



# SPARKS OF LIGHT

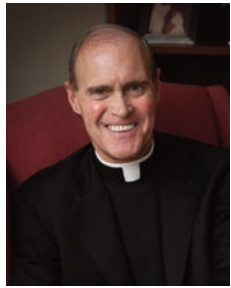
Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary

Answering the Call | Founded in 1964

Spring 2022



## LETTER FROM THE RECTOR



One of the greatest joys that I have as the Rector of Pope St. John Seminary, and there are way too many to list here, is the privilege that I have in representing the Seminary at the Ordinations of our Deacons to the Sacred Priesthood. It is always a pleasure to witness the Laying On of Hands and the Anointing with Chrism as the Bishop ordains these new priests and reminds them that they *"have been taken from among men and appointed on their behalf for those things that pertain to God."* I am filled with pride both for the new priests and for the wonderful faculty, staff, seminarians, and community that helped to form them and bring them to this day.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI wrote that the priest is a bridge between God and His people because *"it is through the priest that the people of God come face to face with their Lord."* Our present Holy Father, Pope Francis, has said that people have a right to see in all priests *"the way that the Lord has cared and continues to care for His people. Priesthood is not a career,"* says the Pope, *"but a service, a way of life. The priest must have "a style of closeness, a style of compassion, and a style of tenderness" to bring the Gospel of Mercy into our world and to enter the hearts of all people.*

Baptism calls all of us to a life of discipleship and of service. In this issue of **Sparks of Light**, you will read how this Seminary has tried to form our new priests through the service of others. We highlight the extraordinary service that others have generously provided for us as we continue to further our mission to form priests *"after the mind and heart of Christ."* We celebrate the tremendous contributions of our dedicated faculty, especially those of the Reverend Monsignor

Peter V. Conley and Dr. Anthony Keaty, who are retiring this year. We acknowledge with great gratitude the Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination our Vice Rector, the Reverend Paul E. Miceli, and his outstanding example of faithful and generous service to this community and to the wider Church. We congratulate our new Director of Intellectual Formation, the Reverend Joseph W. Zwosta, on his new appointment as well as his Tenth Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood.

Most of all, we offer thanks to Almighty God for the members of the Ordination Class of 2022. These new priests have been preparing for years to serve God and His Church in our very diverse and challenging world. It is my hope and prayer that Mary, who schooled Our Blessed Savior in the ways of genuine service, will continue to inspire them and form them in the image of Her Divine Son. With His guidance and grace, may all of us assist everyone that we encounter to know, love, and serve Our God and His Holy Catholic Church.

With my love and prayers for your happiness during this holy Season of Easter and my thanks for all that you do for all of us and asking for a remembrance in your prayers, I remain,

Fraternally yours in Christ,

Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely  
Rector



Cover: Seminarians from the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. with Cardinal Wilton Gregory, (L-R) Greg Zingler '24, Clifton Mastran '24 and Joseph Gonzalez '24.

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## SEMINARIANS ENCOUNTER A VIBRANT OUTREACH TO TEENS

by Tom Fallati, '25



St. Mary's parish in Dedham serves as a bright light in teen ministry. The PSJS first theology class recently travelled to St. Mary's to encounter this thriving ministry to teenagers. The visit was one of four pastoral visits providing first-year seminarians with exposure

to various forms of parish ministry.

The centerpiece of the ministry is Life Teen, a national program that the parish adopted twenty-four years ago. Several dozen teenagers, from middle school and high school, participate on a weekly basis.

PSJS third-year seminarians Edgar Serrano and Zachary Alspaugh serve the parish through their pastoral assignment, visiting the parish on a weekly basis to help with the Life Teen ministry. On February 6, they were joined by PSJS Dean of Seminarians and Pastoral Formation Fr. Stephen Linehan and the first-year seminarians.



After an introductory presentation by Fr. Wayne Belschner and the Life Team staff, the seminarians participated in what was a typical Sunday evening program. The evening started with a 5:00 p.m. Life Teen Mass, which includes contemporary music and allows teens to participate as lectors and servers. Mass was followed by supper, provided by parents and volunteers, allow-

ing a time of fellowship over a meal.


Following dinner was the "Life Night" program, which includes presentations on the faith that are engaging for teens, followed by a 'witness' talk. This night's program focused on vocation, with a witness talk by Zach Alspaugh '23 about how his work in homeless ministry led him on the path to the seminary. Life Teen participants then engaged in small group discussions and had the opportunity to hear from several first-year seminarians about how they discerned their vocations.



The St. Mary's Life Teen program has borne much fruit, notably in vocations. Two men being ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Boston this year are alumni of the program, as were three men ordained within recent years. Alumni also include a consecrated virgin and a permanent deacon, and several marriages have arisen from the program. Most recently, three alumni launched a young adult ministry to extend the parish's outreach to those in their twenties. It has grown to forty participants in just two years.

"Encounter" is a word that program coordinator Elizabeth Balzarini chose to describe the impact of Life Teen, which she said "is a place of clarity, for teenagers at a time when they experience confusion. I am impressed in seeing how God works in their hearts when they encounter that clarity and truth." The evening allowed the first-year seminarians to see this up front, an encounter that they can take to their own parish ministries in the future.

*Pastoral Visits  
with First Year Seminarians*

A photograph of a church altar. In the center is a large wooden crucifix with a statue of Jesus. Below it is a red book with a circular emblem. The altar is flanked by large arrangements of yellow and green flowers. The background is a dark wooden structure with a grid pattern.

*He is not here; for he has  
risen, as he said.*

*Matthew 28:6*





# CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2022

As we conclude another academic year, we congratulate the Class of 2022 on completion of their formation studies and as they prepare for priestly ordination in their respective dioceses. Enjoy their reflections throughout the magazine and join us in prayer and celebration as they go forth to serve God and His Church.



# REFLECTIONS

## CLASS OF 2022



**RUSSELL BERGMAN**  
Diocese of Albany

I feel very prepared to be a diocesan priest. Having had a summer to serve as a deacon in my home diocese, I felt ready to go to work right from the start. I had many opportunities to preach at daily and weekend Masses for which I was well prepared at seminary. My pastoral assignment at Ave Maria Parish in Lynnfield this last year in the Boston Archdiocese has also been a very positive and affirming experience. Also, during my second year of formation, I was assigned to work once a week at a long-term care facility. It was extremely humbling to know how God worked through me and helped affirm my vocation in a positive and concrete way. I am excited to get started {as a priest}, and grateful that I am not alone in this journey, with access to brother priests, deacons, faithful parishioners, and the Holy Spirit to help me be an instrument of God to the people to whom I am called to serve.



### REV. LAWRENCE BARILE '21 ORDAINED TO THE PRIESTHOOD

On December 8, 2021, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Rev. Lawrence Barile of the Class of 2021 was ordained for service as a priest in the Diocese of Norwich.

The Mass took place at the Cathedral of St. Patrick in Norwich and the Most

Reverend Michael R. Cote, D.D., Bishop of Norwich, was the celebrant. Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely, Rector of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary was in attendance along with seven faculty members from the Seminary.

Before entering seminary, Fr. Barile was educated in respiratory therapy and worked for 28 years for the Department of Veterans' Affairs with the State of Connecticut as the department head of cardiopulmonary services.



*Rev. Larry Barile blesses fellow PSJS alumnus, Rev. Frank Rouleau '00*



# UNWRAPPING THE GIFT OF WONDER

Rev. Paul Miceli



Many years ago, I took a course at Boston College at which time I was introduced to the writings of Abraham Heschel, the great Jewish theologian and philosopher. His work opened me to the importance of nurturing a sense of wonder in our lives.

In conversations with various people during the pandemic, I realized that for many, life had in a sense gone flat. They spoke of being deflated. You could almost hear the sigh. Where did all the wonder go?

When I was a child there was a popular brand of bread; in fact it is still around today. It is called Wonder Bread.

As I listen to and look at so many people today, I think that we need loaves and loaves of Wonder Bread. I can see myself stuffing it into people's mouths. Mangia! Mangia!

Abraham Heschel has written that we need large doses of wonder every day, and he is right on target. We need to be inoculated with it so we don't lose a sense of wonder. All too many have had this instinct knocked out of them as they faced the various challenges and disappointments of life. We need to see the world through the prism of

the psalmist, whose life was wrapped in wonder. Without a sense of wonder our lives become weary. We go to bed tired and get up in the morning as tired as we were the night before. I believe it was D.H. Lawrence who spoke of a loss of zest and delight as being symptoms of an eclipse of wonder.

Our distractedness, hypervigilance and compulsiveness desensitize us to living with a sense of wonder and awe.

Not too long ago, I remember sitting on a deck and watching raindrops as they splashed onto the leaves of a tree. I just kept staring and saying "how beautiful!" I startled myself when I considered how long it had been since I sat in wonder at the sight of drops of rain.

*continued on pg 18*



# REFLECTIONS

## CLASS OF 2022



**JAMES BOULETTE**  
Diocese of Worcester

As I reflect on my four years here at Pope Saint John XXIII, I have a deep appreciation of the exemplary faculty and staff that are here, how each of them has assisted me in my formation, and how I feel very prepared to enter full-time ministry. In my Deacon assignment at Saint John's in Clinton, I can already see that I am able to incorporate behaviors and knowledge that my formation has provided me, as well as the grace of the Holy Spirit. During a summer assignment a couple years ago, I started providing Spiritual Direction to some young adults that were seeking to go deeper in their faith life, and I really enjoy doing this work. I would like to continue offering Spiritual Direction in my ministry, and I hope to be able to expand on it wherever I am assigned. The best part of being at Pope Saint John XXIII is being able to have discussion about faith and share our faith journeys with men of a similar age.



# REFLECTIONS

## CLASS OF 2022



**HOA BINH HA**  
Diocese of Oakland

Four years at Pope Saint John Seminary XXIII National Seminary is a perfect time for my vocation. I am so grateful. I have had growth in the academic, human, spiritual and pastoral pillars and I know I am well-prepared by the faculty. I am confident that God's grace is at work within me to draw closer to diaconate and priestly ordination. My pastoral assignment has especially been a good time for me to experience a busy weekend of priesthood through my observation of my pastor. It is an excellent time to have real contact with the people of God in the parish. The way they love the Church makes me confident in my ministry.



## SAVE THE DATE!

30th Annual  
Fran and Stephen Rowen  
Memorial Golf Tournament

**Monday, May 23, 2022**  
**Weston Golf Club**

[www.psj.s.edu/golf-tournaments](http://www.psj.s.edu/golf-tournaments)



## THE RIGHT TO LIFE: OUR OBLIGATION TO DEFEND LIFE

*Barry Mongeon of the Archdiocese of Boston and a member of the Class of 2024 traveled with fellow seminarians, faculty, and members of the Knights of Columbus to Washington, D.C. for the March for Life 2022. Here is his reflection on his experience.*

When we make plans to go on a vacation or some sort of trip, we initially concern ourselves with the preparations. What should we pack, how much should we bring, where will we stay, where will we go? Good preparations are expected to secure a good time and a "good time" helps to set memories. As I prepared my journey to Washington, D.C. for this year's March for Life, I couldn't have imagined the impact this trip would have on me because though I had been to D.C. several times, this was the first March for Life I have attended. It's a different type of journey for me. It's one which, inspired by the Holy Spirit, had purpose

and one that had the potential to change lives and hearts. We might be able to plan a journey, but we have no idea the effect that journey will have on us and on others.

As we approached the city Wednesday night, we started to see familiar state buildings, museums, and the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception all lit up against the night sky and the journey started to become real and exciting. After checking into our hotel and then a good night sleep, we head out the next morning free to explore. Later that afternoon we prepared for our first Mass at the Basilica. As we approached the Basilica we could see priests, seminarians, nuns, students, and families all making their way up the steps to the front door, all being called by the Holy Spirit. When I entered the Basilica, I was once again struck by the beauty of the art work and the space. What impressed me the most this time was the



people, the huge amount of people from all walks of life, all there for one purpose; to pray for the unborn and for the women who find themselves in desperate situations.

After a night of liturgy, devotion, music and reflection, we had a bite to eat and then back to the hotel. The next day we were up early and off to the Basilica for morning mass. Cardinal Seán O'Malley was the celebrant that day. He said many inspiring and insightful things, but the ones that stood out to me were very much to the point. He said that all human life has the "right to life" and it is our obligation to defend that right. I most appreciated his understanding and compassion for the women who find themselves in difficult situations. He made it clear that it is our responsibility to help them through these times, while never judging or criticizing. He spoke honestly and frankly about abortion, and its impact on our society, and for me the most stirring thing he said was, "build a civilization of love or there will be no civilization at all." How true. The only way for civilization to evolve and grow toward a peaceful existence is through our love for one another.



After the walk on Friday, up Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court, we loaded the bus and headed back to Weston. Grateful to have been a part of the walk, I sat back for the 7 hour ride and reflected on the event. I think I was most touched and moved by the people, the church of Jesus Christ, who gathered together reverently, devotedly and without reserve. We were all there together, one body in Christ. What a wonderful way to experience the way God works within us and brings us together in peace and love. Maybe Cardinal Seán will get his wish one day and the world will become a "civilization of love."



## REFLECTIONS

### CLASS OF 2022



**JEROME KLEPONIS**  
Diocese of Harrisburg

Although I feel well-prepared to assume the calling to the Priesthood, I will also miss a lot about PSJS. As I always say about the brotherhood I feel with my class (and the other seminarians): "I grew up as an only child, but when I came here, I feel like I won the brother lottery." I'm looking forward to all phases of ministry: just as in my previous life I was a general dentist, now I would like to be a general priest. There are many fine experiences I've had here, one of which is my Diaconate assignment at the Braintree Catholic Collaborative with Father Paul Clifford and his team. My experiences there have prepared and energized me for my new life as a priest.



# PSJS LENTEN DAY OF SERVICE

By Rev. Scott Surrency, OFM Cap.



The evening of March 23, PSJS's own Fr. Vincent Daily led the seminary community in prayer at a special Holy Hour to commemorate Dorothy Day, who after her death in 1980 at the age of 83 was described by one historian as "the most important, interesting, and influential figure in the history of American Catholicism." Fr. Daily gave a stimulating presentation on the Gospel life and message of this selfless and courageous Servant of God from New York City, which set the proper tone for the Lenten day of service the following day. Seminarians, faculty, and staff divided up and went to serve in a spirit of Christian love at four different ministry sites.

One group went to the **Friends of the Unborn Maternity Home** in Quincy, which offers to expectant and new mothers in need a loving home and a supportive community. A number of seminarians and priests helped with general maintenance and cleaning around the house and property. They were also treated to a delicious homemade lunch prepared by some of the women. The highlight of the day was having the chance to talk with and get to know the young mothers and to exchange experiences about the gifts and the challenges of living in community.



Another group went to **Cradles to Crayons** in Newton, whose mission is to provide children from homeless and low-income families with what they need to feel safe, warm, and valued in the home, at school, and on the playground. Seminarians, faculty, and staff joined other volunteers to sort through donations and get them ready for distribution at The Giving Factory.



A third group went into South Boston to help at the **Food Pantry sponsored by St. Monica's Parish**, whose pastor, Fr. Peter DeFazio, is a PSJS alum. Seminarians and members of the faculty and staff sorted through boxes of food to be distributed and then joined other volunteers to greet and assist clients and to be a kind and welcoming presence for them.



The sturdier seminarians and priests put their brawn at the service of the good and holy monks at **St. Benedict's Abbey in Still River**, transforming two dilapidated rooms into two as-good-as-new guestrooms in a matter of hours.



Nearly 50 members of the PSJS community gave of their time and of themselves, and they all agreed that it was a day well spent encountering Jesus Christ in their brothers and sisters. Many of them said that they are eager to return to the site where they helped in order to build on the relationships that were begun and to continue to serve. When we are faced with the needs of others and try to respond as generously as we can, our own needs and problems have a way of becoming less urgent. Serving others outside the seminary walls was also a fitting way to prepare for the beautiful Solemnity of the Annunciation the next day, since this was when the Eternal Word became flesh in the most pure womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary in order to come to us to serve, not to be served.



## Rev. Msgr. Peter V. Conley Retires from Faculty

In December of 2021, it was announced to the community that one of our most beloved figures at the Seminary would retire from his duties as formator. Msgr. Peter V. Conley decided to step down and move to Regina Cleri Residence in Boston for retired priests. Rev. Brian Kiely, Rector, gave tribute to Msgr. Conley and we would like to share his note to the community. Msgr. Conley was instrumental in helping to form pre-theologians with philosophy instruction as well as fourth theologians with case studies for the Integrative Colloquium course. Msgr. Conley was applauded at the Annual Christmas celebration, held at The Weston Country Club, where he was presented with a gift to express all our appreciation for his special contributions to the Seminary.

From Very Rev. Brian Kiely, Rector  
December 2021

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

*It is with a certain sadness but with a heart overflowing with gratitude that I share with you that the REVEREND MONSIGNOR PETER V. CONLEY has decided to retire from the Faculty of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary. Monsignor Conley has been an invaluable asset to this community, and we have been blessed to*

*have shared his tremendous gifts with us for these past seven years.*

As many of you may know, Msgr. Conley “retired” from his position as Pastor of St. Jude’s Parish in Norfolk, MA in 2014. Having previously served on the Faculty of Pope St. John Seminary, Msgr. Conley accepted an invitation to return to the Seminary and to serve this community as a Formator. Msgr. Conley has had a profound influence on all of us as he modeled the true life and ministry of a priest. Day in and day out, Msgr. Conley’s wisdom and wit, along with his deep faith in the Lord, brought such a calming presence to this community. To say that Msgr. Conley will be missed is a huge understatement, but I respect his decision and pray that God will bless him with that same joy with which He has blessed all of us through the gift of Msgr. Conley.

Msgr. Conley has decided to move to the Regina Cleri Residence in Boston at the end of this semester. I am confident that all of you will join with me in expressing our deep appreciation for his long service to this community and to offer to him our prayers for his continued happiness. He certainly deserves that and much more.

**Ad Multos Annos!**





## *Dr. Anthony Keaty to Retire in May*

For over 16 years, Dr. Anthony Keaty has served the Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary community as a faculty member and as Director of Intellectual Formation and Academic Dean. Dr. Keaty has decided to retire effective May 8, 2022. In reflecting on Dr. Keaty's contributions over the years, Seminary Rector Fr. Brian Kiely shares, "...His wise counsel and gracious manner have enabled us to provide the Church with priests who are intellectually sound, pastorally prepared, and spiritually balanced. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Keaty for his thoughtful advice and guidance with regards to academic affairs as well as a myriad of items associated with the life of the Seminary...he will always be welcome here anytime. May God bless him and reward him for all that he has done, and may his future be filled with the joy and peace that he so justly deserves." The future is bright!



Announced from Rector Fr. Brian Kiely is the appointment of Rev. Joseph Zwosta to the position of Director of Intellectual Formation and Academic Dean, starting in May. The Seminary looks forward to Fr. Zwosta taking the reins from Dr. Keaty and leading the Intellectual Formation of seminarians to ensure that these men will be soundly rooted in the foundation of Church teachings.



In December 2021, Faculty member Rev. Scott Surrency, OFM Cap. received his license in Sacred Theology (STL) from Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. We congratulate you, Fr. Scott, on all of your hard work and this momentous achievement!



# REFLECTIONS

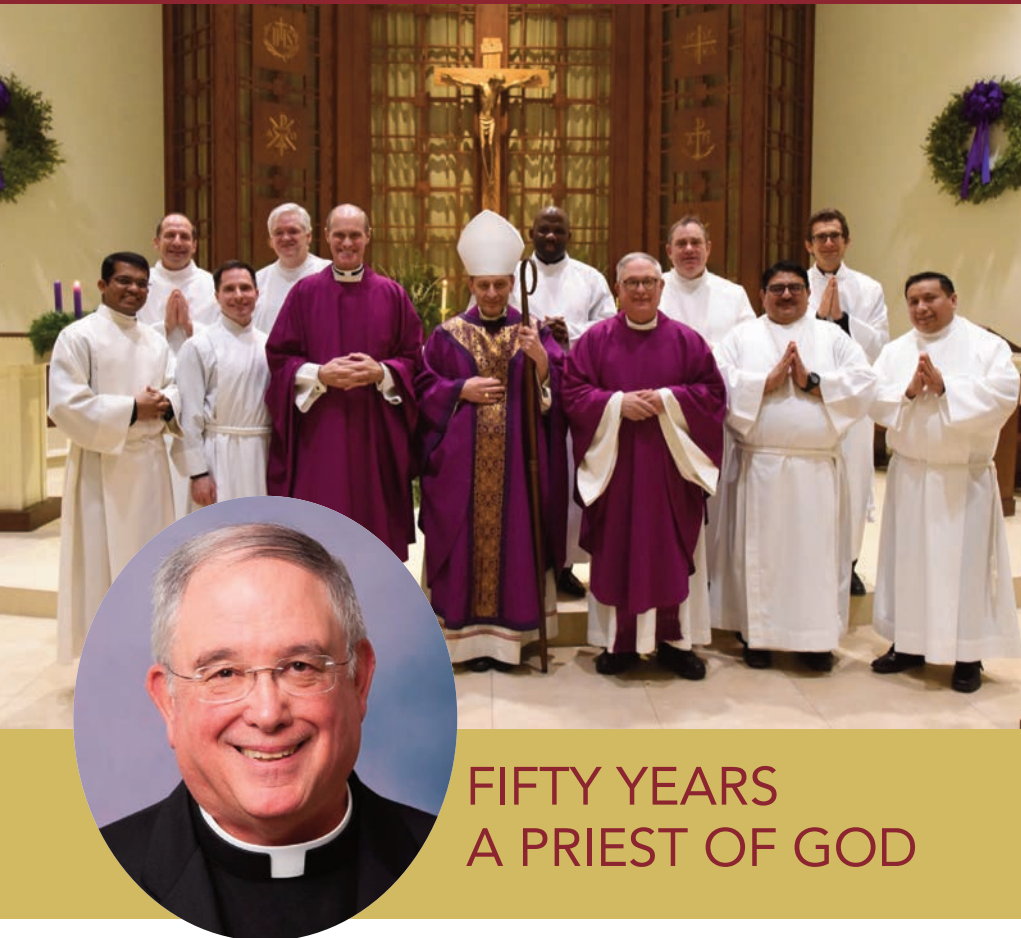
CLASS OF 2022



ROBERT MILLER

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

One of the more enjoyable experiences I had while in formation was spending time getting to know the different priests who lived in the different rectories. Two nights a week everyone got together for dinner and spent the time in good conversation. I'm chiefly attracted to the confessional. I think it's central in the daily battles of striving to live a life of holiness and I look forward to making it more available in order to facilitate a deeper relationship with the Lord.

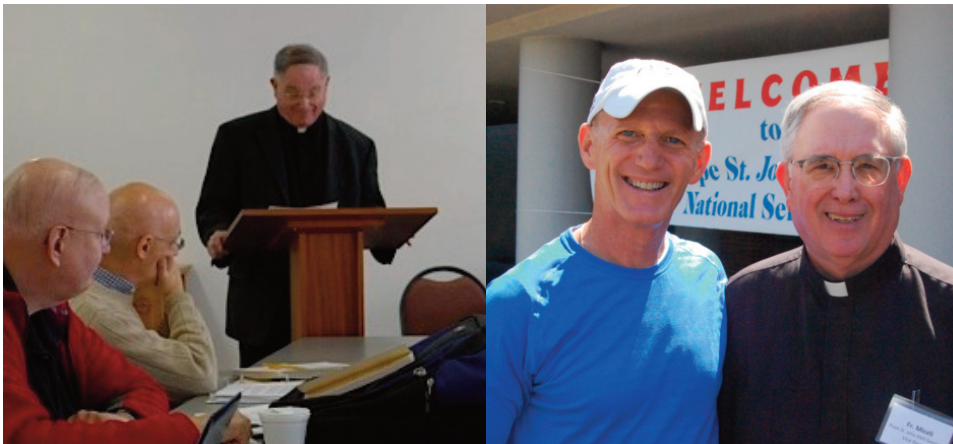


## FIFTY YEARS A PRIEST OF GOD

*Congratulations, Fr. Paul E. Miceli, for Fifty years of service to the people of the Archdiocese of Boston*

During that time, Fr. Miceli has served in numerous capacities. He has been a pastor, the Vicar for Clergy, and a spiritual director at Saint John's Seminary in Brighton, MA. He then joined Pope St. John XXIII and has served as a formator, as Director of Spiritual Direction, as Dean of Men and is currently serving as Vice Rector of the Seminary.

We applaud all that you have done over the years in ministry to God's Church.



*The Harvest is plentiful  
but the laborers are few!*

**Can't stop thinking maybe  
you are being called to  
be a priest?**

Do you feel the Lord tugging at your heart  
to serve the people of God through the  
ministerial priesthood of Jesus Christ?

[www.psjs.edu](http://www.psjs.edu)

# SPOTLIGHT: REV. JORGE V. ROCHA '16

## *"Seek to do God's will above all else"*

Rev. Jorge V. Rocha is a member of the Class of 2016, serving in the Diocese of Providence, and is pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in East Providence, Rhode Island. Fr. Rocha became pastor two years (on July 1, 2018) after ordination to priesthood. Many PSJS alumni become pastors quickly due to their first career experiences coupled with a maturity they bring to the priesthood having answered God's call at a later stage in life. The diversity of life experiences shared by these mature seminarians enriches both the Seminary community and their future ministries in the Church.



prayer that drives service.

**You graduated from Seminary in 2016. When were you assigned pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in East Providence, RI? Have you been able to draw on your first career experiences to minister to your parishioners and in the day-to-day operation of running a parish?**

I was assigned Administrator in August of 2017 and Pastor in July of 2018. Yes, I have been able to draw from my experiences mainly being organized and depending on others. It

is about relationships and the most important is the one with God.

St. Francis Xavier parish is enriched by a Portuguese community – vibrant, active and ready to come back together and stronger after COVID restrictions. We asked Fr. Rocha about what it has been like for him as a parish priest and, more specifically, why he believes he was ready to assume the role of pastor quickly after ordination.

**Did you feel well-prepared after a PSJS formation to fulfill your expected duties as a diocesan priest? What aspect of formation was most helpful/impactful as you assumed that role?**

I felt prepared, but I did not think becoming a pastor would happen so quickly especially at such a big parish. All the pillars of formation were and are impactful. PSJS is a welcoming community where I could build relationships and learn from others' past experiences, and this was beneficial. Above all, it is the

**What is your favorite part of being pastor to such a vibrant community? Speak about your parish community and the active ways your parishioners keep engaged in parish life, especially during COVID challenges, and how they embolden one another to stay engaged and keep the bonds of the parish together.**

My favorite part is celebrating the sacraments. St. Francis Xavier Church was built in 1916 by Portuguese immigrants [mostly from the Azores] and the Catholic traditions that they celebrated in their native home, continue to this day in the U.S. The parishioners are active in every part of the parish, and they sacrifice much in order to maintain and strengthen the importance of service after the example of their ancestors and most of above after the example of Christ.

Covid was challenging and the parishioners did their part to help one another and help the parish.

**What advice can you give to current seminarians in formation at PSJS and also to men who may be discerning a call to the priesthood but think it is too late?**

The best advice I can give is to strengthen your prayer life and trust in God's Providence. Seek to do God's will above all else.







# ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON BLACK CATHOLIC CHOIR CONCERT AND OPEN HOUSE

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary hosted an Open House on Sunday, March 13, 2022. The Archdiocese of Boston Black Catholic Choir performed their first concert since the COVID-19 pandemic. Our guests and the PSJS community enjoyed an afternoon filled with uplifting gospel and spiritual music followed by a reception in the Learning Center.

This choir was established in 1992 to “enhance liturgies & prayer services and to present concerts throughout the Archdiocese of Boston and beyond by raising their voices in song to the Lord.”

Under the direction of Mr. Meyer Chambers, Campus Minister for Liturgical Arts at Boston College, Music Director of St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Dorchester, MA and Liturgical Music Director at St. Sebastian’s School in Needham, MA, the choir sings music from the Black Catholic perspective.

We look forward to welcoming them back to campus next year.



## REFLECTIONS CLASS OF 2022



**ALEXANDER OLSZEWSKI**  
Diocese of Brooklyn

I feel especially called to the ministries of Catechism and Confession. I hope I am assigned to a parish with a school so that I can continue the work I did while on pastoral year. When I was young, there was a TV show called *Mr. Wizard’s World* that taught science in a way that was entertaining and informative. I have found his style of teaching to be an inspiration as I plan lessons for school children.

The pastoral year was a good experience that allowed me daily interactions with the parishioners. We were hit by Covid that year, which made it an even more unforgettable experience. Perhaps the greatest lesson I learned there was to know the people, like the shepherd knows his sheep. They will respond so well once they know you genuinely care for them.



## IN MEMORIAM

**Rev. Paul Nomellini '77**

Diocese of Marquette

**Rev. Edward Serena '81**

Archdiocese of Boston

**Rev. Paul Williams, OFM '86**

Diocese of Charleston

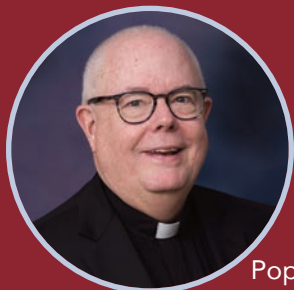


## REQUEST FOR PRAYERS

In an effort to stay connected with our broader community, we invite you to share your prayer intentions with our seminarians. Visit our website at [www.psjs.edu](http://www.psjs.edu) and see the link for Prayer Requests right on the home page. Seminarians will pray for each of your requests when they gather in Alumni Chapel.

## REFLECTIONS

### CLASS OF 2022



**JAMES O'ROURKE**

Diocese of Albany

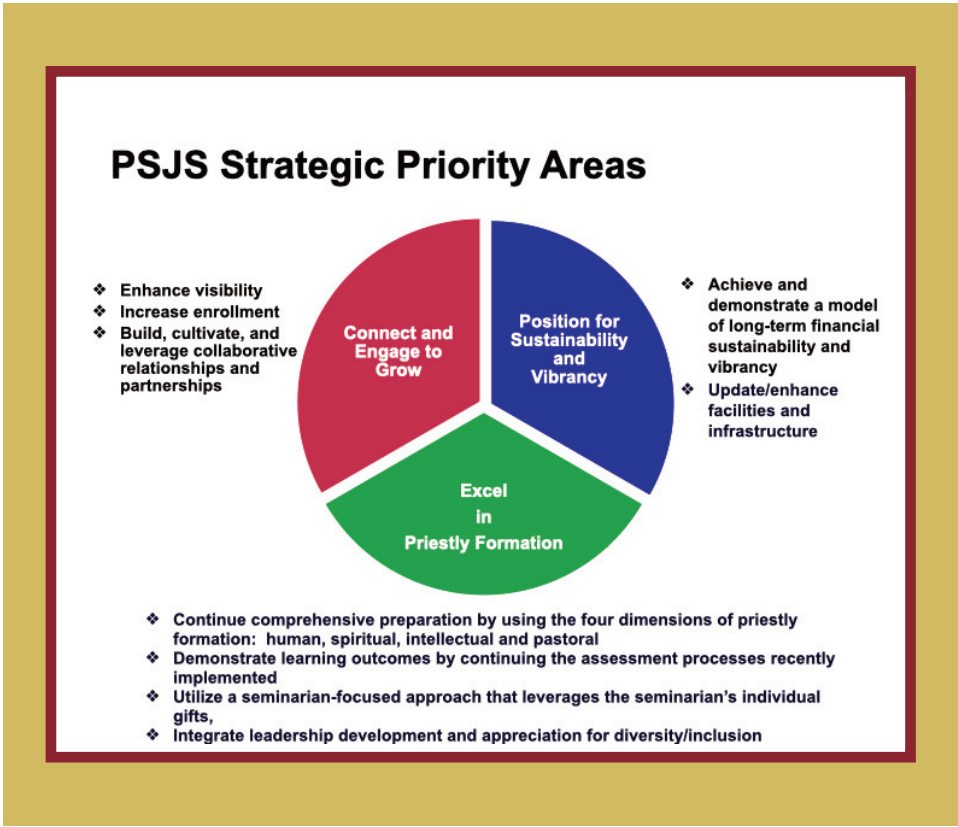


Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary has done an excellent job of preparing me for future ministry in the priesthood. We have a well-rounded and balanced program of academics, prayer, and formation at all the pillars. The Parish experiences that I have had were excellent and were united with effective leadership and guidance from experienced parish mentors. One of the most arduous experiences was seminary life under a pandemic. For four semesters we had to meet the challenges, sometimes acute and sometimes continual, offered by the pandemic. It was amazing to see how administration, faculty, support staff and, most importantly, all of my seminarian brothers pulled together to tackle problems. Overall, I am proud to call PSJS my second home.



# PSJS LOOKS TO THE FUTURE WITH A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

In the summer of 2021, the Seminary applied for and was granted funding from Lilly Endowment Inc., in partnership with the Association of Theological Schools, to fund the hiring of a Strategic Planning Consultant. Soon after, the Seminary hired Carol Marturano-Becker, President of IMPACT Learning, Inc. Working with Carol has allowed the Seminary to assess its current challenges and opportunities and begin to further strengthen the program offered at Pope St. John XXIII. The Administration at the Seminary is grateful to Carol for her insight and expertise as it continues to work with her to hone and refine next steps to keep the Seminary in a position of strength.



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SCAN HERE



## REFLECTIONS CLASS OF 2022



**BERTRAND PROULX**  
Archdiocese of Boston

I feel prepared for the ministry of priesthood as a result of my formation here at PSJS. There was a balance, and I learned to not let my prayer life take a back seat to the many academic deliverables. This discipline is something that is transferable to parish life where there are increasing expectations with fewer resources such as ministering in a collaborative of multiple parishes. In addition, there were several human formation conferences which brought home the idea of proper balance. I also can take with me the experiences from all my pastoral assignments.

I will always remember the generosity of spirit of my brother seminarians when many, including me, were in isolation in our rooms in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Seminarians volunteered to bring meals from the refectory to those of us that were in our rooms, and many chipped in to help in the kitchen. Also, a community was started among those isolated in their rooms where we would pray evening prayer together via Zoom. I felt very blessed to be in such a supportive environment through a difficult time.



# REFLECTIONS

## CLASS OF 2022



**EUGENE SCHAEFFER**

Archdiocese of St. Louis

In the 1980s, I entered a high school seminary. I was not ready then. Years later, after being married, having children, experiencing divorce and annulment, being ordained a permanent deacon in 2002, and now after three years at PSJS, I finally feel like I am the priest God has called me to be. What attracted me to the vocation, and I still find to be the most attractive to me, is the ability to be able to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I believe that the world is in great need for peace and compassion, and I believe that reconciliation and forgiveness is the key for that peace.

One particular moment during seminary formation when I really felt the presence of the Holy Spirit was while working with the dementia group at Youville Place Assisted Living. There was one specific day where we gathered the residents around a table. Most of them, over time, contributed something to a word exercise about fall foliage and together we formed a poem from those words. The residents really connected with the exercise as well as connecting with the poem itself. I really felt that God was working in that moment, and some joy was brought to these people who really need joy.



*continued from page 7*

I am convinced that Heschel was correct when he asserted that a life without wonder isn't worth living. Sam Keen in his book *An Apology for Wonder* wrote that all too many suffer from a loss of the instinct of astonishment.

If we look at our educational systems, we see this same erosion. Heschel noted that we teach our children how to measure and to weigh, but fail to teach them how to revere, how to sense wonder and awe. I see this as an incredible loss and a human tragedy.

I propose that what we are experiencing today in the diminishment of faith and the lack of appreciation of sacramental realities, especially of the Eucharist, is in direct proportion to this diminishment of wonder. Heschel tells us that what we lack is not the will to believe but the will to wonder. He nails it once again. Faith and wonder go hand and hand. Wonder fuels faith.

Recently in a conference, I told our seminarians that we must never become numb, indifferent or take for granted what we as priests see, touch, bless, consecrate and encounter every day. We must be vigilant that our sacred ministry doesn't disintegrate into something routine that loses its

sacramental luster. We must live in a world that shimmers with grace, see the world through what the early Christian apologist and theologian Tertullian called grace healed eyes. We can become so used to seeing the world through the shadows of spiritual cataclysms that we no longer see the wondrous light.

We need to commit ourselves every day to unwrapping the gift of wonder. This will help to prevent us from becoming indifferent to the sublime wonder of life and waking up one day asking a tragic question: where did all the wonder go?

It was Einstein who told us that one who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe is as good as dead; his eyes are closed.

We can protect this gift of wonder if we have eyes that are open, hearts that are grateful, and if every so often we remove our shoes because we realize we are standing on holy ground.





# CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

By Tom Fallati '25

"Am I not the source of your joy?" These words of Our Lady of Guadalupe took on a special significance on December 12, as the PSJS community celebrated a Mass on Our Lady's feast day.

The Mass, organized by the PSJS Hispanic Affairs Committee, was celebrated by Fr. Kiely entirely in Spanish. It included Spanish music provided by the Hispanic Music Ministry at St. Stephen's Church in Framingham.

The devotion recalls a series of appearances to St. Juan Diego in December 1531 near present-day Mexico City. The Blessed Mother left what is now known as the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on his 'tilma', or outer garment.

The PSJS community has for several years celebrated bilingual Masses in Spanish and English every Friday throughout the seminary year and for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The December 12 Mass was the first PSJS Mass celebrated entirely in Spanish.

Seminarian Edgar Serrano, who is active in



the local Hispanic community, organized the liturgy. After the Mass, the entire PSJS community enjoyed a meal with numerous Spanish dishes, including foods prepared by the PSJS refectory staff, as well as members of St. Stephen's, PSJS Professor Nilza Gonzalez-Pedemonte and PSJS staff member Julio Carreiro.

Seminarian Joe Gonzalez, the committee president, provided an authentic reproduction of the Our Lady of Guadalupe image for the Mass. He shared words capturing the spirit of the day: "I am proud to be 'Guadalupeño'! She is the source of our joy!"



## REFLECTIONS CLASS OF 2022



**ANDREW TSUI**

Diocese of Brooklyn

From a worldly point of view, it may seem like a crazy idea to have second-career seminarians. Some may think: "These seminarians are older and have fewer years to give compared to younger seminarians." In the world's eyes, some may think they'll receive less from their investment. However, God can use an old writing instrument and create a beautiful masterpiece! He can use a second-career seminarian and turn him into a future saint!

Take, for example, St. Ignatius of Loyola. He entered the seminary in his mid-40s, was ordained to the priesthood when he was 46, and died when he was 60 years old. He gave 14 years to the Church as a priest, and founded one of the most extraordinary religious orders in the Church... the Society of Jesus - better known as the Jesuits. Like St. Ignatius, the Lord calls older men to serve His Church. Men with incredible talents and gifts are yearning to be used to build up the Church. At Pope St. John XXIII Seminary, I can testify that there are holy and generous men like that here. I have been blessed and honored to be formed with such great and holy men!



# REFLECTIONS

## CLASS OF 2022



**VINCENT VU**  
Diocese of Brooklyn

The time in formation and studying at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary was a precious time for me to realize that the priesthood is not a “job” that each person can choose for himself. Rather, it is a mission that is associated with a special vocation that God reserved for those who were called and chosen even before they were born, as the Lord said to the prophet Jeremiah: “Before I formed you in your mother’s womb, I knew you; before you were born, I sanctified you”

The day I had decided to enter the seminary, God guided me, and I believe that he continues to guide, love, and to support me in my vocation. I keep in my heart that the redemptive mission that Christ performed and entrusted to the Church consists of three main tasks, namely, teaching as a teacher, sanctifying as a priest, and governing as a pastor. I will try with all my efforts to spread the Word of God to all people. For that purpose, I want to be a good priest in prayer, celebration of the Eucharist, the sacraments, and in ministry. As a future priest and Jesus’ disciple, I want to dedicate my life to God and His Church in order to bring more people to Jesus. May God help me through the intercession of our Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, and St. Pope John XXIII.



## NEW EPISCOPAL VICAR FOR HAITIAN CATHOLICS REV. GUY DORMEVIL '21

We congratulate Rev. Guy Dormevil, Class of 2021, and currently serving at the Church of St. Joseph and St. Ladislaus in Norwalk, and who was appointed by Bishop Frank Caggiano as Episcopal Vicar for Haitian Catholics for the Diocese of Bridgeport. The appointment is a term of three years and also makes Fr. Dormevil a member of the Council of Vicars that meets quarterly with the Bishop to discuss areas of pastoral ministry and concern.



Fr. Guy shares his journey to priesthood in his own words: “I am a native of Haiti where I worked as an Immigration Inspector for many years. Upon my arrival in the U.S., I earned my degree and lived in Connecticut for some 30 years. I was married for twenty-nine years, until my wife lost her battle to cancer in 2015. I am a devoted father of two grown children, a son and a daughter. I have always been active in the Church serving as an altar server, youth minister, prayer group leader, liturgical minister, Eucharistic minister and charismatic group leader. I also served on my Parish finance council, advisory council, and as a trustee. After the death of my wife, just as the Risen Christ petitioned Peter for a second time to care for His sheep, He came back to me. When my Pastor invited me to consider a priestly vocation, I felt I couldn't delay any longer. Two months after I met with the Vocations Director for the Diocese of Bridgeport, I resigned my job of 26 years to follow the will of God. PSJS has provided a warm welcome and the camaraderie of brotherhood. I pray that God will bless me and my brother seminarians with the grace needed to be the Lord's voice for the New Evangelization Initiative of the Catholic Church.”

## DIACONATE CELEBRATIONS

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano ordained seminarian Anh Vu a transitional deacon for the Diocese of Bridgeport on Saturday, March 12th at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport, Connecticut.

Additional diaconate celebrations:

**April 2, 2022**

Michael Young '22,  
Diocese of Venice

Edgar Serrano '23,  
Diocese of Orlando

**April 9, 2022**

Robert Miller '22,  
Archdiocese of Oklahoma City







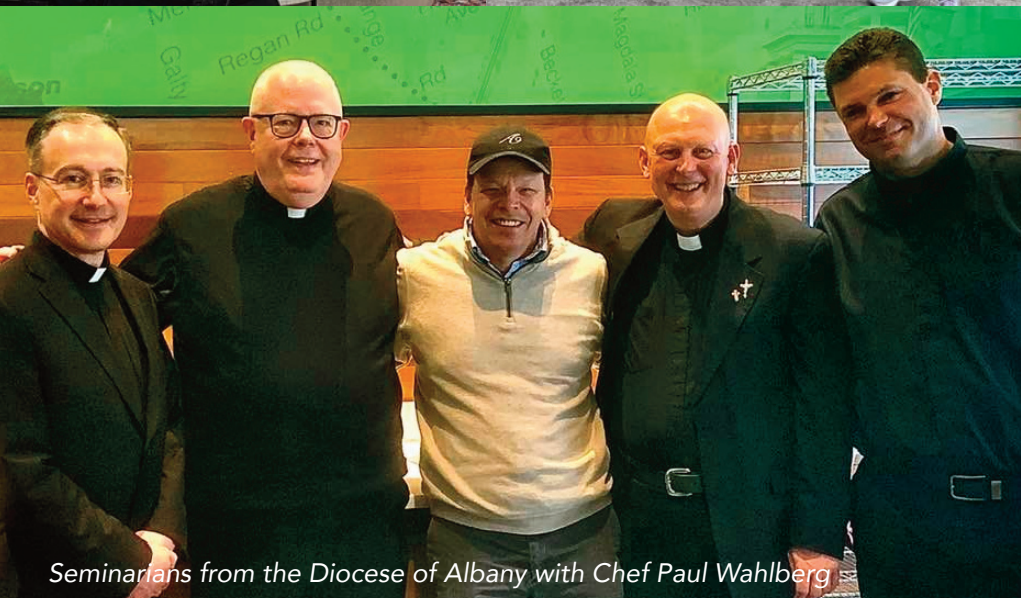
Ping Pong Tournament



Superbowl Tournament



Community Bocce Tournament



Seminarians from the Diocese of Albany with Chef Paul Wahlberg



First year men studying

# REFLECTIONS

## CLASS OF 2022



**MICHAEL YOUNG**  
Diocese of Venice

As a seminarian, my formation is akin to the building of a ship in a shipyard. As I complete my 4th year, I am like a ship about to be launched. Just prior to being launched, a ship is christened and so it is with us when we are ordained. Just as a ship will set sail, I will begin my journey as a priest. There will be many challenges ahead. I am prepared for stormy seas as well as calm seas, but as the saying goes, calm seas make for poor sailors. I am confident that Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary has provided me with a sound foundation to prepare me for my upcoming priestly voyage.

My most powerful and memorable pastoral assignment was prison ministry at MCI-Shirley. In this front-line ministry, I was able to uphold and heal the human spirit. There were many aspects to this which included conducting Communion services, spiritual-counseling and praying with those who have experienced violence, pastoral care of residents in the prison hospital, facilitating ecumenical workshops which included Catholic, Islamic, and Protestant residents, and so forth. But what was really amazing was that I was able to learn so much from these residents by just listening to their testimonies and learning about their approach to faith.





# MINISTRY OF ACOLYTE

With Cardinal Wilton Gregory,  
Archbishop of Washington



On February 9, 2022, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary was blessed to have Cardinal Wilton Gregory of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. preside over the institution of twelve seminarians to the Ministry of Acolyte. The installation Mass plays an important role in the formation of these men in their journey towards becoming priests. As an acolyte, each man's primary role will be assisting the deacon and priest during Mass. They may also serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at Mass, bring Holy Eucharist to the sick, and participate in other tasks while aiding the priest and deacon during liturgical celebrations.



## Homily from Cardinal Wilton Gregory:

*My Dear Brothers,*

*The Church does not linger very long over the events of the Christmas Mystery. She hurries Jesus along from infancy to young adulthood rather quickly with our scriptural readings. Our American sentiments may be offended by not being able to bask at the childhood moments of the Lord's life. For you see, our Church considers His adulthood much more important than His childhood. Soon after Christmas and Epiphany, we begin to listen to God's Word while gathered around the dual tables that the Church prepares and like the little children we once were, we pay attention to those stories that belong to the very heart of the Church and that in turn gives hope to the Church's heart.*

*The origins of the Eucharist can be traced to table fellowship, ordinary tables much like those that you probably found in your own homes – not the fancy dining room tables that many of your homes may have had that were only used on rare and very special occasions, but the everyday tables that were to be found in kitchens and breakfast nooks. These tables that served as the places where you may have gathered as children, and where you were taught to pray, where you shared your fears and worries, boasted of your victories and triumphs, and on occasion received the justice that your behavior had richly deserved. Those tables where every day meals were served, that every now and*



then, became desks and places that sometimes even held the family's laundry, groceries or other treasures.

The altars of our churches had such humbles beginnings as well as the rituals that we celebrate that have been perfected in and by Christ Himself had their own beginnings with such humble proto-types. Tables like those are where people who are hungry still gather to be nourished and fed. Such tables are where God feeds His people with his Word and Sacrament. This evening, a number of you are being designated servants and caretakers of the Lord's Table. You are being commissioned to assist with feeding the hungers of your brothers and sisters – the hungers that we all have for the Bread of Life.

You are being entrusted with the Ministry of Acolyte; you will become an official servant around the Lord's Altar, entrusted with caring for the vessels and implements that are used in offering the sacrificial gifts. As an Acolyte, you will also be assigned a responsibility to share the Bread of Life with God's People. Thus, you are to respond to the hungers of the human family through tonight's celebration. You are to feed the hearts of God's People with a share of the Bread of Life that responds to the yearnings that we all have for Christ Himself.

This new responsibility is intended to help you better to understand the Church's need for Jesus Christ, present in this unique Sacrament. This ministry is not so much a privilege as it is an

obligation for you to be attentive to the longings of the heart of the Church. Just as Jesus often looked upon the hungry crowds and felt pity for them because they were without guidance, without hope, without direction, so must you, as Acolytes have a sensitivity for the faces and hearts of the poor and neglected. This evening, you tell the Church that you will pray and work to become even more attentive, more loving, and more responsive to those hungers since Christ chooses you to act in His name and in the name of His Church by sharing with you this ministry and this responsibility. Thank you, for saying yes to this invitation. May the Lord who has begun a good work in you bring it to fulfillment. Amen.

The men who were installed as acolytes include: Patrick Thomas Bruen, Archdiocese of Detroit; William Edward Burns, Diocese of Orlando; Brian Thomas Delaney, Archdiocese of Boston; Thomas R. Fallati, Diocese of Albany; John Anthony Ippolito, Archdiocese of New York; Brother John Kim, Saint Joseph Abbey; William Patrick Long, Diocese of Venice; Clifton Troy Mastran, Archdiocese of Washington, D.C.; Paul D. McDonald, Diocese of Albany; Rayappan Rajesh Ravi, Archdiocese of New York; Brother Charles Andrew Tupta, Rock Hill Oratory; John Paul Williams, Diocese of Springfield.

Please join us in praying for these men as they continue toward priesthood in service to God and His Church.



## POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

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### MISSION

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary is a Roman Catholic professional and graduate theological institution dedicated uniquely to the preparation of seminarians 30 years of age and older responding to a call to priestly ministry.

Our program fosters the human, spiritual, academic and pastoral formation of its seminarians. We especially respect and utilize the life experiences and accomplishments of our mature seminarians, as we prepare them for priestly ministry.

The Seminary program is based on the *Ratio Fundamentalis* of the Holy See, the Program of Priestly Formation Fifth Edition, of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Post-Synodal Exhortation of Pope St. John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

### DIOCESES SERVED

To date, candidates have come to the Seminary from more than 140 dioceses and 23 religious communities. Over 730 alumni serve in dioceses and religious communities throughout the world. Our alumni priests are serving the faithful both nationally and internationally, including dioceses in Australia, Bermuda, Brunei, Canada, Guam, Ireland, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and South Sudan.



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