

POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

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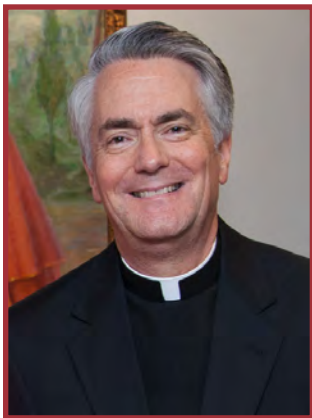
WHAT’S AHEAD AT XXIII

OCTOBER 12-17: Class Retreats 21: Alumni Days 7:30 pm – Keynote Address: Ambassador Ken Hackett 22: Alumni Days 11:40 am – Presentation: Rev. Charles Healey, SJ 4:30 pm – Alumni Mass, Cardinal Seán O’Malley, OFM Cap., 5:15 pm – Alumni Social/Banquet 25: Softball Game: Relics vs. St. John’s 26: Donor Mass 31: Ministry of Reader Most Rev. Alvaro Corrada del Rio, SJ Bishop of Mayaguez	JANUARY 2015 9: Second Semester Begins 10: Boston Diaconate Ordination, 10 am Cathedral of the Holy Cross 21-22: Pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. for National March for Life
NOVEMBER 25-30: Thanksgiving Break	FEBRUARY 1: Super Bowl Party 7-8: New England Vocation Awareness Days 11: Mass of Candidacy, 4:30 pm Most Rev. Thomas J. Tobin, Diocese of Providence 18: Ash Wednesday, Day of Recollection
DECEMBER 2: Advent Vespers Service 7 pm 8: Ministry of Acolyte Most Rev. Michael Burbidge, Diocese of Raleigh 10: Advent/Christmas Mass, 4:30 pm 12-16: Final Exams	MARCH 2-8: Mid-Semester Break 18: St. Patrick’s Social
	APRIL 1-12: Easter Break 28: Pastoral Supervisors Appreciation Dinner
	MAY 6: Final Day of Classes Class of 2015 Mass of Thanksgiving 4:30 pm Farewell Dinner, Tribute 8-12: Final Exams

OCTOBER 2014

POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

FROM THE RECTOR’S DESK



Beginning the Next 50 Years

Our 50th Anniversary is here! It occurred on Friday, September 5th when we celebrated the actual “opening day” of our Seminary in 1964. It is fitting that in this, our anniversary year, we admitted a record number of seminarians—25! Inside you’ll find their individual biographies and brief glimpses of their journeys to Pope St. John XXIII Seminary.

It seems the past few months have been non-stop with anniversary activities: The Pilot’s commemorative issue, the publication of Fr. Healey’s “Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary: The First Fifty Years (1964-2014)” and our 33rd Annual Lawn Party. The celebration continues with Alumni Days in October, including a presentation by Ken Hackett, the U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See and a Mass celebrated by Cardinal Seán O’Malley OFM, Cap. with other bishops, alumni and priests. These stories and more included in this expanded issue of our newsletter.



New men leaving for Trolley Tour of Boston.

Included in our anniversary activity was a very sorrowful moment: the loss of Fr Tom Schmitt ’91 who passed away after a courageous battle with cancer. First as a student, then as the Dean of Students, Fr. Tom was beloved as a friend, a teacher, and priest. In this issue you will learn how some of his former students and colleagues remember him—and how we, too, might remember him.

This is an exciting time at our Seminary. At the Lawn Party Bishop Peter Uglietto described this anniversary moment as a “second founding” or a beginning for our next 50 years. Your continuing support of our capital campaign, “Pathway to the Future”, will both expand and modernize our seminary. It will allow us to continue Cardinal Cushing’s vision—and our mission to prepare men for priesthood.

As always, thank you for your prayerful and continuing generosity.

Fr. Bill Palardy

Rev. William B. Palardy, Rector

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Remembering Fr. Schmitt
- Meet Our New Men
- A Cross-Country Journey to XXIII
- Africa to Weston: Seminarian Corner
- Lawn Party a Huge Success
- Order your 50th Anniversary Book Now
- A Special Alumni Days Ahead

Father Tom Remembered, Missed at XXIII



Rev. William Palardy, Rector of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary, shared countless memories with his close friend and right-hand man and former Dean of Seminarians.

They took vacations together, attended conferences together and worked together teaching and forming men for the priesthood for many years.

In a stirring and beautiful homily delivered Aug. 22 at Christ the King Church in Ludlow, MA, Father Palardy shared the one thing that will stay with him the rest of his life.

“I have never known a priest more devoted to the Holy Eucharist than Fr. Tom Schmitt,” he said. Palardy offered that in Father Schmitt’s 23 wonderful years of priesthood, other than when hospitalized or recovering from surgery, “he never missed a day in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.”

The priests, staff members and faculty who offered prayerful support and shared in Fr. Schmitt’s final weeks this summer witnessed his daily wheelchair trips to the chapel to concelebrate Mass. The morning before he died on Aug. 16, Palardy recalled, was the only day he did not celebrate Mass.

“As a good teacher, even in his last days,” Palardy said, “Fr. Tom continued to teach all of us how essential the Holy Eucharist is in the daily life of the priest... The charity, the sacrificial love of Christ that Fr. Tom celebrated in each Eucharist, he

strove to emulate and exemplify in his own life.’

The seminary family recently celebrated the Month’s Mind Mass in memory of Fr. Schmitt. Various members of the seminary community shared the many ways he is being remembered daily. Fr. Paul Miceli, Schmitt’s desired successor as Dean, joined Fr. Palardy in being with him in his final days and hours. Together the two vested him for his funeral.

“I remember Tom as a priest who loved the Eucharist and who lived and died with a grateful heart,” Miceli said. “He was filled with praise, wonder and gratitude for the gift of the Priesthood. Tom didn’t live for himself but to give himself away in humble service to others. The witness of how he lived and died will remain with me until my own death.

“I miss his humor. I miss him, but I feel his presence in our midst. I remember his last words to me were, ‘Paul, I thank you.’”

Said Deacon Jim Cardosi, one of Fr. Schmitt’s advisees: “I’ll never forget his support of me during a difficult time in my formation journey at the beginning of our second year. He could have responded much differently as I was making more work for him with the issue I presented, but in his typical caring and compassionate manner he complied with my request and guided me through a difficult transition period.

see Fr. Tom on pg. 15

Father Tom

continued from pg. 2

I will always be grateful to him for his support during this challenging time. He was an outstanding formation advisor who provided spiritual as well as academic tutelage. A great priest and friend whom I miss dearly each day and pray to for his intercession for my future priesthood and the well-being of our family.”

Ken Watts, recruiting coordinator of the seminary, worked closely with Fr. Tom as his assistant the past two years related to community-life coordination. He labeled his role as “a treat,” watching Father Schmitt “tap his incredible reservoir of knowledge, share his lightning quick wit and most of all his compassion for the men under his care.” Watts said he long admired Father Schmitt’s deeply-rooted love of the Eucharist, the priesthood and the salvific power of God’s Truth. “Simply being in Father’s presence, during the fun moments and even in his suffering, was a blessing and a gift,” Watts said. “He truly was the “Heart of the Seminary, a treasured friend, a magnificent priest of Christ, a joy-filled gift to all who met him.”

Baldemar Garza, a Theology II seminarian for Boston, was one of the few seminarians who spent part of his summer at the seminary. “I will always remember him for his smile and his jokes,” Garza said. “What also moved me was his deep prayer and spiritual life and he was always ready to teach.

“Two weeks before he died I saw him in his room and I will never forget the words he told me. He told me, “To love people from the heart.”

Said Mark Matthias, of the Class of 2015, another Schmitt advisee: “I confided in him that I wanted to learn as much as I could while at XXIII so I could answer people’s questions with confidence. He told me as admirable as that was, that I wanted to become an ‘expert in the Faith,’ he said the people will not remember me for my intelligence, but for my holiness. He told me my prayer life should be just as important as my academics.

Journey

continued from pg. 3

Aug. 21: Visited St. Kateri Tekakwitha Shrine and the Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Fonda and Auriesville, NY then on to Schenectady. Prayed the rosary and turned in anticipating Massachusetts the next day !

Aug. 22: Drove from Schenectady, NY through the Berkshires, eventually to the Mass Pike and 495 to Hopkinton, Mass., where my sister lives. So glad to be so close now... and finally, the next day...

New Men Arrival Day, Saturday, Aug. 23: Made it, Praise

“As I got to know Fr. Schmitt, I began to understand the wisdom of his advice, that it is far more important to show people how to live the Faith by being a holy priest.”

On the day he performed his first baptism as a deacon, Kevin Mulligan, of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, sent a text message to the priest who taught him and the Class of 2015 the Sacraments of Initiation last year. The text message read: “First Baptism. You were with me. Three pours: Valid! You will be with me at every one. Prayers and thanks, Father.”

Knowing that Father Schmitt’s year-long fight against esophageal cancer was nearing an end, Mulligan wasn’t sure the former Dean of Seminarians would receive his message of thanks. He did not expect a reply. Three hours later, there it was: “Thnk U, Kevn. Means world 2me. God Bless.”

Mulligan, the deacon for the funeral Mass, had visited Father periodically during his time (recovering from surgery) at St. Patrick’s Manor. “They were never long visits, but they were very special, talking sports, Ireland, catching him up on the seminary happenings, and he was always so curious about our classes. We connected from the day I arrived in 2010, and not a day has passed without something triggering a Father Schmitt memory. He just loved our seminary, and he loved his brother priests, the men and the staff here.

“He taught me so much about being a future priest that isn’t in any text book. He did so by the way he lived and the priest that he was. God will be very happy if one day I can be a shadow of the joyful, holy priest that was Father Tom Schmitt.”



Father Schmitt performs his personal "Journey Song" at the 2013 St. Patrick's Day show.

Help us remember Fr. Tom Schmitt '91...

Fr. Tom ‘91 served almost his entire priestly ministry here as our Dean of Students. Fr. Tom influenced the lives of so many in so many ways. As mentioned in my homily, Fr. Tom loved nature; there wasn’t a plant, a bird or a star in the heavens that he couldn’t identify. We’ve decided to honor his memory through his love of nature. We plan to name the large glass wall in the Learning Center overlooking the woods and the Stations of the Cross as a fitting memorial and lasting tribute --The Fr. Tom Schmitt’91 Memorial Window Wall.

-Fr. William B. Palardy
Rector



Father Tom Schmitt '91 Memorial Window Wall

I/We will contribute \$2,000 for a panel in the

Fr. Tom Schmitt '91 Memorial Window Wall

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Oregon to Weston: A Seminarian's Journey to a New Life

On August 11, Steve Garza began a 3,720-mile trip from his home in Stanfield, Oregon to Weston as a member of the incoming class of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary. Steve's sister Alison accompanied him on the 12-day journey across the United States to begin his new life as a seminarian for the Diocese of Baker, OR.

This is Steve's diary. . .

By Steve Garza

As I prepared to depart for the seminary, I was filled with the knowledge through prayer to the Blessed Mother that I had been preparing for this day for four years, since shortly after my wife of 21 years, Maria, died. As she was dying, I felt the desire to start talking to God again and had this great thirst for Him.



Day 3: Old Faithful, Yellowstone National Park

As I pulled away from a house I had completely emptied (and recently sold) I was filled with a sense of peace. I remembered the day I was accepted for admission. I had not been that happy since I married my wife. I felt so good and I prayed in thanks to God and to Mary for leading me to this point in my life, and for all the support I received from Bishop Liam Carey, my home parish, family and friends. Although I was leaving my home, I felt no anxiety or sadness. I was excited in anticipation for what the Lord had in store for me...

Day 1, August 11: Leave Stanfield, OR on I-84 East for Mission, Ore., site of my wife's grave at the Umatilla Indian Agency cemetery. Maria was a member of the Yakama Indian nation. It was an emotional day. One of God reaffirming his calling to me. It was a beautiful experience. We left there knowing that she was with me, and that I would see her again one day.

Aug. 12: Head from Twin Falls, Ore. to Shoshone Falls and the Craters of the Moon National Monument on the way to Idaho Falls, ID. Spectacular scenery at this volcanic landscape of Craters of the Moon.

August 13-15: Rise early and head for planned three days staying in famed Yellowstone National Park (Gardiner, Mont.) and Grand Teton National Park (Jackson Hole, Wyo.). Wow. One of the first things we saw as we arrived, timed perfectly, was "Old Faithful." The geysers were amazingly beautiful, with the mixture of sun and water spray creating vivid colors that left me breathless in awe of God's creation.. On the 15th, after buying a hand-made Our Lady of Guadalupe necklace, the Indian fellow I bought it from asked me where I was headed. It was so moving, his understanding of my journey to answer God's call. He was so happy for me.

Aug. 16: Depart after three great days through Billings, Mont for Rapid City, SD to visit the Little Bighorn Battlefield and Devil's Tower National Monuments (as seen in the movie "Close Encounters"). Spectacular.

Aug. 17: Attended Mass at Our Lady of Mt Carmel in Keystone, SD and make a covenant of love with Mary. Then on to Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse Monument and Badlands National Park, ending the day in Mitchell, SD.

Aug. 18-19: From SD through Minnesota to Waukesha, WI, arriving at the Schoenstatt Shrine to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Attended Mass at Sisters of Mary Convent at the shrine and visited with some of the sisters, breakfast with Fr. Francisco Rojas. Next stop Cleveland !

Aug. 20: Long day of driving from WI to Ohio. Had to see the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame before heading to Niagara Falls (awesome!) and on to New York state. We stopped for the night in Batavia, NY after another full day. Ran into a used car salesman and a couple of others, who asked me what I'm up to, heading to Boston. "I'm going to be a priest," I said. "Their faces lit up, they were really happy to hear that !"

see *Journey* on pg. 15



Day 4: Grand Tetons loom in the distance

The History of Pope St. John XXIII Seminary



POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS
(1964-2014)



Charles J. Healey, S.J.

Richard Cardinal Cushing, the charismatic and creative Archbishop of Boston from 1944 to 1970, announced in early 1963: "I have decided with God's help, with the approval of the Holy See and with the aid of generous benefactors to build that seminary in the Archdiocese of Boston as a National Seminary for older men." With the exception of the Pontifical Bede Seminary in Rome, there was no seminary at this time that had the unique mission of preparing older and mature men for the priesthood. On September 5, 1964, Cardinal Cushing formally dedicated the building. Two days later, forty-five men, between the ages of 28 and 58 and coming from all walks of life, entered the seminary to begin their priestly formation. Since these early beginnings, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary has continued to grow and develop. At the present time, the number of priests ordained from this seminary is approaching 700, representing some 150 dioceses and religious communities. Cardinal Cushing's vision and dream has indeed become a reality!

ORDER NOW!

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Schola CD on Sale

The musical and vocal talents of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary's Schola now can be heard and enjoyed everywhere.

Just in time for Christmas gifts and the celebration of the seminary's 50th anniversary, a 12-song CD entitled, "Rejoice in the Lord" was released during the recent Lawn Party and is available now online at cdbaby.com (\$9.99 for CD or \$8.99 for digital download).

The Schola group includes Father Emmanuel Morinelli, OCSO (Spencer, Mass.) and Father Larry Love (Tyler, Tex.) of the Class of 2014; Deacons Greg Bierbaum (Colorado Springs) and Russ Mower (Dallas), of the Class of 2015; Paul Schultz (Madison, Wisc., '16); Daniel Olvera

(Columbus, '17); and musicians Kevin Yarnell ('16); Dr. John Clabeaux (faculty member); and Kevin Galie, musical director at Pope St. John XXIII.



Incoming Class: Fall 2014



RICHARD ASHER

ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

Richard is a resident of Westland, Michigan enrolled in the Pre-Theology program after a distinguished career as a writer, publicist and event manager for General Motors Corp.

“Becoming a seminarian almost didn’t happen for me after mistakenly concluding that God wasn’t calling me, since I still held a deep desire for a wife and children. After a local pastor told me that the desire for a family actually was a necessary qualification for the priesthood, I embarked on a two-year discernment journey which resulted in my entry into the seminary.”



DAVID D. BARRETT

DIOCESE OF ST. JOHN, NEWFOUNDLAND

David (aka Doug) is a native of St. John’s, Newfoundland, who was ordained an Anglican priest in 1980. He earned a Bachelor of Theology degree from Atlantic School of Theology (Halifax, N.S.). He was married for 39 years to Gwendolyn, who died of breast cancer in 2013. David and Gwen had three children; sons (David, Robert) and a special-needs daughter, Angela Marie, who died of degenerative brain disease in 2010. Doug served five years in the Canadian Armed Forces.

“I am, by the grace of God, in heart and soul, as well now as in affiliation, a Latin Rite Catholic, and I seek, under the guidance of God, to realize my vocation and exercise an ordained ministry within the Catholic Church.”



COREY BASSETT-TIRRELL

ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON

Corey was most recently involved in parish ministry as a full time musician and parish communications specialist. Prior to that he spent a number of years working in the funeral industry in the Boston area. In 2006 he made a profession of faith and was received into the Catholic Church by the Carmelite Fathers. A former Anglican, Corey credits the writings of then-Cardinal Ratzinger (Benedict XVI) as greatly influencing his conversion to the faith.

“With a full heart I look forward to the days ahead, knowing that with childlike trust in Mary, our Mother, and all the saints who intercede for us, the means of grace from that will never fail us. And in this, our faith, and in the confession of Christ crucified we too have the promise of that great hope of Glory through Him and in Him.”



JAMES BATES

DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT, CT

Jim resides in Danbury, CT and entered Pope St. John XXIII after a 15-year IT career with Pitney-Bowes, and 25 years experience in industrial electronics and software development. He has served St. Joseph Parish in Danbury as a lector, catechist, and as a member of the parish choir and handbell choir. He also is a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus.

“As a convert, the single greatest influence for me was, and remains, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. I have also been blessed with many people in my life who have encouraged and supported me in my discernment of a vocation to the priesthood. In addition I have been blessed with the example of many good priests, particularly the priests of my parish, St. Joseph in Danbury.”





DEACON RONALD BLANK

DIOCESE OF NORWICH, CT

Ron has resided in Middletown, CT for the past 31 years and worked as an environmental compliance engineer and electronic engineer. In 2005, Ron was ordained a permanent deacon and served both Notre Dame parish in Durham, CT and St Colman parish in Middlefield, CT. In addition to his parish duties, a focus of his ministry as a permanent deacon was pro-life activities as a political lobbyist on pro-life issues; fundraiser for crisis pregnancy centers; Theology of the Body teacher; and leading pro-life rosaries in his parishes. Ron sensed God’s calling to priesthood following the loss of his wife, Jacqueline (“Jackie”) in May, 2013. Their son Michael (wife Lorena) resides in El Paso, TX.

“After my wife died I began thinking about the priesthood. On three separate occasions priesthood was suggested to me. At my wife’s funeral a woman whom I have known all my life suggested it. A few days later both my son and my father also did so. Each of these did not know that the other two had suggested it and I had never discussed it with any of them. Still it took six more months before I was convinced that this is what the Lord wanted me to do. I am ready now.”



ROBERT J. FORTIN

DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT, CT

Robert calls Hazlet, N.J. home and entered Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary after a successful career as a recording studio engineer/ record producer. He left his professional music career to become the personal care provider for his ill mother. His interests include music, Broadway, cooking, fishing and ministering to those in need.

“All of my brother seminarians and the good holy priests who have guided me along my seminary formation are my heroes.”



STEVE GARZA

DIOCESE OF BAKER, OR

Steve retired from a 35-year career with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service in April 2014 after working on various national forests in Calif. and Ore. In Sept., 2010, Steve’s wife of 21 years, Maria, died of gastric cancer, which led him to the Church. He has been active in his parish as a lector, RCIA teacher and in nursing home and prison ministry.

“I had considered the priesthood when I was in seventh and eighth grade, and always wondered about it even when I was married. I have a deep and abiding love for my wife and credit her, her sister, and Sister Suzanne of the Incarnate Word Sisters among many others for my discernment of a vocation to the priesthood.”



FRANK GILBERT

DIOCESE OF NORWICH, CT

Frank is one of 11 children and resides in Middletown, CT. He is the father of a son, Justin, and recently worked in the Nuclear Power industry. He also sailed as a Merchant Marine Officer for nine years.

“A now deceased Capuchin priest encouraged me to move forward towards my vocation. Many experiences in lay ministry supported this decision. One Sunday I attended Mass with a full church of parishioners and there was no priest available to celebrate Mass. An elderly priest stepped out from the pews! It had quite an impact on me, so here I am to serve the Lord.”

33rd Annual Lawn Party--50th Anniversary

Cardosi, Rocha Journeys Highlight Special Night

By Kevin Mulligan ‘15

The 50th anniversary celebration that was already in high gear hit another peak on Sept. 17 with the 33rd annual Lawn Party gala drawing a capacity crowd under the tent at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary.

Most Rev. Peter Uglietto, vicar general of the Archdiocese of Boston and former XXIII Rector, represented His Eminence, Cardinal Seán O’Malley, who was in Rome and unable to attend, but sent his official greetings.

Scott and Mia Gieselman were co-chairs for the third consecutive year.

Highlighting the evening every year are the stories of two seminarians, and this year was no exception. Fourth-year Deacon Jim Cardosi, from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, shared his emotional journey from the U.S. Navy (P-3 pilot), and Theoogy III member Jorge Rocha, of the Diocese of Providence, traced his faith-filled family



Jorge Rocha ’16

roots from Cape Verde to XXIII. Jorge began: “When I look back at my journey to Pope St. John XXIII Seminary, one word comes to mind. Gratitude. This sense of gratitude stems from where I was in life to where I am now. I have a long way to go, but I am grate-

ful for right now because of God and those people he has placed around me.”

The evening also featured the announcement of the groundbreaking on the long-anticipated expansion and new Learning Center this spring, a result of the successful yet ongoing Pathway to the Future campaign, which still seeks support to meet its \$9 million goal. Father Palardy reflected on the loss of two great friends and long time supporters: Father Tom Schmitt ‘91 and Jack Shaughnessy, Sr. Bishop Uglietto made a passionate plea to the many benefactors and supporters in attendance for a final year-end push to the goal line.

“I’m asking each of you to help us reach our goal by year’s end,” he said. “I’m confident that with your generous support, when we meet here next year you will see our Learning Center under construction. But it is not just a new building. Rather, it is a symbol of our growth and commitment to Cardinal Cushing’s vision. This evening is truly a “second founding” or beginning that will prepare us for the next 50 years.”

The Lawn Party is the seminary’s primary fundraiser in support of its mission of forming men for the priesthood from approximately 40 dioceses

The most emotional portion of the evening was provided by the heartwarming journey-story shared by Cardosi, the father of five children, whose wife Cindy was called home on July 2, 2008 at the age of 51, victim of a rare frontal lobe disease. Her husband Jim was at her bedside, and Cindy had a rosary in her hands when she took her last breath. “I was blessed to have been there for her as she had been there for

me throughout our marriage,” Cardosi said. “When you have been touched profoundly by Christ as I had been, how can you say no to a call to the Priesthood? Why would you want to



James Cardosi ’15

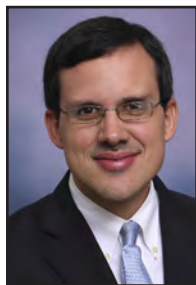
say no?”

Thus, his journey to Weston and this special seminary began with the support of his children, including the youngest, Jen, who responded to a question from a friend about how her dad was holding up shortly after her mom’s death: “He’ll be OK; he’s going to be a priest.”

Six years later, Cardosi is just months from fulfillment of that call from God, with his wife Cindy watching over him. “Six years ago the Good Lord took the love of my life,” he said. “In His great love for me He gave me all of you in return. Thank-you.”

SAVE THE DATE

September 16
Lawn Party



ALBERTO GONZALES

DIOCESE OF MAYAGUEZ, P.R.

Alberto was born in San Juan and raised in Bayamón, P.R. He enters Pope St. John XXIII from a career as journalist and personal trainer. He last worked on the staff of “El Visitante,” the Catholic newspaper of the Puerto Rico Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“The decision of answering God’s Call was influenced by a good pastor, a very happy and holy man, when I was 16 years old. His example and holiness led me to think, ‘I want to be like him.’ But it wasn’t at my time, it was at the time of God. Now, at the age of 31, I’m here starting this journey. I’m more mature with the commitment that is needed to best fulfill it.”



PATRICK GRODE

DIOCESE OF SIOUX FALLS, S.D.

Patrick is from Rapid City, S.D. and a graduate of South Dakota State University, with degrees in English and Theatre. For the previous 5 ½ years he was a Deputy State Attorney for Pennington County, S.D. He attended Ave Maria School of Law; he worked as an associate attorney at a law firm in Pierre, S.D.

“I feel God’s call to priesthood to be a servant of the poor, sick, and those who have no voice to lift them up and bring them to Jesus through the sacraments, and to bring healing to those who are most in need. The biggest influence in my discernment process has been the many faithful priests whom I have known over the years. I have several relatives who are priests, and they have been major influences in my life. I had excellent chaplains in high school, college, and law school. The pastor at my current parish has been an extraordinary blessing these last few years. I think that my relationships with all these men have kept me open to God’s call.”



DARRICK LEIER

ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

Darrick was born and raised on a farm in Esmond, N. D. Darrick entered Pope St. John XXIII after a year of study at St. John Vianney Theological Seminary in Denver. Prior to the seminary, Darrick worked as a product test engineer for Trimble Navigation in Westminster, CO. He holds B.A. degrees in Computer Science and MIS from Jamestown (N.D.) University. He has been active in lay ministries in his parish.

“After my mother’s death in 2011, the Lord pierced my heart and transformed my life, and it has never been the same! I began to realize that the Lord had plans for me. Through amazing, grace-filled events, it became apparent that God was strongly calling me to something vastly beyond myself. I surrendered to God’s will and tried to follow wherever He was leading me. After about a year of dedicated and prayerful discernment, it was evident that the Lord was calling me to the priesthood.”



JOHN MAKSYM

ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

Prior to entering the seminary, John was a judge for the Navy and Marine Corps. He served as a Naval Officer for 31 years, the last 13 as a trial and appellate judge. He retired in 2014 after completing his final tour as the Circuit Judge for the Western Pacific.

“My road to priesthood has been a lifetime in the making. Several great priests have had a hand in guiding me this far - at every step of my life from my pastor in grammar school (Fr. Lasalle Lenk) to Father Benedict Groeshel with whom I shared retreats on three occasions in New York. I also had wonderful guides in a Navy Chaplain friend (Fr. Kieran Mandato) and my home parish Pastor (Fr. Tim Pelc). Finally, I owe a great debt to my parents for their support.”

U.S. Ambassador to Visit for Alumni Days

By Steve Maddaloni ‘16



The Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary community will proudly welcome Ken F. Hackett, US Ambassador to the Holy See, as esteemed guest for Alumni Days on Oct. 21-22 as the seminary continues its 50th Anniversary celebration.

His Eminence, Cardinal Seán O’Malley, OFM Cap, will celebrate the Alumni Mass on Oct. 22 at 4:30 p.m.

Ambassador Hackett’s keynote address on Oct. 21 (7:30 p.m.) will highlight his homecoming for the native of W. Roxbury, MA and a graduate of Boston College. His presentation is entitled: “From St. Theresa’s to St. Peter’s: A Pilgrimage of Sorts”.

Hackett has served as U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See since Aug. 1, 2013, when the U.S. Senate confirmed President Barack Obama’s nomination. In his role as ambassador, Hackett seeks to foster cooperation by the two governments in the fight against human trafficking and in support of social justice and religious freedom.

“The United States is the first to admit that there is no place, and no government, on earth that is exempt from violations of religious freedom,” Hackett said. “Spreading awareness and promoting dialogue across states and reli-

gions is the most effective way to stay it in its tracks. It is our responsibility today to ensure that the world of tomorrow is a safer place for people of all religions than the world was yesterday.”

Hackett has a long and distinguished history of working to bring the presence of Jesus Christ to brothers and sisters in need, a mission that dates back to his service in Ghana as a Peace Corps volunteer. He has a long and distinguished record leading Catholic Relief Services’ humanitarian efforts worldwide, dating back to 1972.



Seminary Alumni Concelebrating: Alumni Days 2013

Around the Seminary

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He will marry his son and his fiancée at Jim’s summer parish, Epiphany of Our Lord in S. Philly on June 6. Congrats Jim ! ... **Deacon Mike Fowler’s** first Baptism this summer was in the same church (St. Pat’s, Oswego, NY) where he, his children and grandchildren all were baptized! Prayers go out to Class of ‘14’s **Fr. Jim Davis** (Diocese of Albany) on the passing of his dad, Jim, a legendary multi-Emmy Award-winning producer for ABC Sports. **Deacon Russ Mower** (Dallas) made a two-week summer pilgrimage to Italy with his home parish, St. Jude, in Allen, Tex., with visits to Assisi, Siena, Pompeii, Subiaco, and Rome.



Orientation Committee: Fall 2014



NATHAN MILES

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

Nathan recently retired from the US Army after 21 years of service as a military police officer, with his last assignment in Kabul, Afghanistan. A native of Texas, he now calls Philadelphia home.

“For many years I have often considered becoming a priest, and asked God for guidance. I felt that it was God’s wish that I serve my time in the military, and that my experiences in the military, especially as a military policeman, would better prepare me to be a priest. I believe that at this point in my life God is calling me to the priesthood. Becoming a priest and serving God’s people will bring me great joy and peace in my heart.”



DAVID MILLER

DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

David was born and raised in Oklahoma and joined the U.S. Army after high school and served his country for over 29 years. He converted to Catholicism in 2008.

“The most influential people in my decision to answer God’s call to discern the priesthood are Bishop Michael Burbidge, Bishop of the Diocese of Raleigh; Fr. Robert Kus pastor of the Basilica Shrine of St. Mary, and Pope St. John Paul II. St. John Paul II was Pope throughout my teens into adulthood and helped keep the fire in me burning. After converting to Catholicism in 2008 and moving to Wilmington, NC, I joined St. Mary’s Church where Fr. Kus picked up the torch along with the Vocations Office of Raleigh. There, during a Mass of Ordination, Bishop Burbidge asked each individual present to ask the Lord what He would have us do. It was then that the time came for me to be obedient to the Lord’s calling.”



RICHARD ODUOR

DIOCESE OF TORIT, SOUTH SUDAN

Richard is a native of western Kenya. Following high school, he was a Trappist monk for three years in Kenya, before departing to discerning God’s call to the priesthood. It was after serving as a lay volunteer in the secretariat of the Emeritus Bishop in Kurin, he shared his desire to be a priest with the Bishop of the Diocese of Torit, was accepted and sent to begin his Philosophy studies at the national seminary in Khartoum, Sudan. Due to operational problems, the seminary closed for two years, during which time Richard got involved in parish pastoral ministry. It was through the efforts of Bishop Akio Johnson Mutek that Richard became aware of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary. Richard has served as a catechist and teacher of Religion and Faith Formation, and as a volunteer at the Peace Village in Kuron in the then-Sudan.

“I can categorically specify that my decision to give a very special consideration to the vocation to priesthood was much influenced by the pastoral zeal that the Mill Hill missionaries in charge of our local parish displayed in their ministry. As a small boy at the time of their ministry in our parish, I used to attend mass every Friday with my Mum and Grandma at a nearby school where they offered pastoral programs for the pupils. This was the beginning of my desire for priesthood that I have tried to follow through some hard times.”



EDWARD SHIKINA

DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

Edward entered Pope St. John XXIII after four years of study at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in Philosophy. Ed resides in Columbus and worked in information technology as a help-desk specialist for Safelite for almost four years prior to entering the seminary. Prior to that, he worked for a paper distribution company; managed a retail store; and worked in the lumber business.

“My desire to bring God’s love to all people is what most influenced my desire to be a priest.”

Seminarian Corner...

Oduor Adjusting to Life “Out of Africa”



Richard Oduor (right) processes in for Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Kisumu, Kenya.

By Kevin Mulligan ‘15

As vocational journeys to Weston go, few in the history of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary can top that of Richard Oduor.

Richard’s home in Kisumu, in western Kenya is 7,010 miles away, on the other side of the globe. His arrival this summer

marked his first time on U.S. soil, in a country and a culture far removed from his native East Africa. Richard, who was a Trappist monk after high school, is studying for the Diocese of Torit, in South Sudan, where he began his studies in Philosophy at the national seminary in Khartoum. Oduor began researching Pope St. John XXIII when St. Paul’s Seminary in Juba, South Sudan seminary was forced to close, and his pitch to his bishop to come to America proved persuasive.

“It was either wait and go to Rome a year and a half from now, or try to find another seminary to study,” he said. “I came upon Pope St. John XXIII’s website and it seemed a good place for me. My feeling was, ‘Let us not fail because we have not tried, but if we are to fail, let it be after trying.’” One thing led to another via email, and with the support of his apostolic administrator and the help from Father William Palardy, XXIII Rector, Richard is adjusting nicely in his new life in America. He is a member of the Class of 2018 in Theology I.

“It is different in many ways for me,” he said, “but I have felt the warmth and spirit here from the priests, the faculty, staff and the kindness of my new brothers which has been very special, helping me with many things.”

There were clothes to buy; money to wire from Kenya; school supplies and books to purchase; and transportation needs without a car or driver’s license -- and the list goes on. Heck, they don’t even have developed roads in Sudan (Kenya is well developed). One hall neighbor has enjoyed the shopping experiences with Oduor. Imagine coming from Africa and going shopping for winter clothes for the first time ! Oduor may have been the first customer buying winter wear the day they were put out in early Sept.

“It has been an enjoyable and interesting process for me,”

he said, “but I have many helping me.” Likewise, his new brothers have learned much from him about his culture.

As the temperatures drop, Richard has begun to anticipate seeing the first snowfall in his life ! He has heard much about the New England snow and cold. He said he likely will not get to go home until July of 2016, but he has kept in touch with his family through the internet and cell phone calls. He said that through the many differences in his life now, he has felt the strong sense of family at the seminary, with one big thing in common with all of his seminary brothers.



Seminarian Richard Oduor (back right) and parishioners with the late Bishop Akio Johnson, of the Diocese of Torit, at the installation of Rev. Hakim Dario, pastor of Holy Family Parish in Palotaka, South Sudan.

“We are from different worlds, different cultures,” he said, “yet we share a love of God and a desire for one day being one of His priests. The focus on formation here is excellent. The dedication of the faculty and the response of the men here is a beautiful thing. I am blessed to be here.”

AROUND THE SEMINARY: Newly ordained priests from the Class of 2014, **Father Larry Love** (Tyler, Tex.), **Father Greg Piatt** (Detroit) and **Father Peter DeFazio** (Boston) were among those returning for the 33rd Lawn Party and celebrated their first Masses at their alma mater ... A summer highlight of Theology III’s **Paul Schultz**, of Madison, WI, was a mission trip with 35 teens from St. Peter Parish (Madison) to a Catholic Heart Work Camp in Charleston, S.C. in service to those in need ... a highlight of **Deacon Jim Cardosi’s** (Philadelphia) summer was news that his son Joe was engaged to be married and Deacon Jim was asked to officiate.

see Around on pg. 11



TOM OLSON

ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON

Just months before he would have been ordained to the transitional diaconate as a Jesuit, Tom, with the help of diocesan priest-friends and his former Jesuit superiors, discerned that he would be better able to fulfill his call to the priesthood as a diocesan priest. During his 10 years in Jesuit formation, Tom earned a Masters of Philosophy at St. Louis University in St. Louis (2009) and a Masters of Divinity at Boston College (2014). His undergrad work was completed at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. Tom also taught English in Poland, studied and lived in Spain, served as a chaplain to the Knights of Columbus and the Daughters of Isabella in St. Louis and Boston; and taught Theology at Fairfield (CT) Prep. He also directed an RCIA program at St. Columbkille in Brighton, MA. He has worked in fundraising/development for several institutions, including the St. Francis Mission on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota.



MICHAEL PANICALI

DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

Michael entered Pope St. John XXIII in Theology II as a member of the Class of 2017 after completing a pastoral year working in child welfare at Catholic Charities in Brooklyn and Queens, NY. Prior to that he worked professionally as a social worker and a director of music ministry. He credits his mother for laying the foundation for his vocation through her “tireless devotion to people in need in our parish community.”

“Several priests from my home parish of St. Athanasius in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn were instrumental in planting in me the idea of priesthood, notably the most recent pastors, Msgr. Ferrarese and Msgr. Cassato, and including Fr. Bryan Patterson, Fr. Robert Mucci, Fr. Ray Basiliou, and Fr. Casper Furnari. I am grateful to my parents Eugene and Santina Panicali, both of whom are no longer with us, as well as the members of my beautiful family and circle of friends. They have been my teachers, my guides, and the sources of happiness in my life.”



STEPHEN PERLA

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER, MA

Stephen hails from St. Cecilia parish in Leominster, MA and brings with him 20 years experience in Catholic education, with stops along the way as a teacher at Notre Dame High (Fitchburg, MA); Catholic Schools Public Policy Advocate (Executive Director, Parents Alliance for Catholic Education); Superintendent of Catholic Schools (Diocese of Worcester); and was Senior Director of the Alliance for Catholic Education Consulting at the University of Notre Dame. He also served 12 years in public office, including Mayor of Leominster! He is the father of three adult children and is a proud grandfather of six.

“My decision to pursue ordination to the priesthood has been inspired by a deep love for the Eucharist and the Church. This journey has been, and continues to be, blessed and nurtured by many family members, friends, priests and religious who have enriched my life. Their encouragement and affirmation to respond to God’s call has profoundly moved me. I am especially grateful to Sr. Kathleen Carr, CSJ, a long-time Catholic school colleague, for her deep friendship, amazing witness to the Gospel, and steadfast commitment to assisting me with truly discerning the meaning of the stirrings in my soul as a gentle call from God to more fully serve the Church as a priest.



JUAN E. RODRIGUEZ

DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN, PA

Juan Eduardo Rodríguez was born in San Francisco de Macorís, Dominican Republic and emigrated to the U.S. in 2007, settling in Allentown, PA just north of Philadelphia. Prior to entering seminary, he earned degrees in Publicist Arts (University of Santo Domingo); Plastic Arts (National School of Fine Arts); and also studied Graphic Design at the Technological Institute of the Americas in the Dominican Republic. Juan was a member of the National Commission of Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Santo Domingo. He has served his Allentown parish, St. Paul’s, as a leader of the Hispanic apostolate, as well as catechist, cantor, lector, Eucharistic minister; and he is active in charismatic renewal. In addition, Juan has utilized his graphic design talents in service to the Office of Hispanic Affairs for his home diocese.

“Since I was very young, I felt the call to consecrated life, yet for various reasons I did not respond to that initial call, though that desire was present in my heart. With help from Fr. Juan Carlos Tobon and Fr. Andrew Gehringer, pastor of my parish; and the support of family, friends and brothers in the faith I feel called to bring Christ to people and bring them to Christ. Special words for me are, “The will of God will never take you to where the grace of God will not protect you. To gain that which is worth having, it may be necessary to lose everything else”.



BR. DOMINIC SAVIO TRAN

CISTERCIAN MONK, VIET NAM

Brother Savio is from Vinh City in central Viet Nam and has been a Cistercian monk for 16 years. His legal name is Luu Tran. In 2012, his Abbot and community assigned him to the United States to learn more about monastic life and to improve his English speaking skills at the Benedictine monastery of Mount Saviour in Pine City, N.Y. For 13 years, he lived in the monastery Our Lady of Grace in the Ba Ria Diocese in Viet Nam. He is a skilled wood carver and artist who has crafted many art pieces since coming to the U.S.

“I was born in a traditional Vietnamese Catholic family, so I grew up around many of my relatives who are priests, which led me to consider the priesthood for many years. Now that I have been sent by my community to Pope St. John Seminary I leave the rest up to God!”



DENNIS SKOWERA

DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD, MA

Dennis hails from Chicopee, MA and was raised in W. Springfield. He was married for 31 years before his wife’s sudden death. Before arriving at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary, Dennis was a manager with Phoenix Management, Inc., and Griffin Services, federal contractors. Prior to that Dennis had served 20 years in the US Air Force. He has a BA in Sacred Theology from Catholic Distance University, Hamilton, VA and attended Sacred Heart Parish in Springfield, where he served as a eucharistic minister and lector. Additonally, he volunteered at Mercy Medical Center providing communion to the sick.

“My (ex-) boss and friend James Carey most influenced my decision to heed God’s call to discern a vocation to the priesthood.”



Golden Jubilee Mass

Seminary faculty members gather after concelebrating the 50th Anniversary Mass September 5 vested in new chasubles donated by Rev. Thomas Shuler ‘13 of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

SAVE THE DATE
May 18 Golf Tournament
Weston Golf Club