



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
**DIOCESE  
OF CHARLESTON**

OFFICE OF MEDIA RELATIONS

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston celebrates a significant increase in priests and religious vocations during National Vocation Awareness Week**

(CHARLESTON, SC) – Everyone has a particular calling in life. The Catholic Church refers to this call as a vocation – a gift from God that guides one’s journey through life.

As the Church celebrates National Vocation Awareness Week Nov. 6 - 12, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston is highlighting the increase in religious vocations around our state and parish communities. Presently, there are 16 men in formation to become priests in the Diocese of Charleston.

Although there is a statistical decrease in the number of priests and religious in the United States at large due to an aging population, there has been a steady increase in vocations in South Carolina in recent years. The Diocese of Charleston has experienced a 55% increase in men studying for the priesthood in South Carolina.

“We have noticed that parishes that focus on truth, beauty, and goodness in their liturgies, preaching, and buildings see the greatest vocational response,” stated Father Rhett Williams, director of vocations for the Diocese of Charleston. “Parishes that focus on the transcendentals and a special devotion to the Eucharist and saints give our youth the tools to discern a vocation.”

“Many are called to the priesthood and religious life, but in our age, few know how to listen, and even fewer are supported when they do,” stated Williams. The diocese encourages families to be more open to and intentional with their children’s vocations. This includes listening to youth and empowering them to pursue their individual call.

“Support vocations in your home and community. It is time to build up the future of our Church,” stated the Most Reverend Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS, Bishop of Charleston.

“We have been blessed with many vocations in our diocese, but we must continue to support and encourage young men and women to discern their unique call to holiness,” stated Fabre-Jeune. “In today’s world, we need more strong and faithful people to lead our Church.”

Those interested in learning more about a vocation to the priesthood or religious life can learn more at [www.charlestondiocese.org/vocations](http://www.charlestondiocese.org/vocations).

#### About the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston

Founded in 1820, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston is comprised of 114 parishes and missions, 32 Catholic schools, and 350,000 people. It encompasses the state of South Carolina.

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