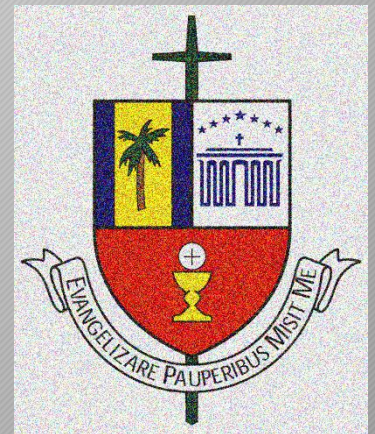


Perseverance in Ministry

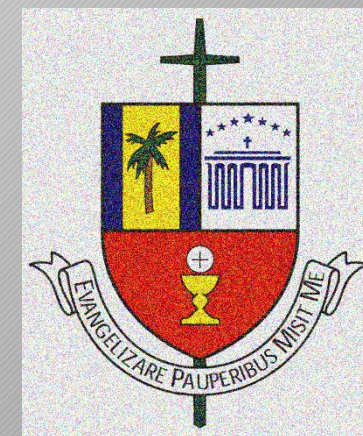
20 March 2019

Rector's Conference
Msgr. David L. Toups



“A sower went out to sow”

Matthew 13:1-23



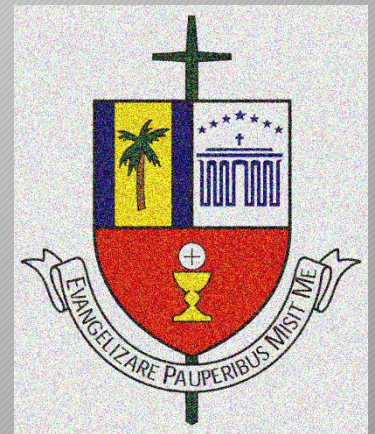
Perseverance in Ministry

Definition of perseverance: Persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success; continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition.

“His perseverance with the technique illustrates his single-mindedness”

Synonyms:

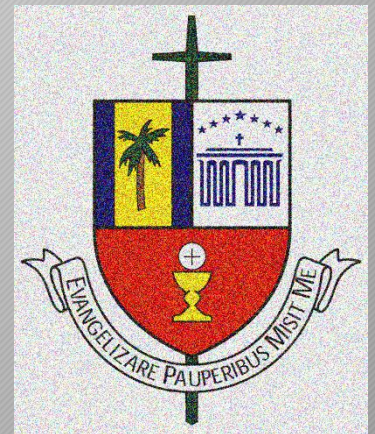
persistence, tenacity, determination, resolve, resolution, resoluteness, staying power, purposefulness, firmness of purpose



Perseverance in Ministry

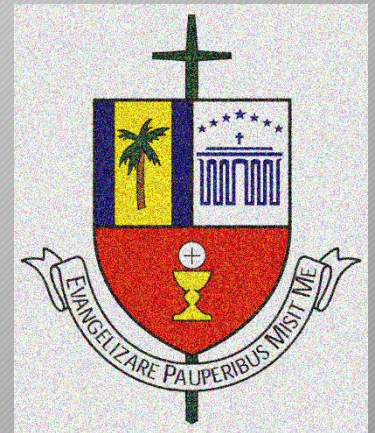
The word for perseverance in the New Testament Greek, *hypomone*, comes from the word *hupo* meaning under, and *meno* meaning to abide or remain. So, the literal definition of perseverance is remaining under.

“Remain in me!” John 15:4



Perseverance in Ministry

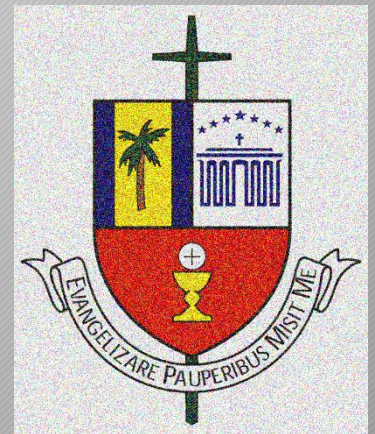
- *Pope Francis recently spoke of “blessed persistence” (12 December 2018)*
 - In Prayer
 - In Life
 - In Vocation



Perseverance in Ministry

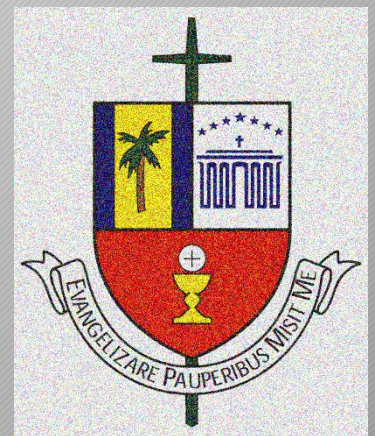
“In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world.”

- John 16:33



Perseverance in Ministry

- Difficulties indeed will come:
 - Rectory situations, staff problems, complaining parishioners, temptations arise, lack of the fraternal support that you experienced in the seminary, etc.
 - Always remember why you are doing it. Maturity and rootedness in your vocation is key.
 - Be prepared and don't be surprised by hardships!

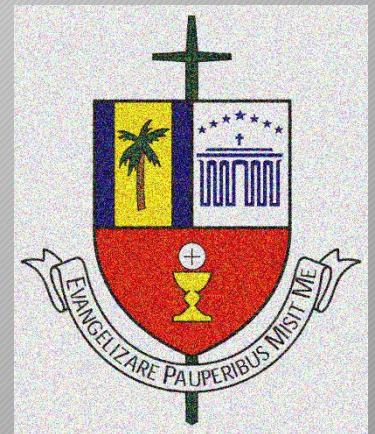


Perseverance in Ministry

All by God's grace

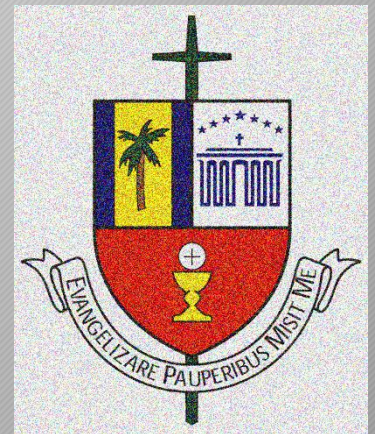
All for His people

All out of Love for Love Himself



Perseverance in Ministry

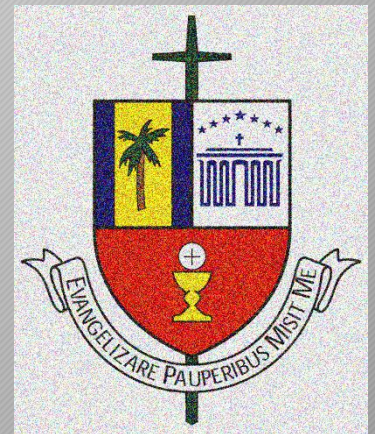
- “Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2-4).
- Perseverance builds character and generates hope (cf. Rom. 5:3-4).
- Perseverance comes with blessings and reward (James 1:12; 5:11)
 - “Blessed is the man who perseveres.”



Perseverance in Ministry

One of our bishops said to me:

- “Help them to realize this is long-term.”
- “Learn to prorate their excitement.”
- “Priesthood is a martyrdom over fifty years!”

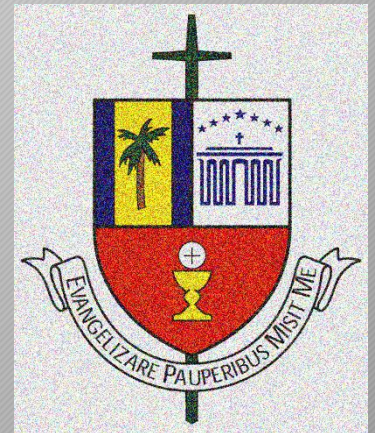


Perseverance in Ministry

Make a “presumption for perseverance and permanence.”

cf. Fr. George Aschenbrenner, SJ, *Quickening the Fire in Our Midst*, Chapter 8

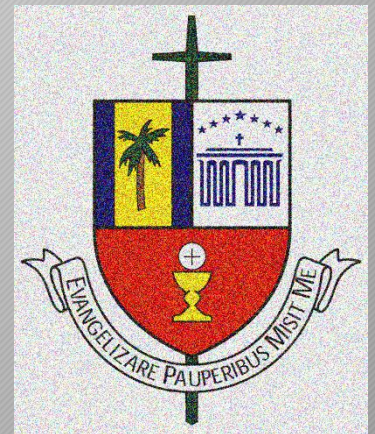
“becomes an inner structure of the priestly candidate’s heart, a heart becoming more and more inflamed in God’s attractive love as revealed in Jesus. This inner drive of love, enlightened and eager to be faithful to God’s glorious dream for the whole universe, always finds focus for a diocesan priest in fidelity to a particular local people. This presumed fidelity requires the courage to stand firm in a promise and profession unto death, just as Jesus did, especially on Calvary, where the light and hope of resurrection originally dawned slowly and now burns with a permanent radiance” (p. 81).



Perseverance in Ministry

Take care of your prayer life, your personal and professional boundaries, your self-care, and your people, and the Lord will take care of you! Do what you are supposed to do.

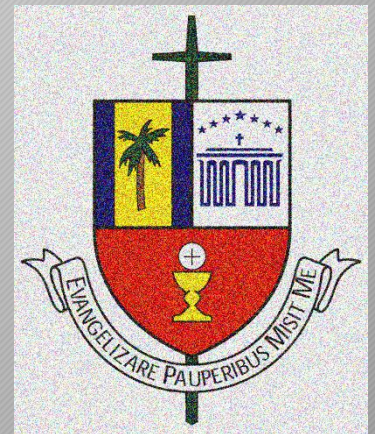
“Priesthood is a marathon and not a sprint”



Perseverance in Ministry

What helps you remain firm or what has helped strengthen your resolve in seminary?

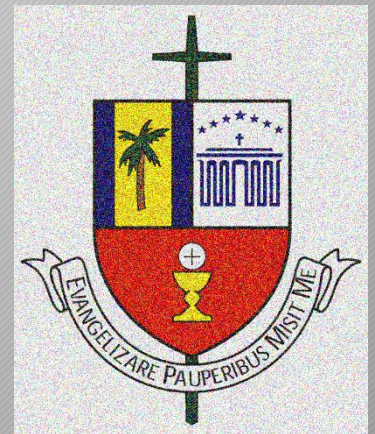
- Strong support group (diocesan, or Emmaus, classmates): It is urgent to build that support network very early in priesthood.
- Spiritual Direction: Have it in place before ordination so you are immediately engaged.



Perseverance in Ministry

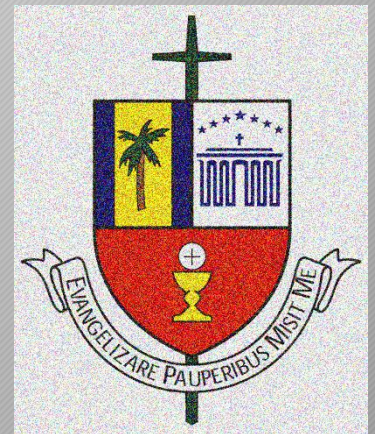
The daily grind:

- Not always exciting
- Do that which you don't enjoy, joyfully!
- Sickness happens and sometimes we have to push through – practice now!
- Keep doing what we are called to do – fifty-year martyrdom!



Perseverance in Ministry

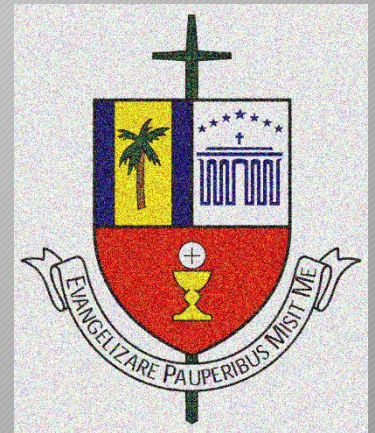
“Ongoing formation is intended to ensure fidelity to the priestly ministry in a continuing journey of conversion, in order to rekindle the gift received at ordination. This journey is the natural continuation of the process of building up priestly identity begun in the Seminary and accomplished sacramentally in priestly ordination, in view of the pastoral service that causes it to mature over time”
(*Ratio Fundamentalis*, 81).



Perseverance in Ministry

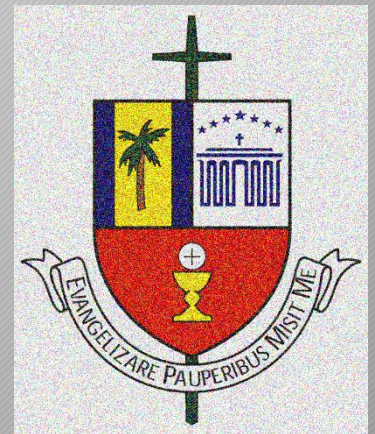
- *Know who you are!*
- *Know Whose you are!*

*“The Crown
must always come first!”*



Perseverance in Ministry

Christ
and His Priesthood
must always come first!



Perseverance means never giving up!

