions and administer the other sacraments to God's people. With so many souls needing to be evangelised, life as a priest in Melbourne will never be boring!

The seminary certainly has its challenges, but every life does. And it's an exciting time to be in the Church. Numbers of priests worldwide have been steadily increasing over the last five years. Numbers in Australia are becoming stronger, but we still need more. So I would encourage any young man who has ever thought about the priesthood to carefully, prayerfully and courageously think about it – the Church needs you. And if the Lord is calling you to the priesthood, then surely that's where you'll be happiest.

Michael Gallacher
Senior Seminarian