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GRANTS TOTALING \$420,000 AWARDED TO ASSIST VOCATIONS  
Organization Assumes Student Debts for Those Making Vows of Poverty

The *Mater Ecclesiae* Fund for Vocations (MEFV) of Arlington, VA announced February 1, 2010 that it has awarded grants to four men and twelve women under its St. Joseph Student Debt Relief Grant Programs. The program exists to allow individuals to begin their formation for the priesthood or religious life by relieving them of their outstanding student debts.

St. Joseph grants were awarded to men and women aspiring to a variety of religious communities in the U.S. and abroad. They were:

- Sadora Ann Bloom of Radcliff, KY will journey to England to enter the Dominican Sisters of St. Joseph.
- Debra Marie Comins, a graduate of SUNY Geneseo will enter the Little Sisters of the Poor in Latham, NY.
- Kayla Cservek, of Baltimore, MD has been working with the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity and will enter their community in March.
- Anne Marie Gallagher of Eau Claire, WI is an aspirant with the Community of St. John in Princeville, IL.
- Kara Marie Hansen, who graduated from Western Carolina University in her hometown of Sylva, NC will enter the Monastery of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Joseph in Brooklyn, NY.
- Marshall Kinsey of Kentucky will enter the *Servi Jesu et Mariae* (Servants of Jesus and Mary) in Austria later this year.
- Karen Mahowald, a graduate of Catholic University of America, will enter the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in Nashville, TN.
- Br. Malachy Joseph Napier is a novice with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in Newark, NJ and will make his first profession of vows in March, 2010.

- Sr. M. Petra Nielsen, holding a Master's Degree from George Washington University, entered the Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration in 2008.
- Jennifer Prickel, a graduate of Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH will enter the Sisters of Reparation to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus in Steubenville.
- Stephanie Prost of Omaha, NE will enter the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary in May, 2010.
- Br. Kamil Rachwal, born in Wroclaw, Poland, is a novice with the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius in Chicago, IL.
- Dr. Leonie Riddick will emigrate from New Zealand to enter the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara, whose formation house is in Upper Marlboro, MD.
- Andrea Slivka, of Bowling Green, OH will enter the Carmelite Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Ada (Parnell), MI.
- Sr. Han Tran, originally from New Orleans, is a postulant with the Vietnamese Dominican Sisters in Houston, TX.
- Bradley Wagner, of Grand Prairie, TX will enter the St. Therese Province of the Discalced Carmelite Friars in Oklahoma City, OK.

The MEFV will make monthly payments on the sixteen grant recipients' total student debts of nearly \$420,000 throughout their years of formation, with a guarantee that the debts will be fully paid by the fifth anniversary of their final vows. If any of the recipients were to leave formation, the grant would be cancelled.

The MEFV is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, founded in 2006 to remove the serious obstacles that student loans present to individuals who seek to answer God's call to consecrate themselves in the priesthood or religious life.

Because of the vow of poverty, men and women entering religious life must be free of all debt. However, the high cost of a college education means that many young people must take student loans to attend college, and the difficulty of paying off these loans -- often tens of thousands of dollars -- can delay or in some cases prevent many qualified individuals from responding to their vocation to religious life.

For its 2010 application period, the MEFV received twenty-seven (27) applications, but was able to issue only sixteen grants, due to limited funds. "We wish we could have awarded grants to all our candidates. The Church needs these young men and women serving in the priesthood and religious life," said Corey Huber, president of the MEFV. "Unfortunately, there were not enough funds available for all."

Additional information can be obtained by visiting MEFV's website at <http://fundforvocations.org/>.

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