

## **St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows**

**Born:** March 1, 1838

**Died:** February 27, 1862

**Feast Day:** February 27

The word vocation means ‘calling’. Each of us have a particular vocation such as Holy Matrimony, Holy Orders, or religious single life. Regardless of what particular vocation we have, they all lead to the fulfillment of the general vocation which we all have which is to reside with God for all eternity in Heaven. That’s of immense importance to remember that the vocation which we have been called to; it cannot be the end in and of itself. How often do we see individuals pursuing the married state with joy of simply being married without any thought of what the purpose of that vocation really is? I can say that I have certainly seen seminarians who were only focused on becoming priests and not on the purpose to why they may have received such a calling in the first place.

The purpose of the particular vocation which we have received in this life, is ultimately aimed at bringing us to Heaven. Among seminarians, there is a saying that ‘no one is called simply to be a seminarian’. St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows disproves that somewhat. He died as a seminarian without ever receiving ordination. His calling was to pursue the vocation of the priesthood and simply pursuing that call, gave him the graces which he needed in order to become the Saint God wanted him to be.

When asked by men how can they know if they are called to the priesthood, they are several answers which are given such as a desire to serve, a love of the Mass, playing priest when you are younger, etc. I find that the question that many young men need to focus on instead is the question of if God is calling them to simply enter seminary. This seems more useful of a question as many men do not know if they are called to the priesthood until they have been in seminary for a few years to really discern it and put frankly, the idea of simply going to seminary is not as difficult a question as the one of if God is calling one to become a priest. If by entering seminary God gives a man the graces that he will need to become a Saint then the who Church profits from this regardless if the man is called to become a priest or not. For you young men who are discerning this question about vocation and struggling to find an answer, I encourage you shift your question from if you are called to the priesthood to ‘am I called to enter the seminary’. In this question, seek the intercession of St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, your guardian angel and Our Mother Mary.