



*Orthodox Church in America*  
**DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST**

1 September 2021  
Beginning of the Liturgical Year  
№. 116

**2021 SEMINARIAN APPEAL LETTER**

To all Rectors, Priests-in-Charge, Deacons, Monastics and Laity of the Midwest,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Some time ago, I asked our communities to begin praying for vocations in the Diocese. This is something that has become a priority for me to ensure that each of my parishes has well trained priests and deacons assigned to them for the continuation and stability of each community. By God's grace, we have begun to see the fruits of our labors and the men are being called to take on this holy vocation.

Currently, our diocese has eight seminarians enrolled at our seminaries. Deacon Anthony Saunders (3rd year), Reader Jacob Ponomarenko (3rd year), Joseph Whittaker (2nd year), Philip Dage (1st year), Jonathan York (1st year), and Tyler Zawatski (1st year) all are currently attending Saint Tikhon's Seminary. At Saint Vladimir's Seminary we have Andrew Prather (2nd year) and Jared Ries (1st year).

In part because of your faithful support, two graduates from the class of 2021 have been assigned to parishes in the Diocese. Priest Matthew McDonald has been assigned to Saint Michael the Archangel Church in Saint Louis, MO, and Priest Peter Simko has been assigned to Saint Innocent the Apostle to America Church in Olmsted Falls, OH.

The support we offer to our seminarians is a vital part to their ability to stay enrolled at these institutions. I ask you again to please continue to support our future clergy by prayer and attention to this annual appeal. Our goal through this initiative is to provide students and their families with a minimum scholarship of \$1,000 per semester to assist them in their studies. This humble amount assists the seminarian that is unable to seek employment while studying, but still has living expenses to attend to. It is not uncommon for students to have a family to care for, which is another reason why your donations are so valuable to this cause.

Support Our Seminarians Month

September 1, 2021

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Contributions can be made through your parish or can be submitted to the Diocese by sending a check payable to “Diocese of the Midwest.” Please note that the check is for “Support Our Seminarians.” One can also donate through our diocesan website, [DOMOCA.org](http://DOMOCA.org).

Your generosity and kindness is much appreciated. The blessing of the Lord be upon you.

With love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Paul". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

**+PAUL**

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest