

Where do the dollars go?

A series of articles on how our local communities benefit from donations to the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Seminarians

Young men from parishes around the diocese, studying to be priests at St. Charles Seminary near Philadelphia get significant help with tuition thanks to donations to the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Here are messages from five young men who are studying to be priests in the Diocese of Allentown, thanks in part to the Bishop's Annual Appeal:

Bishop's
Annual
Appeal
Faith • Hope • Charity

Joseph Ganser – Berks County St. Mary, Kutztown

“There’s no way I would be able to afford this on my own,” said Ganser, who is in his fifth year of seminary after earning bachelor’s degrees in biochemistry and Spanish at Muhlenberg College.

“We know that any amount someone gives to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal is a sacrifice. A vocation, even though it comes from God, still needs the support of the community.”

“I pray that people will think of their gift to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal as a sacrifice that not only benefits them, but also their children and their children’s children. Because, God willing, we will be priests for 50 years of our lives, and during that whole time we’ll be giving back to the community that supported us.”

Daniel Lisella – Carbon County St. Joseph, Summit Hill

“Thank you for all you do for us seminarians,” said Lisella, who entered the seminary last fall after graduating from Marian Catholic High School. “We pray for you every day, and we ask you to pray for us.”

“Because of your faith, and your gifts to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, we are able to grow in our faith to serve you.”

Kevin Lonergan – Schuylkill County St. Patrick, Pottsville

“To me, to be able to be in this place studying to be a priest for our diocese, gives me a tremendous sense of pride,” said Lonergan, who is in his fifth year of an eight-year program at St. Charles.



Lonergan played the baritone in the band and sang in the choir during his years at Nativity B.V.M. High School. It was there, he said, thanks in no small part to the priests he came to know, that “the ember of my thinking about the priesthood began to burn brighter.”

“I want to thank the people of the diocese for their generosity,” he said.

“Their donations to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal will pay dividends back to them many times over through the service they will receive from their future priests who are now studying at seminary.”

John Rother – Lehigh County • St. Elizabeth, Whitehall

“We get an extremely high-quality education here,” said Rother, who served on the Scholastic Scrimmage team at Allentown Central Catholic High School before entering the seminary two years ago.

“Priests have to be knowledgeable when counseling, when speaking from the pulpit, and on spiritual issues. We need to have credibility, and that comes from a good intellectual background obtained at seminary.”

“Support from the Bishop’s Annual Appeal is a great help, because it allows us to concentrate on our studies rather than worrying so much about financial issues,” he said. “It’s a great comfort to our families too. Thank you very much for your support.”

Mark Searles – Northampton County St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton

Searles entered the seminary three years ago, after earning a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from the University of Scranton. He grew up in Palmer Township, near Easton, and attended Notre Dame High School.

“We at the seminary feel very blessed to have the financial support that is available to us through the Bishop’s Annual Appeal,” he said. “We’re very thankful to everyone who finds it in their heart to give to the appeal.”