



A special grant was created from donations given at the closing Mass of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. This gift of nearly \$79,000 will fund scholarships for 16 seminarians selected by their bishops in mission dioceses and eparchies. Four of these Catholic Home Missions Eucharistic Seminararians will be highlighted in each quarterly issue of *Neighbors* as part of the continuing National Eucharistic Revival efforts in 2025.



Benjamin Seago Diocese of Amarillo

"I was born in Bryan, Texas, to Joe Seago, who works as a civil engineer, and Karen Seago, who works part-time for Texas A&M University. My siblings are Nathan, Samuel, and Molly. We attended St. Joseph Catholic School in Bryan, where I developed a love for music. I joined the band, playing French horn. While I was active in my faith, leading music groups and helping on retreats, I did not feel a call to the priesthood, though many people asked if I'd considered it, including my friends, my grandparents, and other religious leaders.

"When I moved to college to study music, I eventually served as a *Totus Tuus* missionary, where I received formation from Fr. Shane Wieck and worked on a team to evangelize and catechize the youth of the Diocese of Amarillo. Experiencing spiritual sonship under Fr. Shane and the enthusiasm of many priests that summer prompted me to consider the priesthood. Fr. Shane, Fr. Taylor Elzner, and Fr. Jim Schmidtmeyer helped me navigate the call through talks, books, movies, and guidance in prayer."



Elias Hazkial Maronite Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, Los Angeles

"I am Elias Hazkial, and I was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan. I am first-generation Lebanese American, my parents having immigrated to the United States in 1970. I earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, then a *juris doctorate* focused on intellectual property law. But my most treasured degree is my master of divinity from The Catholic University of America. I am currently pursuing a JCL (licentiate of canon law) in the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, Italy. The first person to suggest I have a vocation was a permanent deacon (Deacon William), when I was 30 years old. Five years after that encounter, I wondered if God was indeed calling me to the ministerial priesthood. My friend from childhood, who is a beloved priest himself, helped me to explore and discern. Hanging around the church with my friend, Fr. Tony, enabled God's grace to work deeper on me. I entered seminary at 37. At the Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, I witnessed how captivating the Real Presence of Jesus Christ actually is. When the Blessed Sacrament entered the football stadium with more than 50,000 people in attendance, everyone was completely silent in awe and reverence. Also, when the Blessed Sacrament passed down the street during the procession, I overheard a local woman on her phone say, 'I don't know what is going on downtown, but there is some sort of parade here. And it is beautiful. And I don't want to leave.' That is testament of the captivation of Our Lord, the same way the Apostles must have been captivated when they first met him."



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Salvador Paralez Diocese of Lubbock

“My name is Salvador Peralez, and I am a seminararian for the Diocese of Lubbock. I grew up in Idalou, Texas, ten minutes northeast of Lubbock. I am the oldest of two children in my family. I graduated from Idalou High School in May of 2021 and am pursuing my bachelor’s degree from the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio. My expected graduation date is the fall of 2025.

“When I was growing up in my home parish of St. Philip Benizi, many parishioners would come to me and tell me that I would make a great priest. It wasn’t only them but my pastor as well—he gave me my first breviary so that I could start to pray the Liturgy of the Hours in high school. I have always felt a draw to the priesthood, and it wasn’t only my parish that helped; but my late aunt also encouraged and helped foster my vocation. She taught me many things about our faith and how to love not only God but his people as well. I even still to this day pray the prayer that we prayed together for my vocation, the Divine Mercy Chaplet.”



Ricky Molsbee Diocese of Biloxi

“I grew up in Long Beach, Mississippi. I graduated from Long Beach High School in 2002. I attended the University of Southern Mississippi from 2002 to 2007 but did not finish my bachelor’s degree. Recently in 2023-2024 I finished prerequisites before attending Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans in fall 2024.

“I was raised by a single mother and was also extremely fortunate to have a grandfather and grandmother who took a significant role in raising me as well. I still enjoy time with my mother, sister, and my nephew.

“My parish and the Diocese of Biloxi at large were instrumental in my journey to discernment for the priesthood. There was not one person who had the biggest influence on me, but it was through the community of the faithful that I heard God talking. When I heard the call, I talked with my parish priest, Fr. Michael Austin, and Bishop [Louis] Kihneman. I also had great support from my vocation director, Fr. Braxton Necaie, and my spiritual director, Fr. Michael O’Connor. All these men had a significant impact on me and my journey. I first had an overwhelming calling sometime in January of 2022.

“I attended the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis, where I felt an overflowing of the Holy Spirit at three of the masses at the Congress. I felt awe at the sheer size and the determination from all the faithful that attended the event. The aspect of mission that was put together also struck a chord, because I was privileged enough to have been on our Diocesan Eucharistic Council. For a year and half, we planned for the pilgrimage to come through our diocese. With the creation of a Eucharistic Evangelism Team, I was able to see the fruits of the kindling of the Holy Spirit, parish by parish, with the promotion of Eucharistic Adoration.”