



August 26, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am pleased to see that we are moving forward in our plans to encourage and foster vocations to the priesthood and religious life for our diocese. I am grateful to Fr. Cesar Martinez for accepting the full-time position as Vocation Director, a position that includes not only attracting and screening vocations but also formation work and working with seminarians as they progress through their years in seminary. This reassignment of duties will allow Sr. Wanda to commit more time to her duties as the Director of Deacon Formation and as the Vicar for Religious for the Diocese of Stockton.

Also, I would like to inform you that we have “resurrected” the St. John Vianney House as a house of formation. Located within the Newman House near the UOP campus, this house of formation will serve as a residence for our young men who are discerning a call to the seminary. As Fr. Cesar settles in at the house, he will share the residence with three young men who are in the process of discernment. Please keep these aspirants, Saul Perez, Brandon Salas and Osvaldo Zuñiga, in your prayers.

As we anticipate this transition, I want to thank Sister Wanda Billion who has faithfully served the Diocese of Stockton as Director of Vocations and Director of Seminarians for 18 years. During these years she has been a great support for our seminarians on their journey to the priesthood and diligently overseen the process of sending young men to the seminary. Sister Wanda has given her time and talent in support for her love of promoting vocations for our diocese. We are truly indebted to her. Let us keep Sister in our prayers as she continues her ministry as the Director of Deacon Formation and as the Vicar for Religious for the Diocese of Stockton.

As the Clergy, Religious, and Laity of the Diocese of Stockton, let us keep this renewed effort of promoting vocations in our prayers. I believe this is a graced time for us as a diocese. As we work together in this endeavor, let us ask Our Lady’s intercession that we will be blessed with holy vocations.

St. John Vianney, pray for us.

In the Peace of Christ,

Bishop Cotta

