

# RSVP PROGRAM INFORMATION

In an effort to better educate the Chapter's Council Grand Knights and Vocation Directors on the rules for participation in the Supreme Council's RSVP program, the following information on the Program, and its Rules, is outlined here. The Sacramento Diocesan Vocation office would prefer that all Councils seeking new candidates for this program contact the Sacramento Diocesan vocation office and request a qualified candidate(s) be assigned through the office to the Council. As long as the guideline rules below are met, and the candidate is defined as eligible under those same guidelines, then the council may participate in the Supreme program. If a Council chooses a non-qualified candidate for support, then this support would be not part program, and the council should attempt to apply for a refund for this type of support.

## Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP)

Through the Knights of Columbus Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP), councils, assemblies and Squires circles "adopt" one or more seminarians or postulants and provide them with financial assistance and moral support.

RSVP money is used by seminarians and those in religious formation for tuition and books, car insurance and maintenance, travel during vacations, emergency expenditures and other living expenses. Knights provide more than financial support, though. Members write letters to students, sponsor dinners for them, invite them to join the Order and, most importantly, pray for vocations.

Last year, financial help from 2,601 councils, assemblies and circles to future priests, sisters and brothers, exceeded \$2.8 million. Since 1981 the Order has provided more than \$47 million in aid through RSVP, helping more than 75,000 men and women follow their vocations.

Qualifying councils and assemblies receive a \$100 refund for every \$500 donated, **up to a limit of \$2,000 donated to an individual**, while the refund for Squires is \$20 for every \$100 donated.

## RSVP Guidelines

### Guidelines and Eligibility Requirements

**The following persons are eligible to receive RSVP funds:**

1. Seminarians attending college seminaries (sometimes called minor seminaries).
2. Seminarians who have been accepted by a diocese and are currently in their "spirituality" year.
3. Seminarians attending major seminaries (normally four years) in preparation for priestly ordination.
4. Seminarians in their "pastoral" year (most often when they are deacons).
5. Seminarians who belong to a religious institute and are currently in formation for the priesthood (religious seminarians often are called "Brother" even though they will eventually be ordained as priests).
6. Men and women who are novices or postulants in religious orders or religious communities.

Those eligible for assistance do include foreign seminarians studying in the United States or Canadian, seminarians studying overseas; seminarians from your home diocese currently attending seminaries in another diocese, state, or country; and seminarians from other states or dioceses attending a seminary located in your jurisdiction.

**Persons ineligible for RSVP funds are the following:**

1. Priests or religious seeking assistance for continuing education.
2. Religious brothers not currently studying for the priesthood; and
3. Candidates for the permanent diaconate.

Councils, assemblies and circles are encouraged to assist in other ways worthy individuals who do not qualify for RSVP assistance, *but such aid should not come from funds intended for RSVP*. There are different rules for the RSVP program in the United States and Canada than there are in the Philippines. The rules for the other jurisdictions have yet to be defined.

# Action Steps for RSVP

## Action Steps

1. Review [RSVP guidelines and eligibility requirements](#).
2. Locate a candidate to support. If you need help, contact your pastor or diocesan vocations director.
3. After a candidate's name and address is secured, prepare and send a letter of introduction from your council, assembly or circle.
4. Define how money is to be raised.
5. Define how the relationship will be managed.
6. Define how money will be exchanged or presented.
7. When presenting money to an RSVP candidate, notify the diocesan vocations director.
8. Take photos and send them to your local and diocesan newspapers, and Columbia magazine. Be sure caption information is complete and each individual's name is spelled correctly.
9. RSVP assistance also involves prayer and moral support. Make at least one personal visit to each seminarian, and send four letters – i.e.: birthday, Christmas, Easter, and welcome back to school greetings – each fraternal year.
10. Encourage members and their families to keep seminarian or postulant in their prayers; make personal visits to them; and send communications throughout the year – i.e. birthday, Christmas, Easter greetings.
11. Invite seminarian or postulant to all council activities and include in mailing of newsletter or other communications.
12. Invite seminarians or postulants to make a presentation to the council, parish, and/or parish youth groups on what it means to prepare for priesthood or religious life.
13. Arrange for seminarian or postulant to host a group of young people from the council or parish at their seminary to meet other seminarians and get a feeling of preparing for priesthood or religious life.
14. Make sure to offer congratulations and support to your seminarian or postulant on their ordination.
15. Apply for a refund from Supreme Council office – to be eligible for refund, monies must be given *directly* to an individual (**not a an institution of fund**); money given to an individual must be vocations related and donated between July – June 30 of the respective fraternal year; paid with a check drawn from the council-assembly account; *and copies of check or other documentation* must accompany application for refund. Refer to the RSVP Refund Application (#2863) for exact details and procedures for filing for this refund.
16. Request an RSVP Award Plaque. To qualify for an RSVP plaque, the council, assembly, or circle must provide financial assistance, as well as moral support throughout the fraternal year. Refer to the RSVP Refund Application (#2863) for exact details and procedures for requesting this plaque.

## Sacramento Diocesan Office of Vocations

### Contact Information

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Sacramento, CA 95818-2518  
Related Links: [Life of a Priest](#)

### Main Contact

**Rev. Chuck Kelly**, Vocations Director  
Office: (916) 733-0258

**Rev. Msgr. James Murphy**, Auxiliary Vocation Director

### Staff

**Marisela Smith**, Administrative Secretary

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