

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary



2025- 2026 Catalog

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Welcome from the Rector

As the Rector, I am aware of the great privilege that is mine to be called to serve in this special place known as Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary. I am constantly amazed as I discover the wonderful work and ministry of those who have served here before me as either Rector, as a formator, or as a member of the staff. These dedicated men and women have created a spiritual home that offers an opportunity for discernment to those men who feel called to respond to God's invitation to serve Him as a Roman Catholic priest. I am humbled by the knowledge that I am succeeding a wonderful lineage of outstanding individuals who have established this unique place that has provided the strong foundation for those men who have answered God's call later in their lives. I am also very excited about the many possibilities that are before us as we continue to offer to the Church dedicated shepherds who are deeply in love with Christ and who seek to share that love with others as ordained priests.

I am very grateful for your interest in Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary and I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to this extraordinary place.

The Pope St. John XXIII Seminary community is committed to our founding mission: the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation of candidates aged 30 and older. Our unique institution is the only American seminary for these mature candidates administered by diocesan priests. For more than five decades, candidates have been accepted from various professional backgrounds, such as law, medicine, business, teaching, sales, banking, social work and military service. The diversity of life experiences shared by these mature seminarians enriches both the seminary community and their future ministries in the Church.

At Pope St. John XXIII, seminarians are offered a balanced program of priestly formation in a healthy, happy and mature environment specifically suited for the adult learner. The curriculum of theological studies is designed to nurture what is central to our Catholic faith and tradition in an integrated human, spiritual and pastoral formation program. The expectation is that candidates applying for admission will have obtained an undergraduate degree and many enter the seminary having already earned advanced degrees.

Candidates considering admission are sponsored by a diocese or religious order. Our current seminarians represent nearly twenty dioceses and several religious orders located throughout the United States and beyond. Since 1964, 150 dioceses and religious orders have entrusted the formation of their candidates for priesthood to this Seminary. Nearly 700 alumni serve throughout the world.

Thank you again for your interest in our seminary. At Pope St. John XXIII, we are grateful for the opportunity to prepare holy and effective pastoral leaders to serve the faithful of our Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Very Reverend Brian R. Kiely
Rector and President

Mission and History

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, intellectual 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 Sixth Edition of the *Program of Priestly Formation* of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Post-Synodal Exhortation of Pope St. John Paul II *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.



History

Over sixty years ago, Richard Cardinal Cushing saw the need for a Catholic seminary such as ours.

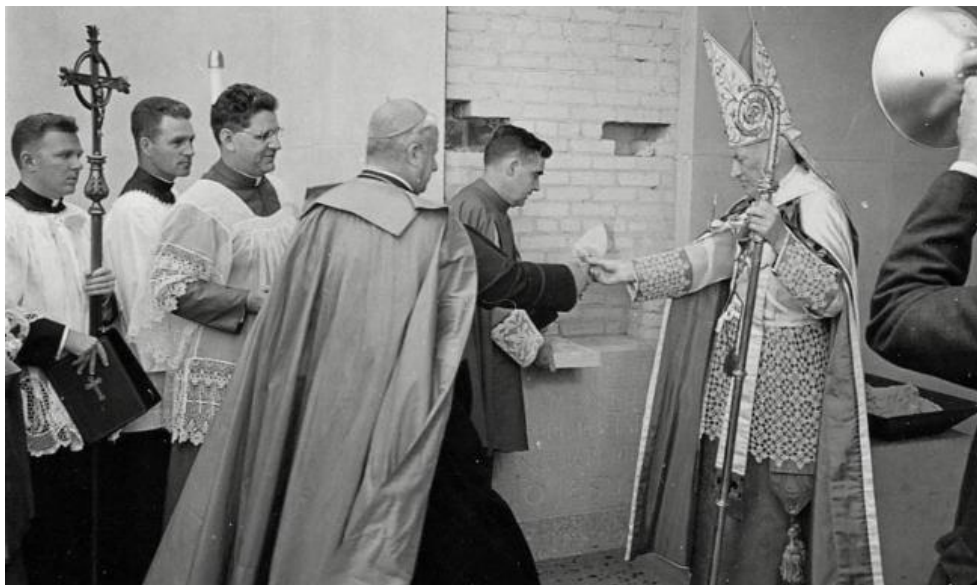
In 1964, with the encouragement and the explicit blessing of Pope St. Paul VI, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary became the first seminary in North America established for the formation of men answering the call to priesthood later in their lives.

In 1972, the seminary was chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to grant the Master of Divinity degree.

In 1983, the seminary became an accredited member of the Association of Theological Schools.

In the 2007 Fall Semester, our seminary introduced a new optional Pre-Theology Program for candidates whose bishops or religious superiors deem it appropriate. This program is now known as the Discipleship Stage Program.

To date, candidates have come to the seminary from more than 140 dioceses and 23 religious communities. Our more than 700 alumni serve in dioceses and religious communities throughout the world.



Governance

Members of the Corporation

Most Rev. Richard Henning, Chairman and Treasurer (*ex officio*)

Most Rev. Mark O'Connell, VG

Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely, Rector and President

Mr. John Corcoran

Ms. Mary Ann McLaughlin

Board of Admissions

Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely, Admissions Officer and Chair

Rev. Derek Borek

Rev. Vincent Daily

Rev. Kevin Deeley

Rev. Msgr. William Fay

Rev. Paul Miceli

Rev. Scott Surrency, OFM Cap.

Rev. Joseph M. Zwosta

Deacon John D. Nicholson

Administration

Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely, Rector and President

Rev. Paul Miceli, Vice Rector and Coordinator of Human Formation

Rev. Scott Surrency, OFM Cap., Dean of Seminarians

Rev. Vincent Daily, Coordinator of Spiritual Formation

Rev. Joseph M. Zwosta, Coordinator of Intellectual Formation, Academic Dean,
Registrar, and Interim Coordinator of Liturgy

Deacon John D. Nicholson, Coordinator of Pastoral Formation

Governance (continued)

Board of Trustees

Most Rev. Richard Henning, Chairman

Most Rev. Mark O'Connell, VG

Most Rev. Roy E. Campbell '07

Most Rev. James Massa

Very Rev. Brian R. Kiely

Sr. Judith Costello, CSJ

Mr. R. Stephen Barrett, Jr.

Mr. John E. Corcoran

Mr. Scott A. Gieselman

Mr. Dan Lagan

Dr. John LaRossa

Ms. Susan Looney

Mr. David J. Madigan

Ms. Mary Ann McLaughlin

Mr. Newcomb Stillwell

Accreditation

In 2019, the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada re-approved our Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree program for an additional ten years.

The Commission contact information is:

The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the
United States and Canada
10 Summit Park Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275 USA
Telephone: 412-788-6505
Fax: 412-788-6510
Website: www.ats.edu

Chartered by:

The Board of Regents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Memberships:

American Library Association
American Theological Library Association
Association for Theological Field Education Catholic
Association of Theological Field Education Catholic
Biblical Association
Catholic Library Association
Catholic Theological Society
Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
East Coast Conference of Major Seminary Rectors
East Coast Conference of Major Seminary Academic Deans
Federation of Seminary Spiritual Directors
National Catholic Educational Association
National Association of Catholic Theological Schools
New England Library Network
Society of Biblical Literature
The National Catholic Bioethics Center

Full-Time Formators

Very Rev. Brian Kiely, Rector

Rev. Derek Borek (Spiritual Director)

Rev. Vincent Daily (Spiritual Director)

Rev. Kevin Deeley

Rev. Msgr. William Fay

Rev. Paul Miceli

Rev. Scott Surrency, OFM Cap.

Rev. Joseph M. Zwosta

Adjunct Professors

Rev. Stanislaus Achu

Rev. Eric Bennett

Deacon Jay Cormier

Prof. Nilza Gonzales-Pedemonte

Rev. John Grimes

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV

Very Rev. Christopher Heanue

Dr. Robert Keane

Prof. Bernadine Kensinger

Dr. Christopher Klofft

Rev. Msgr. James Moroney

Rev. Victor Nwabueze, OMV

Rev. Christopher O'Connor

Rev. Msgr. F. Stephen Pedone

Alumni



The alumni of Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary enjoy a unique relationship with the institution, its formators and current seminarians. This relationship is characterized by a special spirit of warmth, outreach and concern that the community has for each alumnus as a person and for the quality and success of his priestly ministry.

The alumni have their own national association and constitution and informally meet on a regional basis. An annual meeting is held in October at the seminary in conjunction with Alumni Days, a two-day program in which alumni can experience a period of spiritual renewal, theological conferences and fraternity.

Admission Process

Formal Application Process

Candidates apply for admission to our seminary under the sponsorship of a diocese or religious order. The seminary must have formal evidence of sponsorship prior to reviewing an application.

Should you be interested in admission to Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary, your vocation director may request an application packet from the seminary for you. The application packet contains forms which request some general background data, the names of three priests for references, a 500-word autobiography focusing on significant influences in your decision to apply and a recent photo. The applicant also provides the seminary with educational transcripts, testimonials from business/career associates, work history, records of sacraments, health status, military discharge (if applicable), names of any previous religious institutions attended, psychological test results (arranged by sponsoring diocese/order), etc.

Interviews

At a mutually convenient time, the invited candidate visits the seminary for a few days. He is interviewed by members of the Board of Admissions and meets with the seminary's consulting psychologist to review the psychological testing. As necessary, interviews can be conducted remotely via Zoom. Subsequently, a final review is made regarding the candidate, who is then informed of the Board's decision.

Application Timing

Applications are accepted at any time during the year. However, as the process may take up to two months, once a man is accepted for sponsorship by a diocese or order, the process should begin as soon as feasible. If possible, an approved applicant is also encouraged to visit when the seminary is in session (September through early May). This allows firsthand observation of the seminary program and community life. While not officially part of the admissions process, such visits may be useful in terms of personal vocational discernment.

Policy for Non-native English-speaking Applicants

Applicants to Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary who are non-native English-speaking must complete the TOEFL iBT Test and submit the results to the seminary during the admission process. The applicant and/or the sponsoring diocese or religious community is responsible for all fees associated with the test. The Board of Admissions will evaluate the results of the test and determine the applicant's linguistic abilities. The Board may decide to accept an applicant into the formation program on the condition that he enroll for a determinate period of time in a full-time language program prior to beginning philosophical and theological studies. The seminary may also require accepted candidates to enroll in English as a Second Language (ESL) and/or accent reduction tutoring sessions. The seminary may charge additional fees for these services to the candidate's sponsoring diocese or religious community.

Policy for Applicants without a Bachelor's Degree

If an applicant to the priestly formation program at PSJS does not have an accredited bachelor's degree or its equivalent, the Board of Admissions will carefully examine his previous academic work and discuss with him whether he is prepared to do master's-level work. (cf. ATS Standard 7.4) If the Board determines that there is a reasonable likelihood that the applicant is capable, it may provisionally admit him to the Master of Divinity program. The Academic Dean will determine the courses in which the seminarian will enroll for his first semester. At the end of the first semester, the Academic Dean will consult with the seminarian's professors to determine whether the student has demonstrated a capacity to do master's-level work. The Academic Dean will present the results of his consultations along with a transcript of the seminarian's grades to the Council of Formators. The Council will discuss the matter and recommend to the Rector whether to accept the seminarian fully into the Master of Divinity program. If the Rector decides in favor of admission, this fact and the date shall be noted on the seminarian's transcript.

Tuition and Financial Assistance

Tuition

Tuition is billed to each seminarian or his sponsoring diocese or religious community on an annual basis. Current tuition rates are:

- Annual Tuition and Room and Board - \$43,000
 - Tuition - \$28,000
 - Room and Board - \$15,000
- Tuition per credit hour (non-seminarian) - \$500 per semester
- Audit Fee (non-seminarian) - \$250 per course

Additional Fees

- Transcript Fee - \$10
- Refundable Room Deposit - \$500

Tuition is billed to the sponsoring diocese or religious community. Each seminarian should also receive an allowance of around \$5,000 annually for personal living expenses, health insurance (if not otherwise provided), books and automobile expenses.

Tuition Refund Policy

Tuition will be refunded in accordance with the following schedule:

Within the third week of class	80%
Within the fourth week of class	60%
Within the fifth week of class	40%
Within the sixth week of class	20%

Financial Assistance

GI Bill®

In addition to student loans, veterans may apply for assistance through the GI Bill® (GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs [VA]). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>. Pope St. John XXIII acts as a liaison with the Veterans Administration for students who may qualify to receive veterans' education benefits. Eligible students should apply through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility. Applications can be completed online at www.gibill.va.gov or by calling the Department of Veterans Affairs at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442- 4551).

In accordance with Sec. 103 of The Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018:

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary permits any covered individual* to attend or participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to the educational institution a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to education assistance under Chapters 31 or 33 (a "Certificate of Eligibility" can also include a "Statement of Benefits" obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) website - eBenefits , or a VAF 28-1905 form for Chapter 31 authorization purposes) and ending on the earlier of the following dates:

- 1.) The date on which payment from the VA is made to the institution.
- 2.) 90 days after the institution certified tuition and fees following the receipt of the Certificate of Eligibility.

* A covered individual is any individual who is entitled to education assistance under chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, or Chapter 33, Post 9/11 GI Bill ® benefits.

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary does not penalize Chapter 31 or 33 students if/when the VA is late making payments. Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary does not have any policies in place that would do any of the following while waiting for VA payments:

- Prevent enrolling
- Assess a late penalty fee
- Require alternative or additional sources of funding
- Deny access to school resources

To prevent outstanding student accounts, Chapter 31 or 33 students must:

- Submit a COE or Statement of Benefits by the first day of classes
- Submit a written request to be certified
- Provide any additional information needed for certification.

Frequently Asked Questions

Many men have experienced a calling to priesthood earlier in life, but for various reasons did not pursue it. Then, years later, they hear the call again, often in a deeper way. Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary offers a formation program uniquely dedicated to the preparation of seminarians aged 30 and older. Currently, more than 700 of our alumni serve throughout the world. Many men have questions about the discernment and formation process. These often include:

“Am I too old to be accepted into a Seminary program?”

The answer is no! We believe that mature men make some of the best priests, as they possess a wealth of life experiences. As a “second career” seminary, the general range for acceptance is 30 to 60 years of age.

“I was married. Now I am a widower. Am I eligible for consideration?”

Yes. Quite a few of our seminarians are widowers and some have grown children and grandchildren.

“I am divorced. Can I be a priest?”

Yes, provided that you have received a declaration of nullity (annulment) from the Church if the other party is still living.

“What type of educational background is required?”

Generally, an applicant should have obtained an undergraduate degree. An exception is sometimes made, provided that a candidate can demonstrate his ability to complete graduate-level courses. Most candidates will be enrolled in our four-year Master of Divinity program. Candidates who do not have a background in philosophy may begin with an additional year of study.

"I haven't been in school for years. Will I struggle with academics?"

Pope St. John's academic curriculum is grounded in the unique circumstances of the adult learner. Our professors excel in understanding the individual needs and varied backgrounds of our seminarians. They work with each seminarian to provide a comprehensive intellectual formation.

"Who will pay for my seminary education?"

In most cases, the sponsoring diocese or religious community pays for the tuition and room and board. Funding for additional expenses varies from diocese to diocese. Some of our seminarians use the GI Bill to cover a portion of the costs. Financial aid is available for those who may be responsible for their own expenses.

"How do I start the admissions process?"

Collaboration between the sponsoring diocese or religious community and Pope St. John XXIII Seminary is an integral part of the admissions process. Candidates apply for admission to Pope St. John XXIII Seminary under the sponsorship of a diocese or religious order. Your local pastor can help you to contact officials in your diocese. Diocesan websites are also often a great source of information.

Please note that some dioceses do not accept candidates beyond a certain age. If necessary, we can help you to find a possible diocese that accepts older candidates. A map with a list of dioceses that we have served can be found here: <https://www.psjjs.edu/dioceses-served>.

Does the seminary have policies about advanced standing and transfer of credits from another institution?

Yes. Please consult the policies on Page 44.

"I am not a U.S. citizen. Can I study at Pope St. John XXIII?"

Yes. We will work with you to obtain an F-1 visa. This is a type of non-immigrant student visa that allows foreigners to pursue education (academic studies and/or language training programs) in the United States. F-1 students must maintain a full course of study. Please refer to <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students> for additional information.

Welcome from the Vice Rector and Coordinator of Human Formation

Dear Friends,

Central to the life of a Catholic priest is living with a sense of community. We live not for ourselves alone, but to help create something beautiful with and for our God. We are deeply embedded in the lives of others as we accompany them to the Father's House. Priests first and foremost help others to encounter the mystery of God in ordinary life and in being stewards of the mysteries of God.

The ability to live and to nurture healthy relationships with oneself, with our God and with God's people is critical in the formation of a priest. A priest does not build walls, but bridges for others to cross into a world filled with grace. He helps uncover the Divine Presence which surrounds us and abides within us.

In order to assist this ministry, the priest must be the best self that he can be. He must nurture within his soul a sense of respect, reverence and gentleness. He needs to be a man of endurance, fidelity, simplicity and joy. A priest must have a heart that burns with a sense of justice and have a deep passion for truth and the Kingdom God.

In a world where so many experience deep alienation and mistrust, the priest must lead in a way that sustains and strengthens bonds of trust in our parish communities.

It is my conviction that our program of human formation is an essential part of priestly formation. It is my privilege to be a formator in this community.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Paul E. Miceli
Vice Rector and Coordinator of Human Formation

Introduction to Human Formation

Pope St. John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* spoke of human formation as the cement in which all the other dimensions of priestly formation are grounded. Human formation is critical in the formation of priests, who are called to be men of communion, men who can gather and shepherd God's people, always striving to bring unity out of diversity.

Each seminarian is given a priest formator, who assists him in integrating all the dimensions of formation, but especially human formation. This relationship with one's formator is built upon a spirit of trust as is any other significant relationship. It is important that we respect a sense of gradualism in the strengthening of this relationship. It is critical that the seminarian allow his formator to know him.

The formator assists the seminarian in his growth in self-knowledge, which begins in recognizing the formation that happened in his formative years within his family of origin. It is self-knowledge which helps lead the seminarian to self-appreciation, self-acceptance and self-donation.

In this ministry of accompaniment, the formator helps the seminarian to recognize his strengths and those areas that need to be attended to or even healed. Counseling assistance is available if needed.

It is important to note that a major part of human formation is the community life of the seminary. It is here in the midst of the community that we are strengthened and challenged to grow in our ability to interact in a healthy manner with one another.

Each seminarian meets with his formator at least once a month to focus on all the dimensions of priestly formation. The formator assesses with the seminarian benchmarks of growth in light of the goals that the seminarian identifies at the beginning of each semester.

We have developed a comprehensive conference program that addresses those areas of human formation that are specified by the bishops of the United States in the Sixth Edition of the Program of Priestly Formation. These conferences are presented by seminary formators and other experts.

Some of the recent conferences have addressed these very timely topics:

- Emotional intelligence
- Healthy boundaries
- Addictions
- The management of stress
- The importance of wonder
- The gift of friendship
- Affective maturity
- The importance of listening
- Priestly leadership
- Celibacy as a way of loving

The program has been well received by our seminarians and it has been most helpful to them as they try to accompany and guide others to encounter the gift of God's love.

Welcome from the Coordinator of Spiritual Formation

Dear Friends,

I am happy to offer a brief description of the programming at Pope St. John XXIII Seminary that supports spiritual growth.

A healthy, strong prayer life helps seminarians develop and mature. At the heart of this development is our daily celebration of the Eucharist. We also gather in the chapel to pray the Liturgy of the Hours and for a weekly Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament.

Each seminarian is assigned a spiritual director, a priest with whom he meets on a regular basis. This important relationship allows a man the chance to explore his spiritual life more deeply. Regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is encouraged. Men may go to confession to their own director, to another spiritual director, to an outside confessor that visits frequently or to a parish priest. Each fall, seminarians make a five-day retreat.

The spiritual directors offer a conference three times each semester. Three times during the year, time is set aside for the house to spend time in spiritual recollection, with the assistance of an outside presenter.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the way the men help to form one another. Unplanned conversations, faith sharing groups, student-initiated prayer opportunities, exposure to helpful books and other media and acts of service contribute to how men grow in their understanding of living as a priest of Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Vincent Daily
Coordinator of Spiritual Formation

Prayer Life



Prayer is at the heart of seminary life. Our day begins in prayer with the communal celebration of the Divine Office. The Eucharist is the source and the summit of our communal life. We gather for Mass every day in our beautiful chapel. On Fridays, our celebration of the Mass is bilingual (English/Spanish). A communal Holy Hour takes place weekly. Groups of seminarians pray the Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy together. A perpetual adoration chapel is available for private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

Admission to Candidacy for Holy Orders and Institution to Ministries

In accordance with the Church's norms, seminarians are admitted to candidacy for Holy Orders and installed to the ministries of acolyte and lector according to the following schedule:

Admission to Candidacy – Fall of First Configuration Year
Installation as Acolyte – Spring of First Configuration Year
Installation as Lector – Fall of Second Configuration Year

Ordination to the diaconate and priesthood generally take place in the seminarian's home diocese.



Welcome from the Coordinator of Intellectual Formation and Academic Dean

Dear Friends,

At Pope St. John XXIII, we offer a balanced intellectual program in a healthy, happy and mature environment specifically designed for older seminarians. We provide training in the various skills and competencies necessary for effective priestly service in today's challenging culture. Above all, we want our seminarians to know and love God more and more each day, so that they can help others to know and love Him more and more as ministers of the Church.

We aim to provide a complete and well-rounded biblical, historical, dogmatic, pastoral, moral, spiritual, liturgical and sacramental formation. These studies nourish the spiritual life, deepen self-knowledge, promote confidence in articulating the Catholic faith, foster a sense of community and enhance the development of well-integrated and committed candidates. Our academic program is faithful to the Church's Magisterium and grounded in her norms for priestly formation.

Our formators and professors not only have impressive academic credentials and backgrounds. They also have tremendous experience in parish life and ministry.

Please know that I would be happy to speak with any potential candidate about his own academic situation or about our program in general. Please also know of my prayers for your vocational discernment.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Joseph M. Zwosta
Coordinator of Intellectual Formation and Academic Dean

Goals & Objectives of the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Program

Goals of the Program

The academic program seeks to assist candidates in attaining the various competencies and skills necessary for pastoral ministry today and to enable them to articulate and communicate to others what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. To achieve this goal, seminarians must come to know:

- Jesus Christ, their Lord
- The ways that Christians throughout the centuries have understood Him
- Themselves, as earthen vessels who are called by God to proclaim Gospel in our society
- Their brothers and sisters, with whom they form the community of Christians

Objectives of the Program

Specifically, the Master of Divinity program aims to develop in each seminarian a personally interiorized integration of spiritual development, theological knowledge and pastoral skills, including the formation of a lifelong habit of theological reflection, by means of the following objectives:

- Knowledge of the documents of the Christian tradition and the official teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Understanding of traditional theological disciplines as well as their meaning and relevance in the Church and world.
- Cultivation of pastoral identity skills, and practice in the context of a theology of ministry.
- Ability to communicate the Christian message through preaching, teaching and the exercise of leadership in the community, in fulfilling the mission of the Church.
- Development of a sound spiritual foundation based on a life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ, vocational discernment and an understanding of the human person in his various dimensions.
- Attainment of a theological education that recognizes and takes account of the global dimensions of priestly ministry in today's world.

Course Listings

- The courses listed on pages 26-28 are for seminarians in the Discipleship Stage of formation. These courses meet three hours per week for approximately 15 weeks. The amount of work outside the classroom per course per week is 3-5 hours. Seminarians receive a letter grade at the conclusion of the semester. Though these courses are essentially three credit hours, they are not credited to the M.Div. degree program.
- The courses listed on pages 28-36 are Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree courses for seminarians in the Configuration Stage of formation (each of which is for three credit hours, unless otherwise noted).

Discipleship Stage

From its founding, Pope St. John XXIII has been permitted to accept candidates directly into its four-year Master of Divinity Program. However, an optional Discipleship Stage Program is offered for candidates whose bishops or religious superiors deem it appropriate. Until recently, this program was known as “Pre-Theology.” In addition to the academic component listed below, the program also provides human, spiritual, and pastoral formation.

First Semester

Philosophy for Theology I
Natural Theology
Philosophical Ethics
Basic Catholic Doctrine I

Second Semester

Philosophy for Theology II
Philosophy of Being and Knowledge
Basic Catholic Doctrine II
Elective

For those requiring an additional year of the Discipleship Stage, a supplemental curriculum will be provided.

Basic Catholic Doctrine I

This course is a general survey of the fundamental and essential truths of the Catholic faith based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. A summary of the Church's faith and moral doctrine as well as the liturgy and sacraments will be presented.

Basic Catholic Doctrine II

This course is a general survey of the history and teachings of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Prime focus will be given to the four constitutions: *Dei Verbum*, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. Conciliar teachings on ecumenism/interreligious dialogue, religious freedom and evangelization will also be covered.

Natural Theology

This course is a philosophical exploration, following the lead of St. Thomas Aquinas, of what human reason can know about God. Topics include the relation between faith and reason, religion and science, the existence of God and the Divine attributes.

Philosophical Ethics

This course introduces students to the major philosophical theories about ethics. Special emphasis is given to virtue ethics and to natural law theory. Seminarians will develop a strong foundation in Aristotelian and Thomistic ethics. With a firm basis in this system of ethics, we will use it as a basis to understand subsequent developments in ethics such as Deontology, Utilitarianism and Proportionalism. We will also engage with contemporary moral issues such as euthanasia, transgenderism and abortion. Throughout our course we will base our arguments on philosophical principles, enabling seminarians to engage with those who do not share the principles we receive through revelation. At the end of the course, we will see how our human striving for happiness ultimately points to the need for grace.

Philosophical for Theology I

Based on the Catholic doctrine of revelation as expressed in *Dei Verbum*, this course will examine fundamental philosophical distinctions embraced by the Church in her perennial articulation of the faith; the relationship of faith and reason as human activities ordered to the truth; the gift of God's self-revelation fulfilled in Jesus Christ and its reception by faith; sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition as the bearers and disclosers of revelation; and the relationship of the Church's Magisterium and theology. Emphasis is placed on reading primary sources, including texts of Sacred Scripture, writings of Church Doctors and Fathers, magisterial documents and theologians. The

course will help the seminarian to develop a sound spiritual foundation rooted in a life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ so that he may successfully bring the truth of Christ to those whom he is called to serve. The course will also help the seminarian recognize the different disciplines in theology.

Philosophy for Theology II

This course examines the major philosophical themes present in the Modern and Contemporary Periods of philosophy. Attention will be given to the ways in which the philosophical developments during these two periods of thinking either mature and enhance or contravene and undo the discoveries of the Ancient and Medieval Periods of Philosophy. Beginning with Niccolò Machiavelli, we see a drive to accomplish something new in philosophical thinking; something that not only raises suspicion about the inherited wisdom from the Ancient and Medieval philosophers but actively seeks to overthrow it. With René Descartes we find a wholly new first focus for philosophy: The examination of the human subject and how he or she is able to know becomes the ultimate issue for philosophy, replacing the examination of reality and the ultimate search for its first cause. That investigation into knowing, with its necessary focus on man, becomes a hallmark of Modern Philosophy, whether in Rationalism and Empiricism or in nineteenth century Nihilism. In addition to Descartes, we will investigate the work of Thomas Hobbes, Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche to see this point. With the work of Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the Twentieth Century, we see a critique of the Modern preoccupation with how the human person knows, a turn toward locating the human person's proper place in the universe, and a more realistic understanding of human knowing that reaches for and reiterates the discoveries of the Ancient and Medieval minds. In addition to Husserl, we will look at the work of two of his philosophical disciples: Carmelite Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) and Pope John Paul II (Karol Józef Wojtyła) to appreciate the positive implications of the Husserlian development for philosophy and, therefore, theology.

Philosophy of Being and Knowledge

This course will focus on metaphysical understanding with an emphasis on how metaphysics aids the student in theological studies. Philosophical issues like being, essence and existence, causality and the cause of all being will be examined. In addition to developing a metaphysical language and understanding, this course will also treat ideas of Truth and how the human person comes to know and arrive at Truth. Distinctions between nature and convention, Truth and opinion, appearance and reality will be explored. Finally, the course will conclude with the relationship between faith and reason: the two great capacities of the human person.

Master of Divinity

The Master of Divinity program consists of eight semesters, except in the case of those who qualify for a special program. The core curriculum is divided into eight major concentrations: Biblical Studies, Dogmatic Theology, Moral Theology, Sacramental Theology, Patristics and Church History, Canon Law, Spiritual and Pastoral Studies and Communications and Homiletics.

In addition to the core curriculum, each seminarian is required to complete two elective courses.

Course Listing:

Philosophy for Theology I

See description on Page 26

Philosophy for Theology II

See description on Page 27

Biblical Studies

Pentateuch and Historical Books

The course is designed to introduce seminarians to the study of the Old Testament and to prepare them for continued study of its sacred books after ordination. Initial introductory topics build the foundation for biblical study through presentations on the biblical canon, the relationship between the Bible and the liturgy, biblical inspiration, the significance of genre in exegesis, the significance of the Old Testament for Christian revelation and the Four Source theory of the Pentateuch. Following these introductory topics, we will undertake a study of the three major historical sections of the Old Testament in the Catholic tradition: the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy), the Deuteronomistic History (Joshua, Judges, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings) and the Persian (Ezra-Nehemiah, 1&2 Chronicles) and Greek (1&2 Maccabees) Periods.

Prophets and Writings

The course offers a foundational introduction to the Prophetic Books and the Writings of the Old Testament. After discussing interpretive methodologies, we will briefly review the promises made by God in the historical books. The class will then examine three groupings of prophets: 8th century prophets before the fall of the Northern

kingdom, prophets before the fall of the Southern kingdom, and then prophets during and after the exile. Next, we will examine the Psalter and Wisdom Literature in the broader context of wisdom in Ancient Near East and the Wisdom Movement in Israel.

Synoptic Gospels

This course begins with a survey of the origin, historical context and development of the Synoptic Gospels, then engages the literary structure, purpose and theology of the Gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke, spelling out the unique features of each Gospel for effective preaching. We will also examine the plan and early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul and the Pauline Letters

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of Pauline literature and to prepare them for continued study long after ordination. The class will pursue a close exegetical analysis of the letters, with particular attention to the historical setting, style, author and audience and political and social issues. The course will also develop the seminarian's ability to integrate Paul's perspective meaningfully into preaching, teaching and theological reflection.

Johannine Writings

This course offers a detailed examination of the historical context, literary and theological dimensions of a collection of the New Testament works known as the Johannine Corpus (the Gospel of John, the Johannine epistles, and the Book of Revelation). Among the important topics that this course will examine are the rhetorical textures of these collections, sources and traditions, the Synoptic relation, the use of Old Testament, apocalyptic tradition, discipleship, ethics, gender and feminism, the "I Am" Sayings, liturgy/worship, as well as some distinctive theology (God, Christology, Holy Spirit, ecclesiology, soteriology and eschatology) of these corpora.

Dogmatic Theology

Introduction to Liturgical Studies

This course explores the Church's liturgical life as envisioned by the Second Vatican Council. The course is divided into four segments: foundational principles of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, liturgical history, principal liturgical rites and special components of the Church's liturgical life. The principal resources of the course are the *praenotandae* of the liturgical rites, the liturgical rites themselves and official liturgical documentation. Class members process the content of the resources from a historical, theological, canonical and pastoral perspective by means of selected readings and class discussions.

Fundamental Theology

This course focuses on the foundations of theology: questions relating to revelation and faith; questions relating to theology's sources; and questions relating to the overall issue of theological method. The goal is to assist the student to elaborate a theology of revelation; a theology of faith; a theology of Sacred Scripture; and a theology of Tradition as lived authoritatively in the Church.

God: One and Three

This course will explore the mystery of God's unity in trinity and trinity in unity. It will begin with a consideration of the doctrinal development and credal expression of Trinitarian theology in the first few centuries of the Church, paying special attention to how we can talk about God and to the limitations of human thought and language. The second part of the course will be devoted to the theological insights of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Implications of Trinitarian doctrine will be considered for other areas of theology as well, such as theological anthropology, ecclesiology, eschatology and spirituality.

Christology

This course introduces the basic elements in the study of the identity and saving work of Jesus Christ as developed throughout the Catholic theological tradition. The course covers the following topics: the Scriptural data in both Old and New Testaments of Revelation regarding the Incarnation; the Christological formulas articulated by the Church up to and including the Third Council of Constantinople (680–681); the continued theological understanding of the Chalcedonian definition of the two natures and one Person of Jesus Christ; and the fundamental principles of Soteriology.

Theological Anthropology

This course treats Catholic belief regarding creation, the providence of God, the creation and fall of the angels, original sin and the consequences of the fall, the problem of evil, as well as the nature, origin and destiny of the human person. In light of contemporary debates, this course will consider Catholic belief about grace, freedom and the relationship of the natural and supernatural orders. The course will also treat basic themes of eschatology. In addition to Scriptural and patristic sources, instruction will consider medieval and modern authors as well as the texts of the recent papal Magisterium.

Ecclesiology

This course introduces students to the Church's theology about herself. The first part will be devoted to the study of Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition and Magisterial documents pertaining to the Church. Students will thereby gain an understanding of the development of the Church's self-understanding. This will form the basis for the

second part of the course, a systematic inquiry into the unity, catholicity, holiness and apostolicity of the Church.

Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue

This course studies two related, yet distinct endeavors. Ecumenism refers to efforts to restore the full, visible unity of all Christians in faith, sacramental life and mission. Interreligious dialogue refers to the Church's interactions with other (non-Christian) religions. We will study foundational documents of the Church that guide both endeavors on the global, national and local levels. We will especially seek to understand the doctrinal differences that separate Catholics from other Christians and from members of other religions. We will examine key texts from significant dialogue initiatives. Seminarians will consider how ecumenism and interreligious dialogue will form part of their future priestly ministry.

Moral Theology

Moral Theology I: Fundamental

This course introduces seminarians to the major themes of Catholic Moral Theology. Grounded in the teaching of the 1993 encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, instruction will address man's vocation to beatitude, the specification of moral objects, the truth about human freedom, the morality of the passions, as well as a survey of the theological and moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Seminarians will examine the role of the Magisterium in moral matters as well as Catholic belief regarding sin, grace and the moral law. The course will conclude with some consideration of specialized questions of moral theology.

Moral Theology II: Catholic Social Doctrine

This course is an introduction to the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. While the Fundamental Moral Theology course surveys how the human person orders his life toward true and lasting happiness with God by means of his or her actions, Catholic Social Doctrine focuses on the necessary conditions in society that are conducive to this happiness. As such, it has to do with the common good - the sum total of social conditions that allow people to attain their fulfillment in Christ more fully and more easily.

Moral Theology III: Catholic Medical Ethics

This course is an introduction to the moral teaching of the Catholic Church with respect to critical medical and life issues. While Fundamental Moral Theology investigates how the human person orders his life toward true and lasting happiness with God by means of God's grace and his or her morally good actions, Catholic Social Doctrine focuses on the necessary conditions in society that are conducive to attaining this

happiness, Catholic Bioethics gives its attention to and addresses specific health care issues that we face in the course of our lives on earth from conception to natural death.

Moral Theology IV: Catholic Sexual Ethics

This course seeks to understand what God has revealed about the nature and the purposes of human sexuality in the context of the theology of marriage. Based on basic Christian moral principles, we will examine the tradition's teaching on the subject of gender, sex and marriage, as well as address specific topics such as extra-marital sexual activity, same-sex attraction and contraception.

Sacramental Theology

Sacraments of Christian Initiation

The sacraments are central to the life of a priest because they are essential to the life of the Church. In order to administer the sacraments effectively, priests must possess a proper understanding of what the sacraments are and what God accomplishes by means of them. Thus, the first purpose of this course is to acquaint seminarians with sacramental theology in general. This will provide a framework for discussing two of the sacraments in detail: Baptism and Confirmation. It will also equip seminarians for future sacramental courses. Some of the sessions will be devoted to practical training about the conferral of Baptism.

Theology of Priesthood

Pope St. John Paul II famously called the priesthood a gift and a mystery. This course is intended to help seminarians preparing for the gift of ordination to contemplate the mystery of the ministerial priesthood. The first part of the course will examine positive theology regarding the Sacrament of Holy Orders. We will study texts from Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition and the Church's Magisterium that pertain to this sacrament. We will make note of the most significant contributions of theologians to Catholic teaching about this subject. The second part of the course will be dedicated to a systematic study of two pertinent issues: the reservation of the Sacrament of Holy Orders to men and mandatory priestly celibacy in the Western Church.

Theology of Eucharist

The course explores the development of Eucharistic theology as it is revealed through the evolution of the Church's great tradition of liturgical practice and catechesis. The course examines this development in three main stages: Eucharist in the Scriptures up to the Church Fathers, Eucharist in the Middle Ages up to the Council of Trent and Eucharist in the Second Vatican Council and beyond. The course also addresses the implications of Eucharist theology for priestly spirituality, liturgical celebration and preaching.

Sacraments of Healing

This course introduces the theology and history of the Sacraments of Penance and the Anointing of the Sick. Upon completion of this course, the seminarian will be able to distinguish the main historical periods pertaining to these sacraments, to explain the Church's understanding of them, to understand the pastoral issues that surround their administration and to be familiar with how to celebrate them. A separate practicum (conducted in small groups) will take place after the theoretical portion of the course, during which seminarians will practice conferring the Sacraments of Healing.

Patristics and Church History

Introduction to Patristic Theology

This course is an introduction to Christian theology and spirituality from the close of the New Testament through the seventh century. While some attention will be paid to the historical development of doctrine, particularly in regard to the ecumenical councils in the formative years of the Catholic Church, the main approach taken in the course will be thematic, with a strong emphasis on the reading of primary texts. Seminarians will gain an appreciation of the Church Fathers' understanding of the interpretation of Scripture, the Trinity, Christology, theological anthropology, ecclesiology, worship, martyrdom, monasticism/asceticism, spirituality and ethics. Consideration will also be given to the question of genre and its relation to the Fathers' method of doing theology. At the end of the course, seminarians will be well-prepared for further study of patristic thought and history and they will have come to appreciate the enduring relevance of the Church Fathers not only in regard to formal theological studies but also—and more importantly—in regards to their own spiritual practice and their approach to pastoral ministry.

Medieval Church History

This course is a general survey spanning approximately 900 years of Church history. In our study of the Medieval Era, we will discuss the growing call for reform in the Church, the divisions that occurred and led to the breakdown of Church unity, and the early reformers.

Modern Church History

This course is a general survey spanning approximately 620 years of Church history. It will be divided into the following periods: 1. The Medieval Era: In this period, we will discuss the growing call for reform in the Church, the divisions that occurred and led to the breakdown of Church unity and the early reformers. 2. The Modern Era: Attention will be given to two councils, Trent and Vatican II, as well as the contemporary Church.

Spiritual and Pastoral Studies

Pastoral Counseling (2 credits)

This course introduces candidates for the priesthood to the basic elements of pastoral counseling. The lectures and readings help seminarians acquire listening skills, develop a pastoral relationship, provide insight and feedback and action planning. With these basic counseling skills in place, the course addresses situations and issues that commonly arise in parochial ministry such as substance abuse, physical and mental illness and bereavement. Professional ethics in pastoral ministry envelops the entire course.

Pastoral Theology

This course is intended to aid priestly formation for the ministry of pastoral care in parish settings. The course will help equip seminarians with theological understandings of ministry and pastoral approaches to the New Evangelization. As pastoral care involves a variety of ministerial roles, duties and relationships, leadership will be given to the kinds of collaboration needed in one or multiple parishes. Particular attention will be given to the spiritual fatherhood of the ordained priest. This course seeks to foster the integration of the course content with the personal development, pastoral formation and spiritual identity of seminarians.

Catholic Spiritual Tradition

This course presents significant elements of the vast wealth of Roman Catholic spirituality. It begins with consideration of principles essential for engaging and understanding the Tradition. It continues with exposure to themes and categories found within Catholic spiritual life. Then there is an overview of the historical expression and development of Catholic spirituality.

Parish Governance (2 credits)

The role of the parish priest has changed drastically in the last century. Changing demographics, a rise in secularism, and a decline in vocations present many challenges to those in active ministry. This course is designed to give those in the proximate preparation to priesthood an opportunity to recognize the opportunities and difficulties they will soon face in ministerial life. Topics include parish finances, fundraising ideas, personnel issues, working with consultative bodies and interacting with chancery officials. As the semester progresses, teams will work together to create detailed parish reports with the information provided throughout the lessons.

Canon Law

Introduction to Canon Law

This course is a survey of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*. Following some reflections on law in general and its history, a study will be made of the universal law, the *ius vigens*, and how canon law constitutes and orders the structures and pastoral practices of the Church. Special emphasis will be placed on the law concerning the sacraments of the Church. Seminarians will be instructed in the sources of church law, as well as its philosophical and theological foundations. The course will assist in the cultivation of the seminarian's pastoral identity and aid him in developing sound pastoral skills in the practical application of the law. Finally, the course is designed to help the seminarian implement the law in order to provide effective leadership in the ecclesial community.

Canon Law of Marriage

This course studies the canons on the Sacrament of Marriage that are found in the Church's *Code of Canon Law*. It will analyze the Church's ordering of the matrimonial covenant as juridical, social, ethical and theological reality. It will explore the notion of consent in marriage and what affects a person's ability to consent to marriage. The function of dispensation, sanation, Pauline Privilege and Petrine Privilege will be examined. The Church's practice concerning annulment, or declarations of nullity, will be studied.

Communications and Homiletics

Speech (2 credits)

This course is designed to introduce the principles and concepts of speech communications: the basic theory of communication as it applies to the spoken word and the writing and delivery of effective oral presentations. Through workshops led by the instructor, assigned speeches given in class and the evaluation of those presentations by fellow students, seminarians should begin/continue to develop their skills as speakers and presenters.

Liturgical Preaching I

This course is designed to introduce seminarians to the ministry of preaching: the writing and delivering the Sunday homily and proclaiming the word of God in other liturgical settings. Through workshops, assigned homilies preached in class and the evaluation of those presentations by peers, seminarians should begin/continue to develop their skills as preachers and homilists.

Liturgical Preaching II

In this advanced preaching course, ordination candidates utilize public speaking skills and preaching basics from previous courses to further develop the ability to communicate the Christian message through the art of liturgical preaching.

Developing this practical pastoral skill contributes to the candidates' overall formation in cultivating a pastoral presence and the exercise of leadership in the Christian community. Course components include: the creation of a personal Preaching Formation Plan, weekly preaching labs, informative readings, instructor's presentations and class discussions.

Integrative Colloquium

The central focus of the course is the research and presentation of a variety of case studies that are contextualized in parochial ministry. The course provides a context in which the seminarians can express the integration and appropriation of their course of studies.

Apologetics

Critical Catholic Cosmology*

The purpose of this course is to delve into the cutting edge intersection of science, philosophy, and faith; not only to encounter God anew, but to uncover the solid evidentiary basis for the claims of Catholicism in dialogue with atheism and world religions. Together, participants will reevaluate their cosmological assumptions, seeking paradigmatic alignment across these disciplines. Together students will build a consensus framework for the tasks of evangelization and ecumenical dialogue. To do this, students will reexamine life's most profound theological, cosmological, and existential questions through the lenses of faith, science, and reason. In this course, students will think critically, identify bias, formulate evidence-based logical arguments, and reflect prayerfully in order to better challenge, develop, and defend the existence of God and historicity of the Resurrection.

**This is an elective taught on a special schedule*

Academic Credits by Year

FIRST YEAR OF CONFIGURATION STAGE (FIRST THEOLOGY)

First Semester (15.5 credits)

Philosophy for Theology I	3
Introduction to Liturgical Studies	3
Introduction to Patristic Theology	3
The Pentateuch and Historical Books	3
Speech	2
Pastoral Assignment	1.5

Second Semester (16.5 credits)

Philosophy for Theology II	3
Fundamental Theology	3
Synoptic Gospels	3
Medieval Church History	3
Prophets and Writings	3
Pastoral Assignment	1.5

SECOND YEAR OF CONFIGURATION STAGE (SECOND THEOLOGY)

First Semester (12.5 credits)

God: One and Three	3
Pastoral Counseling	2
Moral Theology I: Fundamental	3
Modern Church History	3
Pastoral Assignment	1.5

Second Semester (13.5 credits)

Christology	3
Paul and Pauline Letters	3
Liturgical Preaching I	3
Catholic Spiritual Tradition	3
Pastoral Assignment	1.5

THIRD YEAR OF CONFIGURATION STAGE (THIRD THEOLOGY)

First Semester (16.5 credits)

Ecclesiology	3
Sacraments of Christian Initiation	3
Theological Anthropology	3
Moral Theology II: Catholic Social Doctrine	3
Pastoral Theology	3
Pastoral Assignment	1.5

Second Semester (16.5 credits)

Theology of Priesthood	3
Introduction to Canon Law	3
Liturgical Preaching II	3
Moral Theology III: Catholic Bioethics	3
Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue	3
Pastoral Assignment	1.5

FOURTH YEAR OF CONFIGURATION STAGE
(FOURTH THEOLOGY)

First Semester (17 credits)

Theology of Eucharist	3
Canon Law of Marriage	3
Johannine Writings	3
Elective	3
Sacraments of Healing	2
Pastoral Assignment	3

Second Semester (15 credits)

Moral Theology IV: Catholic Sexual Ethics	3
Integrative Colloquium	3
Parish Governance	2
Elective	3
Sacraments of Healing Practicum	1
Pastoral Assignment	3

TOTAL CREDITS: 123

Academic Policies

Grading System

All courses are recorded in terms of credits or semester hours. Grades are recorded by letter; grade points are used to compute averages.

A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.5
B	84-86	3.0
B-	80-83	2.7
C+	77-79	2.5
C	74-76	2.0
C-	70-73	1.7
D+	67-69	1.5
D	64-66	1.0
F	<64	0.0

A student who foresees, due to extraordinary circumstances, an inability to complete the required work for a course by the end of a semester may submit an Incomplete Request form. This request must be approved by the professor and the Academic Dean by the end of the last day of class. The work required for a course marked Incomplete (I) must be finished by the end of the next semester. If it is not, the Registrar or Assistant Registrar will automatically enter a grade of F. No credit is given for a course in which the student receives an F. If the course is required, it must be successfully completed to earn the Master of Divinity degree.

A seminarian may withdraw from any course or seminar not in the core curriculum up to the fifth week of the semester with the permission of his formator, his professor and the Academic Dean. The grade Withdrew (W) will then be recorded on the transcript.

Minimum grade for passing a class: Any grade less than 64 is an F and receives no credit. Though a 64 is not satisfactory, it is the minimum for receiving course credit.

Conditions for interruption: The Council of Formators votes in May whether a seminarian should continue in the program. This decision is based upon the benchmarks contained in the *Program for Priestly Formation* for all four dimensions of formation.

The seminary has no “probationary” period. Any seminarian who is discontinued must go through the admissions process again.

Progress Records: The Seminary uses a cloud-based platform, ThinkWave, to record and store grades. Each seminarian has unlimited electronic access to a record of his grades. A paper copy of the seminarian’s accumulated grades is sent at the end of the spring semester to the seminarian’s sponsoring diocese or order. Upon request, the seminary sends to a seminarian or alumnus a stamped and signed transcript.

Transfers of Credit

All requests for transfer of credit to the Master of Divinity program must be approved by the Academic Dean. Normally, these credits must have been earned within the previous ten years at an accredited institution and have been judged to be equivalent to courses in the seminary’s curriculum. The seminary may not accept as transfer credits more than two-thirds of PSJS’s required number (ATS Standard 3.12). The seminary will accept transfer credits only for courses in which the student earned a grade of B- or higher. The Rector, in consultation with the Academic Dean, the Admissions Board, and the sponsoring diocese or order, decides the length of the seminarian’s priestly formation program. Seminarians with transferable credits must confer with their formators and the Academic Dean to determine their precise academic program.

Advanced Standing Policy for Deacons Enrolling in the Priestly Formation Program

Given its unique mission, Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary regularly receives applications from men who have previously been ordained permanent deacons and who are now seeking ordination as priests. Such individuals have already undergone a significant formation program in preparation for the diaconate. However, oftentimes their academic courses did not earn graduate-level credits.

When such a candidate’s sponsoring diocese or religious community requests it, the seminary will review his academic record and determine whether it is possible to grant “advanced standing.” The Coordinator of Intellectual Formation/Academic Dean, in consultation with the Rector, will determine the courses from which the candidate will be exempted based upon an assessment of the knowledge, competence and skills gained in previous academic work. The number of credit hours associated with the exempted courses will be subtracted from the total number of credit hours required for the Master of Divinity degree. The reduction of the credit hours shall not exceed one-third of the usual number.

Academic Requirements

To successfully complete the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree, the seminarian must have a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.7 for the required (core) courses.



Most core classes are held in the morning, with elective classes meeting in the afternoon. Many of the classes include a seminar component. Professors teach in a manner best suited for adult learners. Many of the courses help the seminarians to explore ways in which theology meets practical situations that they will encounter in ministry.

On occasion, should it better fit his needs, a seminarian may take an elective at St. John's Seminary (127 Lake Street, Brighton, MA).

Guest lecturers are often invited to make presentations on timely topics. This is especially true for the Integrated Colloquium.

Welcome from the Coordinator of Pastoral Formation

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your interest in the priestly formation program at Pope St. John XXIII. We have a very special program here that helps the more experienced man prepare for the Holy Priesthood.

We have designed the Pastoral Formation Program to help seminarians appreciate, understand and experience the three key dimensions of priestly ministry that reflect the service and work of Jesus himself as *teacher, priest* and *leader*.

A full priestly formation program provides a seminarian with “on the job training” in several different settings of pastoral ministry. Seminarians are given the opportunity to visit and work within a variety of parishes. They prepare and participate in liturgical celebrations, build evangelizing and faith formation skills and develop effective communication skills in various settings. Our program brings seminarians to work among various age groups to experience the how and why of pastoral care with the younger and the older, the sick and the dying, the grieving and those who mourn. They are trained to give witness to all who need the hope that comes from the compassionate and merciful Good Shepherd.

Attention is given to social justice ministries through Catholic Charities, prison ministries, immigration services and respect for life programs. We help seminarians to prepare for parish leadership with the different age groups, families and individuals. Seminarians are guided to offer pastoral outreach to those struggling with cultural, personal, and social challenges.

"The whole formation imparted to candidates for the priesthood aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ the Good Shepherd. Hence, their formation in its different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character."
-Pastores Dabo Vobis, #5



New seminarians generally assist with parish catechetical programs. Each subsequent year, seminarians work on different projects as pastoral interns. They are assisted along the way by several talented pastoral supervisors; these supervisors are great supporters to our pastoral formation program and seminarians. This “field” experience provides opportunities and builds relationships to help seminarians develop leadership and team-building skills. Additionally, summer programs and trainings provide other occasions for seminarians to learn languages, cultures, enrich spiritual growth and understand diocesan parish life and ministry in their home diocese.

Together, all these experiences of priestly life and ministry are intended to enhance a seminarian’s competence for the ministry and to build their confidence in preparation for Holy Orders.

Please stop by often to see where and how these men prepare for the great mission to teach, bless, and lead like the Lord!

God bless you and stay strong,

Deacon John D. Nicholson
Coordinator of Pastoral Formation

Message from Dean of Seminarians

Dear Friends,

As Dean of Seminarians, I welcome the opportunity to provide a short overview of the seminarian's experience at Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary. As a theological institution dedicated to the preparation of second-career seminarians, it is important for us to respect and to integrate the life experiences and accomplishments of our seminarians. The various aspects of seminary life at Pope St. John XXIII reflect our commitment to this goal.

Once a week we gather for communal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Each seminarian meets on a regular basis with his spiritual director. The spiritual director also offers monthly conferences. The Sacrament of Penance is available at any time, although it is scheduled on a weekly basis with the assistance of outside confessors. The seminary has a week's retreat during the month of October.

It is our mission to provide priests who are men of God and of the Church. It is our goal to help form priests who can lead, teach and shepherd God's people with integrity, commitment, imagination and mercy, men who are configured to Christ the Good Shepherd.

We are grateful for our many alumni who are serving the Church throughout the country and the world.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Scott Surrency, OFM. Cap.
Dean of Seminarians

Community Life



We gather as a community for meals and for various social celebrations. These gatherings help nurture a good sense of community. This is an essential part of forming seminarians to be men of communion. The seminary has various house committees that offer valuable input and advice to assist formators in establishing seminary policies and new initiatives. They also nurture a sense of collaboration within the community.

Discounted memberships for a pool and sport complex are available at a nearby college. We also have two small gyms on campus. We assist our seminarians in embracing a healthy diet and lifestyle. Many of our guests experience great joy and hospitality when they visit our community.

Our Campus



Praying the Rosary, Mary Courtyard

The seminary is in Weston, Massachusetts, 13 miles west of downtown Boston, on over 35 acres of wooded land. Our proximity to Boston makes available to us numerous educational, cultural and recreational opportunities.

Each seminarian is assigned a single room and shares a bathroom/shower with his neighbor. The main chapel and dining room are located on the first floor. Exceptional chefs prepare meals served buffet-style. Residence areas are on the first and second floors. Every seminarian's room is equipped with internet and cable television access.

In addition to classrooms and offices, the building features a Learning Center, gym, media room, bookstore, laundry, computer lab and two seminarian lounges. A smoke-free environment is preserved in the building.

Learning Center



Construction of our Learning Center was completed in January 2016. The facility is 10,000 square feet, spread over two floors. In addition to housing 70,000 volumes and over 260 journal titles, the Learning Center provides a state-of-the-art environment with advanced technologies to foster learning, research and communication. Study and research are aided by a significant reference collection of over 4,000 volumes, as well as the assistance of a professional librarian. In addition to the physical collection, access to the most important database tools in theology are available electronically.

High-speed wireless internet access is available throughout the Learning Center, along with access to the seminary's internal computer network.

Rule of Life

The Rule of Life Handbook is given to every seminarian upon arrival (and is also available on SharePoint). This Rule of Life helps seminarians to achieve the goals and objectives of the formation program. Specific regulations are intended to concretize the Gospel values that build up the Christian community. These policies enumerate individual and community expectations. They are also guides and aids in the transformation of one's mind, heart and will to Jesus Christ the High Priest, who came "not to be served but to serve." (Mk 10:45)

The Rule of Life includes standards for a well-balanced community life as well as academic parameters necessary for a positive experience at Pope St. John highlighting the four dimensions of formation. The handbook includes topics such as:

- Life in community
- Facilities and operations
- Seminary policy on alcohol and drug abuse
- Massachusetts hazing reporting regulations
- Fire prevention and emergencies
- Presence of minors on campus
- Sexual harassment policy
- Grounds for immediate dismissal
- Counseling policy and protocols

GROUND'S FOR DISMISSAL

Certain behaviors constitute grounds for dismissal from the seminary outside the normal evaluation process. Such a decision can be made immediately by the Rector or upon the recommendation of a Disciplinary Board selected by him. The following serious issues may constitute evidence of a seminarian's lack of suitability for priestly formation, and are therefore grounds for dismissal:

1. Slander, calumny or detraction.
2. Stealing, cheating, lying or plagiarism.
3. Sexual harassment or misconduct.
4. Use of any electronic resources for unhealthy, illegal or immoral purposes.
5. Alcohol and drug misuse.
6. Significant psychological disorders.
7. Bullying.
8. Violation of the policy on the presence of minors

Athletics & Recreation



The seminary fitness area is composed of two well-equipped rooms (with treadmills, ellipticals and free weights). Outside, there is a full basketball court, a bocce court and a 5-hole putting green. Nearby Regis College provides a full and very affordable fitness center, including a six-lane pool.

The town of Weston and surrounding rural environs offer numerous areas for running, biking, hiking and cross-country skiing. A fine variety of ocean beaches, lakes and rivers, ski areas and state parks are located within easy driving distance.

2025-2026 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

FALL SEMESTER

Arrival of new seminarians	Aug. 11 (Mon.)
Arrival of returning seminarians by 5 p.m.	Aug. 24 (Sun.)
Orientation for all seminarians	Aug. 25 (Mon.)
Classes begin	Aug. 26 (Tues.)
Mass of the Holy Spirit (11:45 a.m.)	Aug. 29 (Fri.)
Labor Day (No classes)*	Sept. 1 (Mon.)
Seminarian retreat begins (afternoon)	Oct. 12 (Sun.)
Seminarian retreat ends (12 p.m.)	Oct. 17 (Fri.)
Pastoral assignments resume	Oct. 18 & 19 (Sat. – Sun.)
Classes resume	Oct. 20 (Mon.)
Full faculty gathering (5:00-7:00 p.m.)	Oct. 21 (Tues.)
Thanksgiving Break begins after last class or pastoral assignment	Nov. 25 (Tues.)
Classes resume	Dec. 1 (Mon.)
Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (no classes)*	Dec. 8 (Mon.)
Last class day	Dec. 15 (Mon.)
Study day**	Dec. 16 (Tues.)
Examinations	Dec. 17-18 (Wed. – Thurs.)

N.B.: Saturday, November 1 is the Solemnity of All Saints. Since it is not a day of obligation this year, classes will be held.

*Other formational activities may occur on these days

Seminarians are free to depart after their last exam, **but no earlier than after Mass on Dec. 16

Number of class sessions: M-13; T-15; W-14; F-14; S-14

SPRING SEMESTER

All seminarians due back by 5 p.m.	Jan. 5 (Mon.)
Seminarian Day of Prayer	Jan. 6 (Tues.)
Classes begin	Jan. 7 (Wed.)
Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No classes)*	Jan. 19 (Mon.)
National March for Life (No classes)	Jan. 21- 24 (Wed. – Sat.)
Full faculty gathering (5:00-7:00 p.m.)	Feb. 10 (Tues.)
Presidents' Day (No classes)	Feb. 16 (Mon.)
<i>Monday Class Schedule</i>	Feb. 17 (Tues.)
Ash Wednesday (No classes)*	Feb. 18 (Wed.)
Spring Break begins after last class or pastoral assignment	Feb. 28 (Sat.)
Classes resume	Mar. 9 (Mon.)
Easter Break begins after last class or pastoral assignment	Mar. 28 (Sat.)
Classes resume	Apr. 13 (Mon.)
Last class day	May 6 (Wed.)
Study day**	May 7 (Thurs.)
Examinations	May 8-9 (Fri. – Sat.)

*Other formational activities may occur on these days

Seminarians are free to depart after their last exam, **but no earlier than after Mass on May 7

Number of class sessions: M-13; T-13; W-13; F-13; S-13

The Theology Program, leading to the degree of Master of Divinity (M.Div.), is a coherent, comprehensive, four-year program offering human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation for candidates for the Catholic priesthood.

Among the cohorts from the past five years (2021-2025), 74 students have entered the Theology Program and 52 students have completed it, a completion rate of 70%.

With successful completion of the Theology Program, seminarians are then ordained to the Catholic priesthood with a 100% job placement rate throughout New England and beyond.

6-Year Graduation Rates

2020 Cohort - 80%

2021 Cohort - 65%

2022 Cohort - 81%

2023 Cohort - 73%

2024 Cohort - 75%

2025 Cohort - 73%

3-Year Job Placement Rates

Class of 2023 - employed 100% full time/part time

Class of 2024 - employed 100% full time/part time

Class of 2025 - employed 100% full time/part time



POPE ST. JOHN XXIII NATIONAL SEMINARY

558 South Avenue • Weston, Massachusetts 02493 781.899.5500 www.psjs.edu

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary (PSJS) does not engage in misleading or erroneous recruitment when recruiting students. Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary abides by the Accreditation of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary owners, administrators, directors, and instructors are of good character and reputation. As a MA National Seminary, PSJS is regulated by the MA state guidelines for all those who are employed at the seminary.

Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary's educational and experience qualifications of directors, administrators, and instructors are adequate. As a MA National Seminary, we are regulated by the MA state guidelines for all those who are employed at the seminary.

Sincerely,

Administrator/SCO Signature

Contact Us

Mailing Address

558 South Avenue
Weston, MA 02493

Main Telephone: 781-899-5500

Fax #: 781-899-9057

Email: seminary@psjs.edu

Directions to Pope St. John XXIII National Seminary

Located 13 miles west of downtown Boston, about a twenty-minute drive, depending on traffic.

From Logan Airport & Boston - go west on the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90), to Exit 123 - Route 30 West.

Continue west on Route 30 for approximately 2 1/4 miles and the seminary will be on the left.

If traveling north or south on Interstate 95/128 - take Exit 24 to Route 30 West.

Continue west on Route 30 for approximately 3 miles and the seminary will be on the left.

If traveling east on the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) - take Exit 13 to Route 30

East. Continue east on Route 30 approximately 4 1/2 miles and the seminary will be on your right.

From Route 9 in Wellesley - turn north onto Weston Road and continue for approximately 2 miles. (Note - this street is renamed Wellesley Road at the Weston town line). Turn left onto Route 30 (South Avenue). The seminary will be 1/4 mile on the left.

