

J.M.J.  
Fr. Patrick

**On the other side of this page is Bishop Ricken's message for the annual seminarian collection.** My guess is that this collection happens at this time of the year because of the feast day of St. John Mary Vianney which was celebrated this past Wednesday, he being the patron saint of **all priests.** **Next week's bulletin will have a seminarian profile and the offertory envelope.** We will also have our seminarian from Holy Trinity, Edward Looney, to speak at all the Masses.

The aspect of the **priestly life which often causes debate is celibacy.** It's safe to say that a majority of Catholics are not so sure why the Church continues to require priests to make the promise of celibacy. It should be noted that celibacy is a discipline which the Church could change. It is an unlikely thing however. Recent teachings from John Paul II and Benedict XVI have emphasized the value of celibacy for priest, church, and culture.

The promise of celibacy involves forsaking a family and in order to do so a **man has to view this as a sacrifice for a greater good.** I've been surprised that often in conversation with people about the priesthood they dismiss the whole idea of celibacy while giving no attention to the sign of sacrifice. This is really the only way to understand celibacy. Like all priests, I had to discern the call to celibacy as part of my call to priesthood. This is obviously a very big thing to decide. And I wish for people, rather than having a **knee-jerk reaction against the Church's** teaching on celibacy, to consider that their priest prayed and continues to pray for the graces to make this life-long sacrifice. I fear that sometimes people think we are forced into celibacy, forced into grudgingly accepting it if we want to be priests for the **Church.** **If that's the way a man is ordained then there's no sacrifice at all.**

In addition to making an offering for the education of our seminarians, please keep them in your prayers so they can discern the whole call to priesthood, or as Bishop Ricken has described~

the call to *epic priesthood.*