



# The Vine



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Official Newsletter of St Charles Seminary,

A Roman Catholic Seminary forming men for the Priesthood in WA.

## Latest News

- Seminarians return from leave to resume formation and studies.
- Archbishop Timothy Costelloe presides over the Mass of the Holy Spirit for the opening of the seminary year and joins the community for dinner.
- Fr Phillip Fleay presides over the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist with the Seminarian's Personal Affirmation and Commitment to the values and lifestyle expectations of the seminary for the year 2020.

“ As the new year begins, then, I want to encourage each one of you to enter with great courage and openness into the journey of discernment which lies ahead of you. As God progressively sets you free, if you allow him to do so, you will begin to see more clearly who God really is, who you really are, and what God is calling you to be and to do. This will make the year ahead one of growth in humanity, growth in holiness, growth in your journey of becoming the man God has created you to be.” ”

– Archbishop Timothy Costelloe



## Come and See!

No matter where you are in your discernment journey, you are always welcome to introduce yourself to us and join us for a meal. Whether you're someone who has only begun to have thoughts about becoming a Priest, or someone who has already made the first steps towards seminary life - come and see! We would be delighted to meet you. No strings attached!



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# “A Day in the Life of a Seminarian”

By Jason Yeap

## *Prayer*

Effective priests are first and foremost wholehearted disciples who are comfortable at the feet of the Lord. That is, our spiritual development is only as healthy as our relationship with Christ. Thus, prayer not only begins and ends the day but also subdivides it. The day begins with Morning Prayer and ends with Night Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours, which forms an integral part of one’s daily spiritual practises. Each day there is a celebration of Mass which provides an opportunity for seminarians to be involved at every aspect of the liturgical celebration. Seminarians are rostered to reflect on the readings, and are entrusted with preparations in the sacristy, musical accompaniment, and even the floral arrangements. An informal and sometimes brief breakfast follows before seminarians head off to university for the day.



**“** To many people, life in a Seminary may seem shrouded in mystery. Maybe part of the mystery is due to the modern struggle to understand why any individual might choose such a life of total consecration to God and service at the expense of what are the many goods and pleasures of life. Or maybe it is merely because seminarians are so few and far between that many people are not afforded any deep insight into their lives in the first place. In the hope of providing some insight, here’s a brief peek into an ordinary day at St Charles Seminary, Guildford. **”**



## *Study*

Academic formation for the Seminarian is broad and thorough. Studies in philosophy, history, scripture and theology are conducted at the University of Notre Dame, in Fremantle, three days a week and may occupy both the mornings and afternoons. Occasionally, other courses and workshops are provided at the seminary covering areas of psychology, Canon Law, professional standards and the work of various church agencies.



These studies are a core focus of seminary life and are spread across the entire duration of one's time at the Seminary. Yet, academic learning is not mere memorisation and rote learning, rather, developing the ways in which we think, analyse and articulate ourselves. The opportunity to develop one's mental and intellectual ability hugely complements one's ability to articulate the gospel of Christ to modern audiences who now, more than ever, are just as educated as the priest or if not more. The value of time dedicated to study in Seminary is often attested to by young priests who note that Parish ministry just doesn't allow the kind of space and freedom to learn and read as broadly and as

deeply as in Seminary.

### **Community**

After returning from university, seminarians enter a period of silence and meditation in the chapel. Silence is foundational to the discernment necessary for seminarians and, while after a long day, these can be moments where fatigue sets, they are also indispensable moments where one's experiences and needs can be presented anew to God. Evening Prayer ends this period of silence and dinner is then shared in the dining hall.

Common mealtimes are often an interesting exchange of anecdotes, experiences and opinions on current happenings. It's not always noisy but rarely is there awkward silence. This is an important time to build fraternity among priests, formators and seminarians. As dinner ends, all welcome the last part of the day where all can retire back to their rooms.

### **Recreation**

The rest of the evening affords some private time which can be spent attending to the rest of life's needs – whether it's further study, making phone-calls to family or friends, doing some exercise, or enjoying a good book (or movie). Night prayer is normally said in private, and marks the end of the day, providing a final point of reflection and recommitment to the day ahead. Finally, lights begin to go off around 9.30pm however, towards the busy end of semester one may observe the occasional light going off later!

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*In presenting this overview of life in the seminary, I don't intend to diminish its charm. Yet, in a real sense, only by living at the seminary does one tangibly experience the joys, sorrows and grace as part of a community of men pursuing a life of virtue and discerning God's call, all-the-while building from an honest understanding of who we are.*

*The life and rhythm of Seminary provides the time, space and support which allow for this growth and discernment. It is a place through which men realise their vocation towards the priesthood or otherwise, yet nonetheless grow in virtue through the encouragement of formators and friends, and a personal commitment to discerning the will of God.*

## Ten Things to Know About Discerning A Vocation

*An extract from an article by Fr. Christian Raab, O.S.B.*

### 1. God calls

Vocation comes from the Latin word, vocare, “to call.” It is a calling, a calling from God, who made us, loves us, and has a plan for us. Discernment, then, is different from simply making a decision about a career path or lifestyle. Discernment starts in faith, where we acknowledge God as the source of vocation, involve God in the decision-making process through prayer, and actively listen for God’s will.

### 2. Vocation is a two-way gift

In John’s gospel Christ says: “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

But what will make us really happy? The Second Vatican Council teaches that it is through self-giving that we are fulfilled as human beings. So, vocation is not only something given to us, something we receive, it is also something we freely give to God and others.

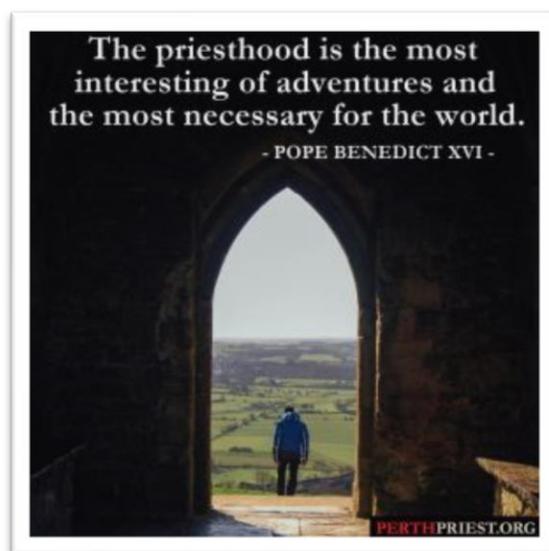
### 3. God preserves our freedom

Because vocation is something we give to God, it is important that we have the freedom to make this offering. God gives us real choices. We have the freedom to marry or enter religious life or remain single.

Furthermore, as long as we are not choosing something evil, God respects the choices we make. We must not believe, as so many in discernment do, that God will reject us if we make the “wrong” choice. On the one hand God really does call us to vocations. On the other God respects our freedom and does not abandon us.

### 4. Know thyself

God, who will sanctify us through our vocation, has already endowed us with a certain nature. Ordinarily the grace of our vocation will build upon this nature. An awareness of our personal gifts and weaknesses can help us considerably in gaining a sense of which vocations are possible for us and which are probably not wise paths for us to take.



*[Used with permission. For the complete article visit [www.vocationnetwork.org](http://www.vocationnetwork.org)]*



## Is God Calling Me?

The Rector and Seminarians of St. Charles Seminary would like to invite all those discerning the vocation to Priesthood to join us at Evening Prayer for vocations on Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March from 4:00pm – 5:00pm.

If you are a young man discerning a call to the Priesthood, we also encourage you to visit the St. Charles Seminary Website for more information and resources:

[www.stcharlesseminary.org.au](http://www.stcharlesseminary.org.au)

Please do keep in your prayers the seminarians and staff of St. Charles'.