



Pontifical North American College
00120 Vatican City State, Europe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

32 SEMINARIANS RECEIVE MINISTRY OF LECTOR
ROME, 11 January 2026

On 11 January 2026, His Imminence, Cardinal Fabio Baggio, C.S., Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, conferred the Ministry of Lector, in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at the Pontifical North American College, Vatican City State, on the following students:

1. Carter Thomas Anderson	of the Diocese of Helena
2. Luis Araiza	of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St Peter
3. Shae Scott Bills	of the Diocese of Helena
4. Christopher John Braden	of the Diocese of Orange
5. Elijah Michael Buerkle	of the Diocese of Charlotte
6. Casey Matthew Burgess	of the Diocese of Manchester
7. Thomas Magnus Nelles Cain	of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis
8. Jordan Thomas Damewood	of the Archdiocese of Baltimore
9. Joseph Dominic Derico	of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston
10. Michael Augustine DesOrmeaux	of the Diocese of Lake Charles
11. Gianni Alexander DiTola	of the Diocese of Gary
12. Gabe William Fanning	of the Diocese of Rapid City
13. Dakota Matthew Gates	of the Diocese of St. Petersburg
14. Paul Alexander Guertin	of the Diocese of St. Cloud
15. Nicholas James Hays	of the Archdiocese of Baltimore
16. John Michael Imbimbo	of the Diocese of Bridgeport
17. Andrew Joseph Lehnen	of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis
18. Nathan James Lurette	of the Diocese of Shreveport
19. Joseph Francis Marra	of the Diocese of Providence
20. Max Thomas Megaffin	of the Diocese of Salina
21. Luke Henry Metzer	of the Archdiocese of Denver
22. Anthony Tien-Huy Nguyen	of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon
23. Salvatore Joseph Orosz	of the Diocese of Bridgeport
24. Nicholas Joseph Patin	of the Diocese of St. Augustine
25. Ryan David Pierce	of the Diocese of Gary
26. Ethan Tanner Rice	of the Diocese of Austin



Pontifical North American College 00120 Vatican City State, Europe

27. Michael Edwin Santos	of the Diocese of St. Petersburg
28. Brandon O'Neill Smith	of the Diocese of Beaumont
29. Michael Andrew Snyder	of the Diocese of Austin
30. Daniel John Spears	of the Diocese of Rochester
31. Timothy Michael Spjut	of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
32. Collin Samuel Thielen	of the Diocese of Salina

Addressing the new lectors in his homily, Cardinal Baggio encouraged the seminarians who were to be installed as Lectors them to proclaim the Word of God with faithfulness and joy. He went on to say, “The bishop places the Book of the Gospels in the hands of the newly ordained deacons, by saying, “Receive the Gospel of Christ whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach. So too, those who are installed to the ministry of Lector are to become heralds of God’s Word, believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.” Following the homily Cardinal Baggio placed the Holy Scriptures in the hands of each candidate and said, “Take this book of holy Scripture and be faithful in handing on the word of God, so that it may grow strong in the hearts of his people.”

The seminarians, currently in their first year of theological formation for the priesthood, will have three additional years of theological, spiritual, and pastoral formation before being ordained to the priesthood in their home dioceses.

The Pontifical North American College serves as the American seminary in Rome. Founded in 1859 by Blessed Pius IX, the College has formed over 5000 priests near the heart of the Church for service in dioceses around the United States, and Australia. The College strengthens the bonds between Rome and local Churches worldwide, and it allows its students a first-hand encounter of the Church’s rich religious and cultural heritage.

A gallery of photos from the Mass may be viewed at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/pnac/albums> in the coming days. News organizations may contact pnacd@pnac.org for photo permissions.

Rev. Anthony F. Ligato
Assistant Vice Rector, Director of Pastoral Formation,
Media & Institutional Relations,
Formation Advisor
Pontifical North American College
00120 Vatican City State, Europe
Email: aligato@pnac.org