

The Student Press



Savonarola Theological Seminary of the Polish National Catholic Church

January/February 1976

Seminary Dean Retires

I have fought a good fight...I have finished my course...I have kept the faith. (2 Tim. 4:7)

Seminarians are losing a great teacher and leader with the retirement of the Very Rev. Stanley C. Shuman, Savonarola Theological Seminary's dean.

Many persons by now have read or heard that Father Shuman has resigned his 15-year post as Seminary dean and his 22-year pastorate of St. Mary's PNC Parish, Duryea.

What many do not know, however, is that side of Father Shuman which only the seminarians can tell.

The students of Savonarola, many who have since become priests, have looked upon Father Shuman as a pillar of the Polish National Catholic Church.

A seminarian has only to study any facet of church history to find their beloved dean's name as a worker in the growth of the PNC Church.

While Father Shuman's accomplishments were great, his demeanor was always one of true Christian humility.

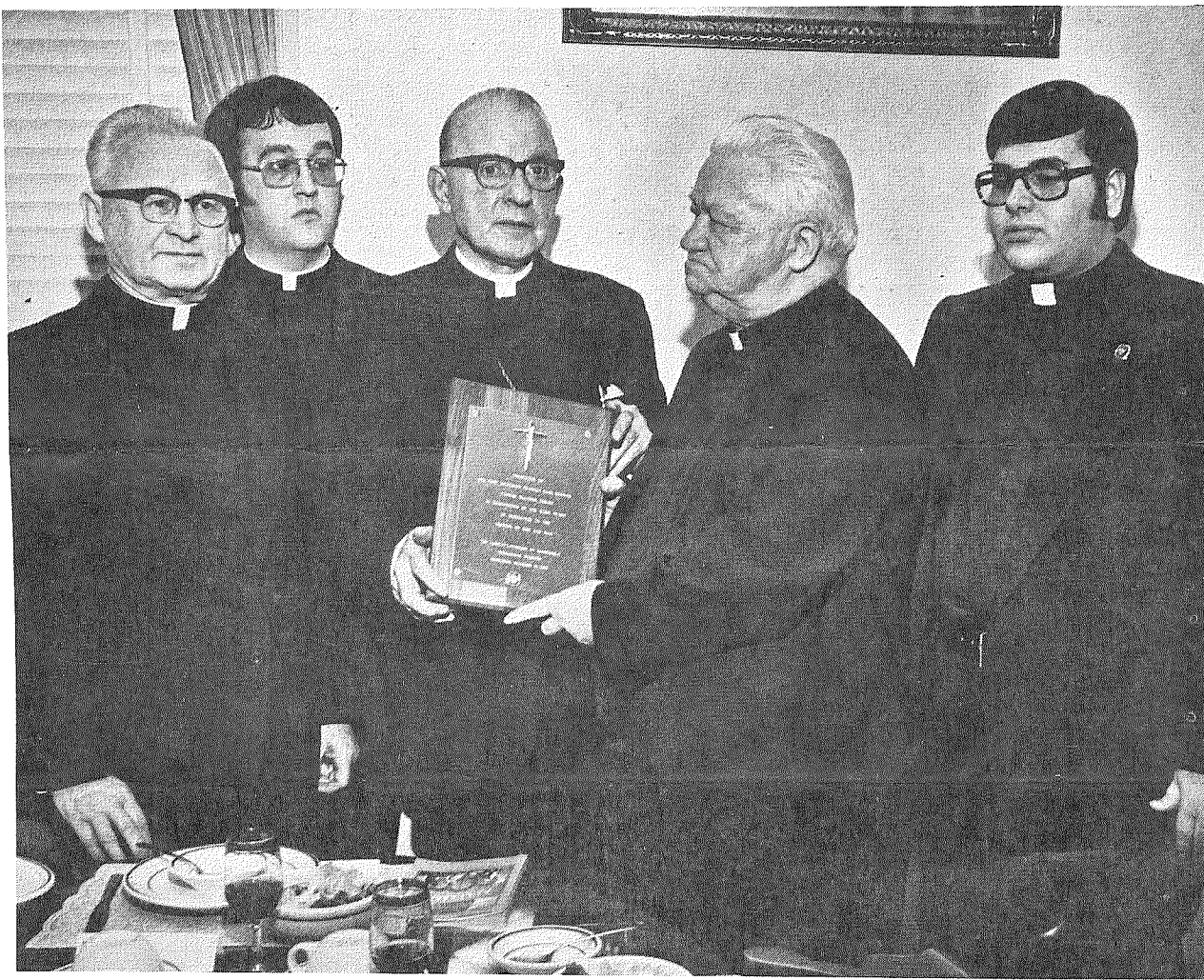
Students looked to him as a father, not a demagogue, because everyone involved with him always was the recipient of his help and knowledge, two things he gave freely.

Father Shuman always made reference to God's love and charity and instructed seminarians that they too must display these qualities to their fellowmen.

He taught numerous courses including Homiletics, English and Church History, topics which he knew well if not first-hand.

Although his loss will be great to those who knew him, Father Shuman certainly deserves his retirement. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Francis Hodur in 1932 and has kept a busy schedule in Christ's vineyard ever since.

While his priestly duties have ended from an administrative point of view, it is certain he will never stop teaching or venerating God's great wisdom which he has expounded for so many years.



DEAN RETIRES - Very Rev. Stanley C. Shuman, retiring dean of Savonarola Theological Seminary of the Polish National Catholic Church, was honored Tuesday at a testimonial hosted by seminarians and faculty members. Father Shuman also is retiring as pastor of St. Mary's PNC Church, Duryea. Principals, from left: Rev. B.S. Danis, seminary vice rector; Cleric Joseph Lewandowski, chairman; PNC Prime Bishop Thaddeus Zielinski presenting Father Shuman with a plaque from the seminarians; Cleric Joseph Palumbo, cochairman.

Your Comments Are Welcome

In the very first issue of The Student Press the introductory article set our goals at producing a closer tie between Pastor, Parish, and Seminary. This is now our fourth issue and we're happy to say we feel our goals are being met. However, in an effort to improve our publication and better serve our readers, we would like to know, "What do you think?" We would like to hear from those of you who read The Student Press. Just what impressed you the most, or the least? What kind of articles would you like to see in this type of publication?

The student body of Savonarola would like to make this publication a success within the Polish National Catholic Church. As in any school, students graduate as time goes on. One job we have is the training of new students to edit The Student Press. In this area we need your advice. Is there any topic not covered in our publication that you would like to see? Perhaps you would like to learn more about the curriculum at Savonarola Theological Seminary?

We are always open and ready for suggestions from our readers. We sincerely hope your interest in the seminary of our church will continue and that some of you will take the time to send us your comments.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

*from all of us...
to all of you!*

An Editorial

HEED THE CRY!

Because this is not just an ordinary school, the students here find themselves constantly preparing for the Lord. This Advent Season may better be called a "strengthening of preparation" in priestly life. The vocation of priesthood is by no means an easy life and this is one of the first lessons a young seminarian will learn. It is one of sacrifice, hard work, little or no reward, and preparation. Again St. John's Gospel tells us to "prepare a way for the Lord..." and this is a most difficult task, especially in today's often confused society. This task takes man-power and as in any vocation, there is a shortage. As any parishoner can attest - the parish pastor's job is one of leadership.

A pastor must be a leader not only in his parish but in the community as well. Why? Because today's society is one full of troubles, poverty, distrust, and apathy. What is needed to get out of this predicament? Good leadership is the answer.

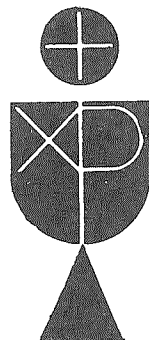
What does it take to be one of God's leaders of men? Again we come to the key word, "preparation." The only place where one may attain this preparation is through the seminary educational process and a well-rounded spiritual life. We must never lose sight of the fact the priesthood is and must be a spiritual life one of Holiness. The following is an excerpt from a nationally-circulated Christian newspaper, in an article entitled, "The Vanishing Shepherds".

The problem of the Priesthood today is we need saintly priests." Unless our bishops and priests respond with a true, exalted personal holiness, then the Church cannot be renewed and the Christian civilization is lost."

Someone is still shouting in the desert, "prepare a way for the Lord." If you're a young man who has realized the many problems that our world is faced with and would like to work for our Lord to lead our people a better way, then listen for that shout. Good Shepherds are vanishing but we're preparing ourselves for the vocation of the priesthood in our church. Join us if you will.

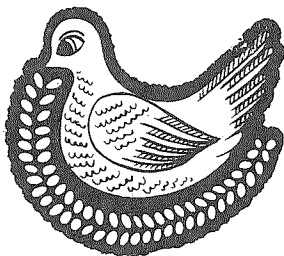
"Someone is shouting in the desert, prepare a way for the Lord..." According to the Gospels, this is just what John the Baptist did and the students at Savonarola now follow these same instructions. Just like Christians everywhere, we are now preparing for the coming of Christ.

The account of our Lord's birth is given fully in the Gospel of St. Luke but equally important are the prophecies of the Old Testament, especially those found in Isaiah. Many of these readings are now used during the morning and evening prayers at the Seminary. "He will teach us His ways and we will walk in his paths...", "For to us a child is born, and to us a son is given..." These and many more passages from Scripture have now changed the mood of the seminary students. "Preparation" is the key word.



Peace

It's wonderful! Let's work for more of it. Lots more. This year.



May the happiness
of the holidays remain
in our hearts through all
the New Year ... to
brighten our lives with
true comfort and joy.

NOTICE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Every subscriber to the Student Press is guaranteed four issues per year including a summer edition. Those who subscribed in mid year will nonetheless receive the same amount of publications, with their subscriptions extending into 1976.

Some persons and parishes have made very generous contributions. The Student Press Staff has responded by including extra issues in each mailing. For those thinking of renewing their subscriptions, we appreciate your continued support. We ask you, however, to make a donation of at least \$5 or more, so we may continue to print our newsletter professionally -- an expensive undertaking.

If you know of a young man or someone else interested in the seminary, you might consider giving that person a gift subscription of the Student Press for Christmas. They will be constantly reminded of your thoughtfulness through the new year as they receive our editions. We also will advise them by letter you have taken out a subscription in their name. Your gift also represents a valuable way to support the Student Press and seminary.

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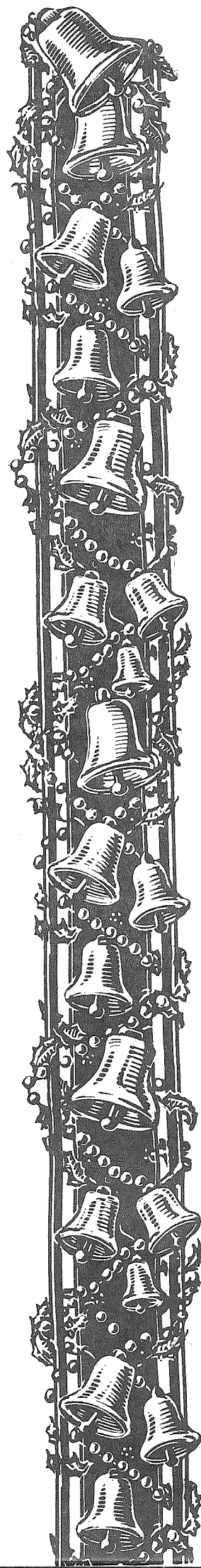
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REMEMBER THE POOR SHEPHERDS



Sunday, Dec. 28, is the Feast of the Poor Shepherds. It is a holy day unique to the Polish National Catholic Church-- the only Christian denomination which pays special homage to that band of shepherds who graciously venerated the Christ Child and bestowed their humble but unselfish gifts upon him.

During this celebration we also are reminded of the shepherds' faithfulness to their duties in tending their sheep. In modern days we emulate their fine example by making donations to the Church and seminary.

Since our last issue many good-hearted shepherds have shown their concern for the welfare of our seminary. For instance, two ciboria were donated to the new chapel by Very Rev. Stanley Shuman of Duryea, Pa. and Rev. Thaddeus Peplowski of Houtzdale, Pa. A few

months back the Clergy Conference of the Central Diocese donated books on Poland's history, people and culture to our library. In the same manner, we gratefully acknowledge receiving twenty dozen pierogi from Mr. and Mrs. Henry Pasternak of McKeesport, Pa.

As we read in Paul's letter to the Romans (The epistle for the First Sunday of Advent) "...the day is at hand. Let us therefore, cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light.

In this season of Advent as we prepare for the Coming of Christ and the approaching Feast of the Poor Shepherds, what better way to prepare than to consider and reflect upon the needs of the seminary of our Church. Yes, the time is at hand. Therefore, consider the Savonarola Theological Seminary now and throughout the whole year.

Feast of the Poor Shepherds

Seminary Enrollment

The Savonarola Seminary has maintained its enrollment, although one of its students has been assigned to a parish. Father Wojciech Bazarnik, who left the seminary October 30, has been sent to St. Thomas's Parish in Wallingford, Conn. The following day a Scrantonian, Joseph Seliga, entered the seminary and brought the number of students again to five.

Father Bazarnik, who was ordained by Bishop Julian Pekala in 1958, received his theological training in a Benedictine monastery in Opactwo. While serving our church in Poland he organized the parish in Boleslaw. He came to Savonarola Seminary this year.

Joseph Seliga has been active in work with children at Camp St. Andrew in McKhannock, Pennsylvania, planting trees and teaching agriculture. He studied horticulture at North Vocational Technical School and attended a related course at Lackawanna Jr. College. He applied this knowledge in teaching retarded children at Scranton's Nay Aug Greenhouse.



Boże Narodzenie w Polsce

W Polsce długa i szeroka zwyczaj obchodzenia "Gwiazdki" jest różny w różnych regionach kraju. Inaczej świętuje się w Wielkopolsce, inaczej w Małopolsce, inaczej na Mazurach a inaczej w Śląsku. Każdy nawet Powiat ma swoje zwyczaje, ale jedno jest wspólne wszystkim; Boże Narodzenie obchodzi się przeżywa bardzo radośnie. W całej Polsce dzień 24-go grudnia jest dniem świątecznym. Wszyscy czekają na kolację wigilijną. Obowiązkowo musi być "gwieździna" (świerk lub sosna) lub przynajmniej gałązki świerkowe w wazonie. Na stole powinna być udekorowana świecami, papierowymi bombkami, cukierkami, ciastkami, orzechami, srebrnymi gwiazdkami, świeczkami i innymi drobiazgami.

Wraz z ukazaniem się pierwszej gwiazdki na niebie powinno się zacząć świąteczną kolację. Domownicy, ubrani w najlepsze i zebrani przy stole od-

mawiają modlitwę pod przewodnictwem głowy rodziny (zwykle najstarsza osoba przy stole). Tradycja każe aby jedno miejsce przy stole pozostało puste.

Oplátky to rzecz najważniejsza. Po skończonej modlitwie wszyscy łamią się opłatkiem życząc sobie nawzajem pomyślności, i błogosławieństwa Bożego w nadchodzącym nowym roku.

Po tej ceremonii domownicy i goście zasiadają do kolacji. Ilość potraw zależy od zamożności domu. Po kolacji wszyscy

idą pod choinkę i następuje otwieranie prezentów.

O północy wszyscy idą na "Pasterkę" ale do tego czasu domownicy przy zapalanej choince śpiewają kolędy. Wieczór wigilijny jest uroczystością ściśle rodzinną, więc odwiedziny znajomych zaczynają się następnego dnia.

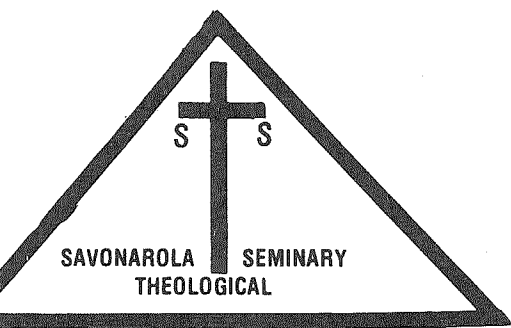
Polska jest krajem o pięknych i głębokich tradycjach, ale niestety z postępem cywilizacji te piękne zwyczaje powoli zanikają.

Coraz mniej rozumiemy z symboliki tych zwyczajów a zwyczaj nie podbudowany treścią staje się obcy, niezrozumiały i w końcu niepotrzebny.

Niech nadchodzące Święta będą nową okazją do przypomnienia tych pięknych i głębokich w treść zwyczajów naszych ojców i matek.

Christmas Greetings To Our Subscribers —The STS Staff

Steps to the



of the Polish National Catholic Church

Priesthood

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(The following article is the second in a series by Cleric Joseph Palumbo which deals with holy orders conferred on seminarians as they progress toward their eventual goal of ordination. Cleric Palumbo explores the theological and historical implications of these ancient rites and how they apply to the Polish National Catholic Church.)

The Rite of Tonsure was an old custom practiced by the pagans to signify submission to a certain deity. The early Christian Church adopted this pagan rite of cutting hair to symbolize total submission and a desire to serve the one eternal and true God. As time went on, ancient Christian clergy acquired the habit of wearing a crown of hair around their shaven heads. This is still practiced in some religious orders.

It is difficult to ascertain when a special ceremony for the Rite of Tonsure was introduced. It appears however, that centuries ago it was given at the reception of the first order and not before as is now the custom. The Galesian Sacramentary of the eighth century mentions a special ceremony for bestowal of this rite. The ceremonies consisted of the prayers of the Bishop and the cutting of the hair of the young cleric. Sometime later the institution with the surplice by the Bishop was added.

The ceremony, as it appears in the Ritual of the Polish National Catholic Church, is a compilation of many centuries of ancient tradition which serve to remind the young cleric of his responsibilities before his God, his Church and himself. In the P.N.C.C. the ceremony of tonsure signifies initiation into the clerical state and gives the young cleric the privilege of receiving the Minor Orders which lead to the Priesthood. Thus, Tonsure is the first official step on the way to ordination.

The aspirant to Holy Orders is admonished by the Bishop to give up worldly desires and is charged to consecrate himself to the service of the Almighty. "May the Lord clothe you as a new man, who was created in the image of God, in justice and true sanctity," the service reads.

The first of the Minor Orders is that of Porter or Porter. In the early Church, the Porter had the task of guarding the entrance of the Church from those who were not permitted or authorized to enter. The first mention we have of them being considered as part of the clergy is in the surviving documents from the third Council of Carthage in 397. The functions of the Porter progressed very rapidly as the Church grew numerically. From the simple task of doorkeeper, the Porter's duties grew to include counting the number of faithful present for liturgical services, ringing the bells to signify when liturgical services would begin, and preparing the book of Gospels for the Deacon who was to preach.

The next progression in the clerical state is that of Lector. Of all the Minor Orders the Lectorate seems to be the oldest. It was the function of the Lector to read the writings of the prophets and

Apostles to the Bishop before his exhortation to the faithful. Many documents of Christian antiquity indicate that the first Lectors of the Church were not specifically ordained but rather appointed or commissioned. From the writings of St. Cyprian we find early in the Church that Lectors were considered a part of the clergy and were connected in a special way with the Deacons. Cyprian himself speaks of his ordaining certain men as Lectors. This indicates that the order underwent a very quick and spontaneous evolution as the Church began to grow philosophically and theologically. As early as the fifth century the Church also gave the Lectors the task of leading certain liturgical chants. When the Subdeacon and Deacon were officially given the faculties to read the Lesson and Gospel respectively, the Order of Lector had lost much of its importance and was associated only with leading the chants. During times of persecution, however, the Lector was entrusted with the safe keeping of the holy books.

"Receive the power of Blessing, so that what you bless will be blessed." With these words said by the Bishop, the power to bless is given by the Holy Church to one of her sons. From the time of Christ and the Apostles blessings were used to strengthen the faith of those for whom the blessing was given. Due to the constant attacks both verbal and physical made by opponents of the early Church, coupled with the superstition this caused, the Western Rite of the Catholic Church referred to this office as Exorcist. Unfortunately the Order of Exorcist was used at the whims of unsaintly prelates to extort money from the faithful and even the clergy under their charge for the performance of unnecessary exorcisms and the driving out of unclean spirits. Many devout faithful of the Church were forced to consent to these bizarre rituals with the threat of excommunication from the Church if they refused. They were further instructed that unless they would consent to be cleansed from the so-called unclean spirits, "they would spend eternity in the flaming fires of hell with the Prince of the nether world, Satan himself."

In the early years of formation, Bishop Francis Hodur, the organizer of the P.N.C.C., looked back at the history of the Church and realized the many abuses that arose because of this order. As an integral part of his new ideology, Bishop Hodur always stressed the love of God and the holiness of all of His creation. Therefore, rather than exorcise, he stressed the positive aspect of "Blessing" or giving the sanction of the Almighty to His people and creation. Rather than viewing man and the world he resides in as something unholy and full of devils, Bishop

Hodur stressed the power of God's regenerating and saving act through the death and resurrection of His only Son, Jesus Christ. Thus exorcisms become unnecessary and even blasphemous in the newly-organized P.N.C. Church.

In the P.N.C.C., the Blessing is given the power and authority to approve, sanction and hallow any articles the faithful request to be blessed. This power is not to be taken lightly as the Bishop charges those to whom it is given. "Therefore perform this duty with authority and dignity; so that, when the faithful see your faith and piety, they will better understand that God created everything for the benefit of Man."

After ordination as a Blessing in the P.N.C.C., a man is ordained to the office of Acolyte. The word acolyte itself means assistant or follower depending on the context with which it is used. The order is first mentioned as a distinct ministry in a letter of St. Cornelius written in the third century. St. Cyprian is the first Christian author to enumerate their functions. He states that they acted as escorts and secretaries for the Bishops and carried the Reserved Sacrament to those whom the bishop would send them. He was also given the task of carrying Holy Oils blessed by the bishop. As the Order of the Diaconate assumed these duties the acolyte was soon only left to light the candles and prepare the cruets for Holy Mass. The ceremony of ordination to the Order of Acolyte in the Ritual of the P.N.C.C. stresses these latter functions of lighting the candles and taking care of the cruets. In the Order of Acolyte the Church stresses the role of the future priest as shining forth the Light of Christ in a world that is often full of darkness.

The Polish National Catholic Church has always strived to bring to its people that which is beneficial and in keeping with Holy Tradition and Sacred Scripture. It was pointed out recently by the Most Rev. Thaddeus F. Zielinski, Prime Bishop of the P.N.C.C., that at the last International Conference of Old Catholic Bishops held in Europe, the body of Prelates representing the Old Catholic Churches of the Utrecht Union decided to retain the Minor Orders even though in many instances their functions are fulfilled by laymen or altar boys. After much deliberation the Bishops felt while the Minor Orders themselves do not always fulfill a practical purpose, they should be retained for two reasons: First, because each Minor Order has certain duties and responsibilities connected with it. During the ceremonies the Bishop charges each Seminarian to perform his new tasks diligently. These responsibilities would discourage those who are seeking priestly ordination for dubious means. And secondly, because they illustrate for us the evolution that the Sacrament of Holy Orders has undergone since Christ ordained the Apostles as His first Priests and Bishops nearly two thousand years ago.

In spite of the fact the Roman Catholic Church has abandoned the Minor Orders in an effort to get their faithful to more actively assist and even in some cases to conduct liturgical services, the P.N.C.C. has chosen to follow the path of Ancient Catholic Tradition in emphasizing the Priesthood of all believers as our Lord Jesus Christ did when He clearly and unequivocally stated, "Many are called; but few are chosen."

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