

THE PAPAL FOUNDATION

PRESS RELEASE

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The Papal Foundation Awards \$800,000 in Scholarships to 106 Priests, Religious, Brothers, and Lay Faithful

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Saint John Paul II Scholarship Program, Saeman Scholars from disadvantaged countries will have the opportunity to study in Rome

The Papal Foundation, whose mission is to serve the Holy Father and the Roman Catholic Church through faith, energy and financial resources, has announced \$800,000 in scholarships for 106 Priests, Religious, Brothers, and Lay faithful from 44 disadvantaged countries, providing them the opportunity to study at 16 Pontifical Universities and Institutes in Rome.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the program has provided more than \$12 million in scholarships to over 1500 individuals, known as Saeman Scholars, to advance their education and prepare them to return to teach in their own countries. “Following the Lord’s command to ‘Go teach all nations,’ seminarians, clergy, religious men and women, and laity need an excellent education and a sound program of spiritual formation in order to secure the future of the Church around the world,” said Eustace Mita, President of The Papal Foundation Board of Trustees.

In 1998, Saint John Paul II envisioned providing scholarships for tuition, room and board to seminarians, priests, religious sisters and laity from disadvantaged countries, allowing them to study in Rome and then return to their dioceses to teach future Church leaders in a way that is faithful to the Magisterium. The program launched in 2000 thanks to the wonderful generosity of John and Carol Saeman of Denver, CO, who made an initial \$5 million gift that was matched by The Papal Foundation.

“You helped me acquire academic expertise that has been an invaluable addition to my Priesthood and service to God’s people,” said Rev. Dr. Boniface Mungai, who graduated from Holy Cross University in Rome and is currently Chaplain at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and a lecturer on Church History in the History Department. “God bless you and the foundation!”

This year’s Saeman Scholars will begin their studies with a virtual orientation October 3, preparing to earn Doctorate, Licentiate, and Bachelor degrees in various Church disciplines including but not limited to Theology, Canon Law, Biblical Studies and Sacred Scripture, among others. Applications for the Saint John Paul II Scholarship Program are received by the Vatican Secretariat of State. Scholars sponsored by their home dioceses and demonstrating need are then recommended to Carol and John Saeman and The Papal Foundation for final approval.

“The idea for the scholarship program may have come from a chapter right out of JP II’s own life,” continued Mita. “After his ordination, and shortly before the communists took control of Poland, he was sent to Rome as a student priest to obtain an advanced degree. The opportunity he was given has shaped our Church, and his faith-filled response was to provide that opportunity to future generations.”

For more information about The Papal Foundation, its grants and scholarships, visit thepapalfoundation.org.

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