

POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

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WHAT’S AHEAD AT XXIII

NOVEMBER

- 1: The Solemnity of All Saints
Ministry of Reader, Second Theology
Most Rev. Robert C. Evans, Auxiliary Bishop of Providence, RI
- 6: PSJS XXIII Witness Talks in Parishes of the Archdiocese of Boston
- 11: Veterans Day (No Classes)
- 13: Pre & 1st Theologians Pastoral Visit, Holy Ghost Parish, Whitman, MA
- 16: Spiritual Director’s Conference

DECEMBER

- 7: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
Ministry of Acolyte, First Theology
Most Rev. James Massa, Auxiliary Bishop of Brooklyn, NY and Seminary Trustee
- 12: Last day of Classes - Semester I
4:30pm - Advent/Christmas Mass and Dinner
- 14-17: Final Examinations

JANUARY

- 11: Second Semester Begins
- 16: Martin Luther King Day observed
- 25-28: National March for Life - Pilgrimage to Washington, D.C.

FEBRUARY

- 5: Super Bowl Party, Seminarian Lounge
- 10-11: New England Vocation Awareness Days
- 20: Presidents Day (No Classes)
- 22: Mass of Candidacy
4:30pm Most Rev. Allen Vigneron, Archbishop of Detroit

MARCH

- 1: Ash Wednesday, Day of Recollection
- 6-13: Mid-semester break

APRIL

- 12-24: Easter Break

MAY

- 8: Last Day of Classes
4:30pm - Class of 2017 Mass of Thanksgiving
Farewell Dinner, Tribute
- 10 - 13: Final Examinations



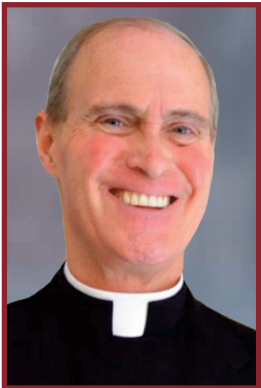
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NOVEMBER 2016

POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

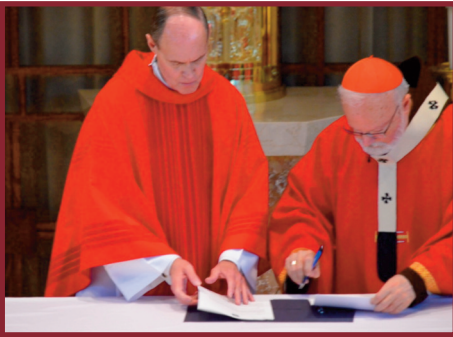
FROM THE RECTOR’S DESK



Wednesdays at PSJS XXIII!

Wednesdays! That may seem an odd title for my initial column. However, it probably best describes the “happenings” at our Seminary--and my first two months as Rector.

It all began when I moved in on Wednesday, August 24 just two days before the Mass of the Holy Spirit, when I signed my Oath of Fidelity as Rector to Cardinal Seán, and the fall semester began. What followed in rapid succession was a series of Wednesday events beginning with a farewell luncheon on Wednesday, September 14 for Fr. Palardy, my predecessor and 8th Rector of the Seminary. We then hosted back to back “under the tent” events: our 35th Annual Lawn Party with over 350 friends and supporters attending on Wednesday, September 28, and then a Lobster Bake for some 200 visiting Vocation Directors the following Wednesday, October 5. The next Wednesday, October 12, I celebrated Mass in Biddeford, Maine with our seminarians at their Annual Retreat. The focus then switched to our returning alumni for Alumni Days, Wednesday, October 19, and a keynote presentation from John Allen on: “The Global War on Christians”. That same day Catholic TV was here filming a promotional piece on our new Learning Center. The Wednesdays in October conclude with our Board Meeting on (you guessed it!) Wednesday the 26th.



The Wednesdays begin all over again in November with, for the moment, an Alumni Dinner in Springfield, the USCCB Conference in Baltimore and a Knights of Malta dinner here at the Seminary.

Inside you’ll find further information on all of these activities as well as numerous other non-Wednesday events!

Enjoy the Newsletter and, as always, thank you for your prayerful and generous support.

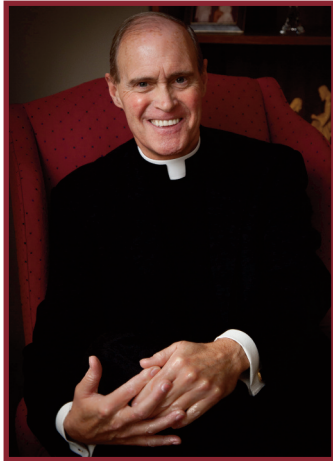
Brian R. Kiely

Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely, Rector

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- Interview with Fr. Kiely
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- Alumni Days
- Around the Seminary
- Who’s New at PSJS
- NCDVD National Convention

A Pastor Appointed Rector of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary



by Mason Wiggins '20

First, Fr. Kiely, I must tell you, since your first day here, your practice of greeting the men every morning after Mass or Morning Prayer has been very warmly received.

Thank you, it's something I learned and have continued from my first parish assignment. I have felt it's a small

gesture that easily connects the priest with his people. I'm also hopeful that by this example our men will adopt this practice in their ministries.

Now tell us a little about yourself.

Well, I'm a priest of the Archdiocese of Boston, ordained in 1978, who comes with 38 years of pastoral assignments locally and in the Virgin Islands. The past two years I served as the Episcopal Vicar of the West Region of the Archdiocese until the Cardinal asked that I succeed Fr. Palardy as the Rector of Pope St. John XXIII. I laughed and said, "You're kidding right." Of course, he wasn't. I told him with all due respect "I'm not an academic and I have no background in priestly formation", but the Cardinal insisted. I spent the night in prayer and could not find a real reason to say no. I told the Cardinal I would do it, "and I have not regretted it one bit. So you guys are stuck with me!"

My earlier pastoral assignments were varied and included some very valuable experiences: managing a parish school with the sometimes competing interests of parents and parishioners; closing a church which had been run by an Order that suddenly withdrew; building a new church from a one-room school house and, finally, living as a "minority" for three years in the predominantly black culture of the Virgin Islands. I mention these as examples of the diverse challenges that await our men in their ministries. And, in some small way, I'm hopeful that my experiences might help prepare them.

What has been your experience your first two months?

It has been extremely positive—and busy. I am most impressed with the people—the faculty, the seminarians and

the staff. Everyone has been so welcoming and helpful.

What do you see as the most pressing issue at PSJS?

I feel there are two and they are related: finances and enrollment. First, I want the seminary on a sound financial footing. The seminary can certainly pay its bills, but there are a lot more things the seminary could do if it had the resources, such as a native-Spanish speaking priest on faculty and/or expanding the Spanish language program—perhaps even adding a Portuguese program. I want the men leaving here well prepared to meet the needs of their ministry.

Secondly, increasing vocations, and enrollment, is our top priority. We need to let men know that it is possible to become a priest later in life as Msgr. Conley said in his Opening Prayer for the 200 Vocation Directors at the recent lobster bake. He stated that the Apostles, that Christ called, were middle-aged, more mature men and all had careers. Older men can certainly go to other seminaries and that may be great for that seminary, but the question is whether that seminary is great for that man? Here at PSJS the men are formed in an age appropriate way and with their peers.

Where do you see PSJS in the years ahead?

I see opportunities that can be expanded. I want not only the faculty to "dream a bit" about what is possible, but also the students. You men come from diverse backgrounds with a lot of talents. One of the challenges is to make sure we utilize those gifts to make this a communal effort. I need the assistance of everyone. So it's not just what do I see it being, but what do we see it being. I don't have that vision right now; I think we are in the process of prayerfully discerning what that vision might be. We will to do it together.

Final thoughts?

I would be remiss if I didn't express my deepest appreciation to Fr. Bill Palardy, my predecessor, for all that he has done for PSJS first, as Academic Dean then as Rector. I am honored to follow him at this most blessed institution and on behalf of all the faculty, the seminarians and staff—"we wish him the very best as the Pastor of St. Agatha Parish in Milton."

Lawn Party 2016



new Auxiliary Bishop of Boston. The Lawn Party is the Seminary's signature fundraiser and was again this year chaired by Julie and John Corcoran and family.

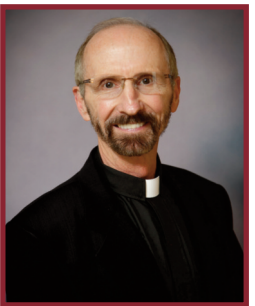
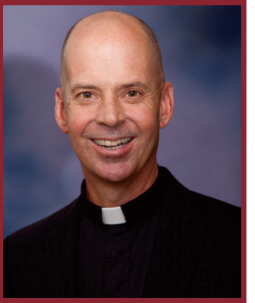
In his opening remarks, John Corcoran thanked the over 350 friends and donors "under the tent" for their support and said "this seminary is full of really good men—men of character, humility and kindness...men of deep commitment to the faith."

The Lawn Party was a "first" for Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely who was appointed the 9th Rector just weeks earlier. Father Kiely had spent the majority of his priesthood in pastoral assignments and most recently was the Regional Vicar for the West Region of the Archdiocese. Father Kiely thanked the prior Seminary Rectors and the "many faithful whose financial support have allowed this seminary to flourish."

On Wednesday evening, September 28th, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary held its 35th Annual Lawn Party hosted by Bishop Robert P. Reed, the

The speaking program then shifted, as is customary, to two seminarians who shared their respective vocation stories. The first was Christopher Koehn, of North Carolina, Class of 2018. "After almost 20 years in the family business, renovating hotels, I took an early retirement and offered to work for the Church. I thought I was too old for priesthood, but the Bishop thought otherwise and sent me to Pope St. John XXIII Seminary."

Peter Adamski, a member of the Class of 2019 followed and stated that after his wife of 40 years passed away, he again thought of the priesthood. Shortly after she died, he said "the Lord began calling—often at night and those late nights of prayer led me here to Pope St. John XXIII". Both men stated that it was the prayerful and financial support of our benefactors that made this "seminary journey" possible. That support continued this evening with the event raising \$250,000!



Alumni Days



two days...we think he enjoyed his visit!

The featured speaker this year was John Allen, Jr., editor of Crux Now, a news outlet carrying news, features, and community content about the Catholic Church and Catholicism. On Tuesday evening, Mr. Allen delivered the keynote presentation, entitled "The Global War on Christians: Why Anti-Christian Persecution is the Transcendent Human Rights Issue of the Early 21st Century". A sobering topic, to say the least, but all in attendance were deeply touched by Mr. Allen's presentation. Of note: over the last 3 years, there has been a 139% increase in attacks on Christians - depending on the human rights organization data, "...there is either every five minutes or every hour of everyday a

We recently welcomed PSJS XXIII Alumni back to Weston in October. Msgr. Jim Burnett, Class of 1974 of the Diocese of Davenport in Iowa hadn't been back since ordination! His permanent smile lit up the halls for

Christian martyred for his or her faith." What is it WE can do? Pray; influence policy; support those already there spreading awareness; and TALK about these persecutions.

The next day Mr. Allen offered a lighter topic: "The Pope of Mercy: Pope Francis and the Revitalization of the Gospel of Mercy in the Catholic Church." Of note: the Pope has an overall approval rating of 81% (CNN poll). Aside from the dynamic of increased social media, Mr. Allen offered three pillars that make this Pope so special: a passion for those on the periphery as evidenced by his travel to places in need of Vatican attention; a seriousness about service – to priests, "carry the smell of the sheep"; and lastly, his mania for Mercy.

Mr. Allen's presentations are currently available in full on our Facebook page!

Alumni Days concluded with the celebration of the Mass offered for our deceased alumni. At a banquet celebrating our Jubilarians, Fr. Kiely assured ALL alumni that PSJS XXIII is their home.

Around The Seminary



Seminarian Michael Goodreau '20 from the Diocese of Springfield, was one of several Pope St. John XXIII seminarians who attended World Youth Day in Kraków, Poland this summer. "There were so many great moments during the pilgrimage; the vigil with the Pope, the Papal Mass, seeing the Holy Father drive by our area before the Mass!" Read more on Michael's reflection on his experience on our website: www.psjs.edu.

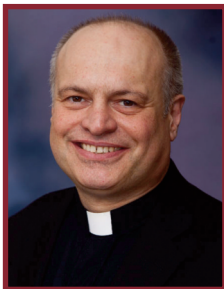
Seminarian Darrick Leier '18 participated in a 10 week Spanish immersion program in Puebla, Mexico which is located about 90 miles Southeast of Mexico City. The main purpose was to learn the Spanish language, Spanish liturgy, and the history and culture of the Mexican people. In the final 3 weeks of his assignment he was on pastoral immersion in a small town, Tecali in an evangelization mission team.



Seminarian Michael Bova '18 spent a Spiritual Year discerning as a missionary priest for the SMA Fathers in Lyon, France and Calavi, Africa. His class had an "international" flavor with 31 men from 12 different countries speaking "Frenglish", a combination of French and English.



Who's New



Fr. I. Michael Bellafiore, S.J. is the newest member of the Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary faculty. He is a native of Providence, RI and was ordained to the priesthood on June 14, 2003 at St. Ignatius Church, Chestnut Hill, MA. In second semester he will be teaching: Trinity and Christology; Theology of Priesthood; and Theological Anthropology.

Fr. Michael's academic credentials include: S.T.D and S.T.L in Systematic Theology and S.T.B and M.F.A. from Catholic University of America; M. Div. from the Jesuit School of Theology; M.A. from Loyola University Chicago and a B.S. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



In August, Barbara Mullen-Neem joined us as assistant librarian and overseer of Library Services. She comes to us with a Masters in Pastoral Ministry and is currently a graduate student of Library and Information Science at Simmons College.

Barbara's range of enriching cultural experiences comes from living overseas for a number of years in the Middle East and in Europe. While there, she raised her family and was in ministries, from co-founding a parish food distribution program to working with Mother Theresa's Missionaries of Charity at their home for women and orphans, to mention but two. Upon her return she continued volunteer work. She then taught Theology in a Catholic high school and was recently a Director of Religious Education within the Archdiocese of Boston. She has a son who is now a young adult and presently lives in Wellesley. Her rule of thumb is the prayer of St. Francis.

Incoming Class of 2016



ANTHONY HAMATY - DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FL

Prior to entering Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary, I enjoyed practicing pediatric medicine for 28 years. Over that time, I had the pleasure of being involved in various areas within pediatrics such as emergency medicine, Strengthening Our Students (S.O.S.), Child Restraint Division of The National Safety Council, Women's Help Center (Pro-Life) and for most of those years in private clinical practice. Additionally, I was graced to serve in medical missions to deliver medical care to the children of the Dominican Republic through The Knights of Malta.

"It was through the guidance and direction of my bishop, Bishop Estevez, that I am fortunate and blessed to be able to attend Pope St. John XIII National Seminary. I thank God that I am here because I am confident that with God's grace and the fraternal love and nurturing given here that I will be the priest Our Lord Jesus intends me to become."



FRANCISCO SORDO – DIOCESE OF HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

I have a Bachelors in Mechanical Electrical Engineering, with an MBA in Administration. After working for Eastman Kodak Mexico for 8 years I redirected my career working for a couple of Banks in Mexico and in Canada until my recent resignation in Aug 2016 after 20 years in the Banking Industry.

"After years and years of searching for something, I should have said for 'someone' I found through several means (Catholic Books, CDs, DVDs, Conferences and Retreats) Him who I was looking for. However, probably the main factor was leading Bible Studies for three and a half years. Reading the Holy Scriptures inspired me. All this in addition to praying the Holy Rosary and spending wonderful evenings in Adoration. All the information and insights gathered have contributed to my decision to enter Seminary after one year of discernment."



MASON WIGGINS - DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FL

Before coming to PSJS I worked in Washington DC for the past 30 years. I worked for 10 years in the House of Representatives for several members and a committee and then for 15 years in the Senate in various capacities. My last position was with the Senate Sergeant at Arms. I also worked in a law firm and as a lobbyist for a food safety organization. I am originally from Florida and have a BA and MA in philosophy and a JD and an LLM in agricultural law.

"Earlier in life, after a year at the University of Florida, I entered the seminary as a sophomore. I was in the seminary for several years, but then decided to pursue a career outside the Church. I chose law. However, during that time I felt that God was not done with me. He was still calling me to serve Him. I have taken an 'Augustinian' path to priesthood. There have been bumps and diversions along the way, but a vocation must be answered. As an older seminarian my Bishop decided that the mature environment of PSJS would best serve my discernment needs and that of the Diocese. I am grateful to be here and pray everyday that I may be worthy of my vocation and the possibility of ordination to one day serve the people of the Diocese of St. Augustine."



NICHOLAS ZRALLACK - DIOCESE OF PALM BEACH, FL

I worked in the St. Lucie Public School System for 18 years in a variety of roles beginning with that of a Special Education teacher. Most recently, I was the Director of Curriculum serving the 40,000 students in the District. In that capacity, I worked with a gifted team to develop the curriculum documents, instructional resources and assessments for use by teachers system wide.

“God has been patiently and gently calling me to a priestly vocation throughout my life. I am now aware that this is the time to answer. I have found a home at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary surrounded by talented and similar-minded men. In this setting, we are encouraged to take our previous experiences and integrate them into God’s service. The supportive sense of community speaks directly to me as an individual in formation for the sacred priesthood.”



BRUCE BARNETT - DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON, SC

I have a B.S. and M.S. in Chemical Engineering and have worked in the petroleum, paper, chemical and automotive industries. Most recently I was a Senior Process Engineer for Robert Bosch in Charleston, SC. I have taught RCIA and was in the Permanent Diaconate program for St. Theresa Church in Summerville, SC. Additionally, I was a member of the Summerville Catholic School Advisory Board and coordinated mentoring programs for local schools for the last 28 years. I have two daughters, one has been married for 7 years and the other was married this past September.

“I have led a blessed life and told God that I would be happy to serve him in any capacity. When He started calling me to the priesthood, I told Him; “You can’t be serious.” However, He persisted for two years before I finally called the Vocations Office! Despite being turned down twice due to my age, here I am. I can thank many people for this vocation, especially two great spiritual advisors, Fr. Newman and Msgr. Lofton. I feel that God has been preparing me my whole life for this vocation, saving the greatest blessing for last.”



LARRY BARILE - DIOCESE OF NORWICH, CT

I graduated from Manchester Community College in 1985 earning an Associate of Science degree in Respiratory Therapy. The past 28 years I have worked for the Department of Veterans’ Affairs with the State of Connecticut as the department head of cardiopulmonary services. Being a member of the DVA afforded me the great privilege of serving those who have served in ways that I would not have envisioned. In addition, I have had many other blessed opportunities to serve the church in various ministries over the last 20 years; Lay Minister, Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, and Catechist at all grade levels. Most recently, I have served as the director of a lay apostolate called ACTS within the state of CT.

“These life experiences, coupled with the fact that many of my family members have been remarkable witnesses to the Catholic faith for me personally, have provided me with both blessings and challenges; blessings in terms of seeing the Catholic faith lived out, challenges in way of imitating the examples generously provided. The interior desire to continue a life of service, as nurtured by God’s grace, has led me to Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary to discern a life to priestly vocation.”



RODRIGO F. ROMAN - ARCHDIOCESE OF NY

For the past several decades Rodrigo Roman worked both in New York City and Central America, in government, for-profit and non-profit efforts. After studying economics as an undergraduate, and doing some credit training in a commercial bank in Manhattan, Rodrigo had the opportunity to contribute to the development and financing of business ventures, nonprofit organizations, and government economic development programs. In Central America Rodrigo worked for the national government promoting economic development programs.

“For the past several years I have been contemplating a call to the priesthood, and last year I was blessed by the decision of Cardinal Timothy Dolan, of the Archdiocese of New York, to send me to Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary.”



SHAWN M. SIMCHOCK - DIOCESE OF SCRANTON, PA

Prior to entering PSJS I attended St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore MD for two years, attending the Diocese of Scranton Permanent Deacon program for one year prior to that. Earlier I had worked for many years in both restaurant management and sales. I hold a degree in Political Science from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania.

“What I thought to be a vocation to the Permanent Diaconate developed in 2010-2011 while caring for my terminally ill mother. I entered into the Diaconate program, and through that year, I realized that God was calling me to do more than just being a Permanent Deacon, I realized that my true vocation was to the Priesthood. I had an initial vocation call to the Priesthood when I was a child, but let it go and chased it away. There are only so many times that you can ignore the call before you must answer it. That led me to the seminary, and thus my experiences at St Mary's led me to become a part of the community here at PSJS. I am truly blessed to be a part of this community, which has been so welcoming.”



EDWIN A. NALAGAN -ARCHDIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

My career prior to seminary was as a Hospital Administrator. I served in several financial and administrative roles for INTEGERS Health in Oklahoma City culminating in my final position as Chief Financial Officer for INTEGERS Baptist Medical Center and INTEGERS Southwest Medical Center in Oklahoma City in 2010 when I "retired" from my career to enter seminary and answer God's call.

“I have always known that God was calling me to his service in some kind of capacity even as a young child. I just wasn't one of those brave and enlightened young men that answered God's call at a young age. I often say, I let Jesus roll into voicemail for the better part of 26 years. Finally in 2011 I listened to my heart and left all of my fears behind and applied to become a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City - a decision I still value more than anything else I have done in life thus far. People often ask me if miss my former life and all of it's trappings (financial, prestige, independence, etc.) I always answer with a resounding no, because I did not wake up one day and say to myself ‘Gee, I want to be a Hospital Administrator’ I did however wake up one morning and told God ‘I would like to be a priest, if you will have me.’”



BR. STEPHEN SHANAHAN, OCSO - ST. JOSEPH'S ABBEY, SPENCER, MA

I have a culinary degree, and spent years catering everything from homes, halls, offices - to even Tall Ships! My prior career has also entailed selling furniture and working in a casino.

“This has been a call that I have ignored for years, I’ve taken many calls trying to run from God, and what he wanted from me. But when I finally turned around and listened, and said to myself I wanted to be a monk and a priest, I thought it was too late for me I’m too old and I’ve been on my own for far too long. I think that made God laugh, and say Stephen you’re always thinking you are alone and relying on yourself. I am now a Trappist Monk and a seminarian. I’m from St Joseph’s Abbey so there is a history of monks coming here, and they have always said how impressed they were with the seminary, the community life, the quality of the teachers and support was second to none - and that is exactly what I have found at PSJS.”

PETER OKAJIMA - DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN, NY



My previous work experience was in finance, specifically banking. I was the head of banking operations for a class action and bankruptcy firm, and held several executive positions in various New York money center banks, including managing Government Contacts at JPMorgan Chase, Global Sales Director at Citibank, and other positions which included: strategic planning, global client and product management for trust services. Most recently I spent the last three years working in my parish as the RCIA Director as well as serving in various other ministries.

“I am grateful to my Bishop for sending me to Pope St. John XXIII as it is important for me to be among fellow seminarians who have also had significant life experiences prior to responding to God’s call to the Priesthood. Here there exists a collegial, cooperative, and supportive atmosphere whereby everyone (faculty, staff, and fellow seminarians of all levels) is sincerely interested in your successful discernment and fulfillment of God’s Will; which is what seminary life should be all about.”

MAZEN MIKE ELIAS - DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE , FL



I was born in Ramallah, Palestine on the West Bank of Jordan and raised with my five siblings in Jacksonville, FL. I thank God for my parents who instilled in me their authentic Christian values and their charitable efforts toward their neighbors.

“Beginning at age 12, I learned the meaning of work in my father’s grocery store. And in my adult life, ethics and moral principles continued to form me while working in the family business. These values were especially dear to me during my 20 years of corporate life in the chemical and financial services industries. In the last several years, as my mother’s full time caregiver, I gained several new dimensions in my life; one being the fruit of the spiritual life. The call to the priesthood came in January 2014. After several months of both reflecting on my past and in examining my life experiences, I can see now how His hand had directed my past as well as how He prepared me for this new task. With a contrite heart, around Easter of 2015, I applied to the Vocation Office of the Diocese of St. Augustine, and a year later I was accepted by the Vocation Board as a seminarian. May God’s grace continue to sustain all seminarians to walk in His holy footsteps.”



PAT LOPRESTI - ARCHDIOCESE OF ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

Having a Master of Laws Degree I worked for the State Attorney General as a lawyer representing the state in both criminal and personal injury as well as negligence matters. After several years I left the full-time practice of the law and worked in retail property development and part-time legal research.

“Since the age of five I thought about priesthood but never seriously explored my calling. That all changed in June 2012 with my return from volunteering in Lourdes. I made the call to my Vocation Director that would change the direction of my life. Two years of spiritual direction and discernment ultimately led me to Pope Saint John XXIII National Seminary.”

DEACON MAURICE M. CULVER - DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FL



I entered Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary “twice retired”: first as a physician, Medical Officer, United States Navy, and second, as a Professor from Florida State College at Jacksonville.

“As I review my spiritual journey I’ve sought to answer a yearning that, as the author, David Brooks, of The Road to Character, terms “the Adam I”, attempts to succeed in the secular world. However, one finds that everything in the secular realm is just not enough; there is more. It is the journey to that fulfillment, that Brooks terms our “Adam II” or our “eulogy virtues” that has brought me to Pope St. John XXIII Seminary. There is a realization that I can do more for God’s people; I’ve already answered the call to the Permanent Diaconate and the yearning to do more for His people does not cease. My Bishop and I believe that the further formation that I require is here at this seminary.”



VICTOR BRINKMANN - DIOCESE OF COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri and served as a law enforcement officer for twenty years retiring at the rank of Lieutenant. I have a B.S. in Criminal Justice with a minor in Psychology and an M.A in Criminal Justice Administration from Columbia College and am the proud parent of a twenty one year old son.

“After converting to the faith, I felt God's call to the priesthood, but didn't feel ready. I continued to pray and questioned God-- ‘why me’. Along my discernment journey I had met several wonderful priests that encouraged and supported me. Several years later I'm finally accepting God's call, and I'm the happiest I have ever been. I know the next five years will be challenging, but I accept the challenge and I'm looking forward to serving God's people and his Holy Church and am now enrolled in Pre-Theology program at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary.”

2016 NCDVD National Convention and Lobster Bake at PSJS



The National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors met in Boston during the first week in October with nearly 300 Vocation Directors from all over North America attending. The Vocation Directors had last assembled in convention in Boston in

2002 and the Pope St. John XXIII Seminary administration and staff realized this was a rare opportunity to meet and greet the men who were critical to recruiting men to our seminary. PSJS, as an exhibitor, had a constant presence of faculty and staff at the convention and was also the principal sponsor of several prime events. On Wednesday, October



5th, PSJS enabled the Vocation Directors to take an extensive tour of historic Boston on vintage trolleys and later in the day welcomed nearly 200 of them to the Seminary campus for tours of Alumni Chapel and the new Learning Center followed by an authentic New England “lobster bake”—with all the trimmings! Taking advantage of this rare opportunity, our new Rector, Father Brian Kiely, and two seminarians, Kevin Miller and Rodrigo Roman, addressed the group and extolled the virtues of priestly formation at PSJS. While the festivities were underway, EWTN’s “Vo-

cation Boom” was filming interviews with the Rector and other PSJS seminarians in the new Learning Center. At the end of a great evening of feasting and fellowship, the Vocation Directors reboarded their trolleys (with gifts of Cape Cod chocolates!) for the return trip to their Boston hotel all-the-while singing the praises of PSJS and its warm and gracious hospitality.

Building on Wednesday’s events, the following day PSJS sponsored the convention’s closing banquet. With nearly 300 in attendance, Father Kiely was able to once again take the microphone to reinforce the PSJS ‘story’. His remarks were seconded by a heartfelt endorsement of PSJS by Cardinal Seán P. O’Malley, OFM Cap. who shared his sincere appreciation for the sacred work done here. In a twist from usual practice, Father Kiely also informed the banquet attendees that, rather than giving them the usual convention trinkets to take home, PSJS was making a substantial donation in their names to the vital work of the Cor Unum Feeding Program in Lawrence, Massachusetts where thousands of God’s poor are given badly needed nourishment for body and soul on a daily basis. This news elicited a rousing ovation from the banqueters. It was a strong signal to the attendees that PSJS has fully embraced Pope Francis’ requests to make the seminary experience one rooted in devotion to Christ in the person of His most vulnerable sisters and brothers.

