

Sad news: WTU closing

Heidi Schlumpf | Jun. 28, 2011 NCR Today



Washington Theological Union, a seminary that has educated men and women for ministry in the church for 40 years, is closing because "it does not have the financial resources to be able to continue offering its academic services to the Church and the community beyond the 2012 - 2013 academic year," according to a [press release](#) [1] dated June 27.

The Board of Trustees attributed the decision to "financial challenges with the recent economic downturn, decline in the number of religious vocations and a national decrease in private funding for religious initiatives," the press release said.

"This was a difficult decision for us, not least because of the excellence of the education and formation our students are receiving," said Very Rev. James Greenfield, OSFS, and Chair of the Board of Trustees. "We remain proud of all we've accomplished as a community, and of the many successes and contributions our students, faculty, staff and alumni are making to the Church."

The board decided to close enrollment to new students after September, but continue classes to allow current students to complete their degrees before the end of the 2012-13 academic year.

As a seminary graduate myself and a writer for [InTrust](#) [2], a journal for boards of theological schools, I know well the financial challenges facing institutions of theological education today. This is sad news not only for the students, faculty, staff and alumni of WTU, a widely respected school, but for all Catholics.

Who will train the next generation of religious leaders?

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[1] <http://www.prweb.com/releases/WTU/06-27-11/prweb8594038.htm>

[2] <http://www.intrust.org/home.cfm>