

Seminarians must not be ‘St John Boscros by day but John Travoltas by night’



The vocations director of Southwark Diocese has established a Vocations Missions Team for would-be seminarians in an effort to support their discernment and prevent them from being “John Boscros by day and John Travoltas by night”.

Fr Stephen Langridge has invited eight men who are considering entering the seminary to participate in nine months of missionary work that will include evangelising people on the streets.

He said an integral part of the programme was to emphasise the need for Catholics to grow in virtue.

He said the sacraments could not “magically” transform a person on their own and growth in virtue had to come also from within, by young men choosing to embrace the good and rejecting the bad.

Fr Langridge added that men considering the seminary could not be “John Bosco by day but John Travolta by night” and therefore must resist temptations such as excessive drinking.

He said that beginning in September this year, the men would receive “intense spiritual formation so that they are rooted in the call to holiness and a personal relationship with Christ”. Among the members of the team are a 19-year-old from Kerala, a young man who has worked as a missionary in the Congo and another who has served as a soldier in Afghanistan.

On his blog Fr Langridge wrote: “I would ask your prayers please for a new project here at the Vocations Centre. Next year we will have eight young men living here forming our Vocations Mission Team. They will receive formation in the faith, in the spiritual life and in community living.”

He continued: “What will set them apart from other similar projects, however, is that they will also go out to evangelise in schools, parishes, universities and on the streets.”

Fr Langridge said he hoped that young people would take particular notice of other young men who are reaching out to evangelise them.

Fr Langridge said: “Pope Francis says it is not enough to open the door in welcome, we have to go out through that door in order to take Christ to others. The plan is for the experience of a year with our mission team to ensure that evangelisation becomes part of the DNA of our future priests.”

The boys will live and work together in Southwark Vocations Centre in Whitstable, Kent, for the full nine months.

Madelaine Teahan - Catholic Herald