

# Becket Hall Annual Report

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Becket enrollment for the 1976-77 academic year numbered 48 students—including 38 from the Rochester diocese, 5 from Syracuse, 2 from Burlington, Vermont, 1 from Albany, 1 from Brooklyn and 1 from Grand Rapids, Michigan.

### SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Becket Hall provides the opportunity for seminarians to grow spiritually, individually and as a community. The prime emphasis is on Christ-centered spiritual formation. There is a daily schedule of liturgy and prayers; other exercises include retreats, days of recollection, penance services, bible vigils and student homilies. Spiritual conferences are conducted and counsel is available from priests of the diocese, Basilian Fathers at the college and priests in residence — the latter including the rector, the spiritual director and one or two other clergy living at Becket.

All students engage in some form of apostolic activity, including participation in religious education in parishes, aiding inner-city parishes, or work with social agencies involving the poor, the elderly and youth.

### BECKET STUDENT AT FISHER

The Becket student is enrolled at St. John Fisher College and is entitled to participate, with rare

exception, in every phase of its curricula and activities. He is required as a seminarian to take 18 hours of philosophy and 12 hours of religious studies in order to qualify for admittance into a major seminary. He may take part in student government, in all athletics, clubs and social events which are not limited to couples, and in campus activities which do not involve "preliminary or real courtship" — no "one-to-one" dating. The association with female students is viewed as aiding his subsequent decision with respect to celibacy and enables him to see this issue in a very realistic way.

### FINANCE

Most college students are faced with financial problems, and Becket students are no exception. Currently, the tuition at John Fisher College is \$2750 and room and board at Becket is \$800. While it is a long standing policy of the Rochester diocese that "no one be deprived of studying for the priesthood because of financial difficulties," it is assumed that through parental support, financial aid programs and summer employment, the student will do his part to meet these expenses. To be of some assistance to students in need of income, Becket employs a number of them in part-time jobs necessary for the operation and maintenance of the facility. Furthermore, there is a small scholarship fund available.

### FUTURE

It is the considered opinion of the Board of Trustees and the administrators of Becket Hall that its ten years' experience has proved the validity of this new concept in seminary education.

To help assure its future, the Board has just completed revision of its by-laws to allow for expansion of the Board so that a larger representation of religious and laity might be involved.

Added encouragement is evidenced from current studies on vocation trends. There appears to be a possibility that the decline in priesthood candidates which has been occurring in the last few years may have bottomed out, and there are indications here and elsewhere that the graph line may be turning slightly upward. This much to be desired change may be aided by the fact that there is a growing determination in many dioceses throughout the nation to place much more emphasis on methods to influence interest in priest vocations.

It also is to be admitted, however, that in these times of financial stress there will be the continuing challenge to study ways in which Becket Hall income can be increased. Perhaps one of these steps will be a need to better publicize the existence of the Becket Hall Endowment Fund, with the hope of attracting additional contributions and bequests.

