



# Bishop Simon Bruteé

## FOCUS

June 2021

## Praying with St. Joseph for vocations



**Fr. Joe Moriarty**  
**Rector**

The beautiful Carmelite sisters who occupied this building before us, united with Carmelite orders throughout the world, have always had a unique devotion to Saint Joseph, the father of our Lord and the husband to our Blessed Mother Mary.

In fact, etched in the stone of our gate house as you leave the enclosure of our premises, is a beautiful image of Saint Joseph holding the baby Jesus. As a man of faith, I am never given to believe in coincidence, but I am always given to believe in evidence of God's knowledge of things to come.

The image of Saint Joseph etched in stone at our gate house is evidence to me of God's foresight and knowledge. Today, this convent turned seminary serves as a house of future spiritual fathers. It is beyond appropriate that

every time seminarians go beyond the enclosure, they see an image of Saint Joseph who was father to our Lord Jesus Christ and is spiritual father to all of us, Jesus' baptized children.

I have often said that no time in seminary is ever lost. Indeed, we desire good and holy vocations to the priesthood. If a man decides this is not God's call for him, he will be a better husband and father for having spent time in seminary. Saint Joseph is a model for all Christians in his patience, guidance and care for the holy souls who were entrusted to him. Similarly, priestly fathers and biological fathers offer guidance and care for souls they love. In this way, Saint Joseph is a perfect model for us!

In this year of Saint Joseph, let us ever realize the humility, courage, strength and consistent kindness this holy man displayed in his love for Mary and Jesus. Let us also pray that this holy man, by his intercession, will continue to send faithful souls to the vineyard of God's church. Although all eight of our graduating seniors are attending major seminary next year, we have no priestly ordinations in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis this year. May we ever realize our need to pray to this holy patron to support our efforts to reap a bountiful harvest for service in God's church. ✠



# A heart for fatherhood

When I learned that there would be a “Year of Saint Joseph” for the Church, I was excited because he has always been a patron saint of mine. After my wife, Gabriela, and I welcomed our little Caterina Sofia into our family, I considered it an invitation to renew my devotion to St. Joseph and spend some intentional time reflecting on the example of fatherhood that this great saint provides. What a good and patient father St. Joseph was. As a new father, I have encountered many opportunities to grow in the virtue of patience and I rely on St. Joseph’s intercession to give me the grace I need!

When I was a student at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, discerning God’s call in my life, one of the most important aspects of formation was the dynamic of communal living. At Bruté, we were a small community and shared a truly wonderful, fraternal life. Alongside these joys, community life will help you grow in patience! Whether it be through interactions with brother seminarians, in waiting for your turn to wash laundry or shower, or sitting through house meetings, the opportunities to grow in patience were ever-present. Such experiences helped prepare me for the joys and challenges of family life and fatherhood.

What was even more crucial from my time at Bruté was learning how to be a man of prayer. St. Joseph was a man of prayer and the man who first modeled prayer for Jesus. At Bruté, prayer was a constant. Whether it was liturgical prayer, such as Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, or personal prayer during Eucharistic Adoration or devotions, prayer was always at the heart of life at Bruté. It taught me to keep God at the center of my day and to be aware of his presence always. I strive as a father and



husband to impart this beautiful model of prayer that was given to me while in formation at Bruté.

After spending a couple of years at Bruté and discerning that God was calling me to another vocation, I married my wife, Gabriela. Many of my brother seminarians, including all those who began formation with me at Bruté in our freshman year, and several of the priests attended our wedding. Gabriela and I are active in our parish community and currently serve the Church working in ministry for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. We have initiated Caterina into the life of the Church through baptism and she takes part in our daily family prayers and Sunday Mass. She loves waving to other babies in church, hearing the organ playing and is delighted when the consecration bells are rung!

I find myself constantly grateful for the formation I received while living at Bruté which made me into a more loving, patient and prayerful husband and father. ✠

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***Daniel Ross serves as Judge Instructor/Assessor on the Metropolitan Tribunal for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. He is also a member of the Bruté Advisory Board.***

*Photos provided by Daniel Ross*



# St. Joseph, a model for priests



Photos provided by Rev. Dominic Vahling

This Year of St. Joseph has been a great chance for me as a new priest, and for my brothers in the priesthood, to reflect on the great power of our spiritual fatherhood. St. Joseph is a striking figure in the Gospels. He is striking both in his silence and in his generous dedication to protecting and providing for Mary and Jesus.

One of my favorite “Joseph” scenes to imagine from the Gospels is the Flight to Egypt found in Matthew 2:13-15. Joseph is informed by an angel that baby Jesus is in danger of being killed by Herod. I imagine that St. Joseph’s fatherly instincts kicked in at that moment and he went into action. He woke Mary gently but firmly, telling her that they needed to leave *now*. Mary confidently trusts her husband to make the right decision for their family and to protect them along the way. Even if the Holy Family had encountered a hostile soldier, I’m confident that the strength of Joseph would have been a sturdy defense against an attack.

Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus, and he and Mary never had physical relations. But, among all the men in the world, St. Joseph was chosen to stand in the place of God the Father, from whom fatherhood itself takes its name (Ephesians 3:15)! As spiritual fathers, we priests need men to

look to for an example of celibate, fruitful love. My four years at Bruté helped me to grow into the identity of a spiritual father. I don’t think I necessarily would have had the vocabulary to express this growth at the time, but looking back, I can see how I was being prepared to make a total gift of myself to God and to the Church.

Every day, high school students and parishioners call me “Father.” It has taken some time to get used to this new title and new identity, especially when I am being addressed as the spiritual father of people who are over ninety years old! In a special way, the celibate love of priests for their people reveals the love of God the Father. May St. Joseph, the protector of the first Priest, also protect us through his fatherly care. ✠

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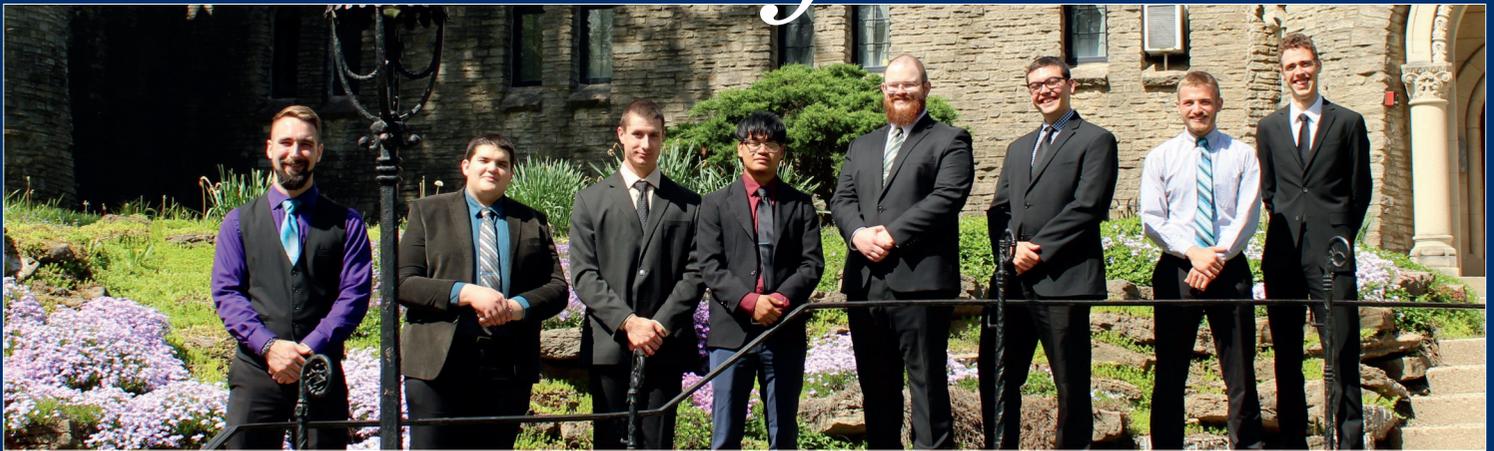
**Rev. Dominic Vahling '16 is a priest of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois serving as Parochial Vicar of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield and Co-Chaplain at Sacred Heart-Griffin High School.**

## LEAVE A LEGACY

Have you considered how a planned gift to the seminary can impact lives for years to come? Including Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in your will continues your ability to serve the seminary’s mission of helping young men discern their vocation to the priesthood.

*To learn more about how you can plan a lasting gift through legacy planning, contact Jim Maslar at 317.236.1588 or [jmaslar@archindy.org](mailto:jmaslar@archindy.org).*

# CONGRATULATIONS, *Class of 2021!*



Left to right: Justin Horner, Aaron Noll, Isaac Siefker, Khui Shing, Matt Smyser, Nick Monnin, Andy Barnes, and Benjamin Packer

## ANDY BARNES

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend **Major Seminary:** Mount St. Mary's—Emmitsburg, MD

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** A chipmunk had snuck into the building and made its way into a guy's room. The chipmunk was sitting on his bookshelf staring at him when he woke up. To make a long story short, three other guys went into the room and looked for the chipmunk for 45 minutes, occasionally running into and knocking down furniture trying to catch it. The chipmunk was eventually caught in a grocery bag and was taken outside, never to be seen again.

**The most important thing you learned at Bruté:** The most important thing that I learned at Bruté was greater trust in the Lord, especially having to do with discernment. I have learned to strive to walk with Him through my day and let Him open and close doors for me, for Christ will lead me

where He wants me to go.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** "On our own we are incapable of doing the Lord's will, but we must incessantly turn to Him and allow Him to work through us, for if we do this, God will use us as vessels to accomplish His will just as He did with Saint Joseph." (from my talk on the second sorrow/joy of St. Joseph - the poverty of Jesus' birth/the birth of the Savior)

## JUSTIN HORNER

Archdiocese of Indianapolis, **Major Seminary:** St. Meinrad—St. Meinrad, IN

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** Of the many great memories of Bruté with my brother seminarians, one of my favorites is all night adoration and the Eucharistic procession through the hallways of Bruté.

**The most important thing you learned at Bruté:** I have better learned to be Christ centered and

to listen to God in the everyday.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** The love that we have for Joseph leads us to a greater devotion to Mary and Jesus. The love we have for Mary leads us to a greater devotion to Joseph and Jesus. When we love Jesus, He calls us to love His parents, so to better know Himself.

## NICK MONNIN

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, **Major Seminary:** Pontifical North American College—Rome

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** My favorite Bruté memory would have to be either building a 12-foot snowman on the front lawn of the seminary in my freshman year or all the Mundelein basketball tournaments the seminary played in.

**The most important thing you learned at Bruté:** The most im-

portant thing that I have learned at Bruté is how to pray and how to love.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** I think St. Joseph really relishes his vocation as a father. He loves the opportunity to be our father and to teach us to be good fathers.

## AARON NOLL

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

**Major Seminary:** St. Meinrad—St. Meinrad, IN

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** When we meet as a community for different class tournaments, volleyball, Bruté Olympics, etc.

**Most important thing you learned at Bruté:** Management of academic study and prayer and how to make good use of your time with both.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** Verse fourteen (Mt 2:14) of this passage starts out and it moves quickly and contains one of my favorite quotes from St. Joseph and how he didn't stop to ask questions or make excuses. He was giving God what was due, listening to His messenger as he had before and following God's will. As foster father of Jesus and spouse of Mary, it was Joseph's duty to protect them while going through a land which was often hostile to the Jewish people. Like St. Joseph, we are called to walk with his son Jesus and Mary, in a world which is often hostile to them and the Gospel.

## BENJAMIN PACKER

Archdiocese of Cincinnati

**Major Seminary:** Mount St. Mary's—Cincinnati, OH

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** One of my favorite memories from my time at Bruté has been planning

and teaching catechetical lessons with Isaac Siefker as we tried to explain the Eucharist and Jesus to 5th graders. We spent significant time teaching that Jesus is God and it took some creativity to get the 5th graders to remember it.

**Most important thing you learned at Bruté:** One of the most important things that I have learned at Bruté is that even if I am not especially gifted at a certain thing, God will provide, either making my actions sufficient, or allowing someone else to express their gifts by helping me. I do not need to be perfect, but only willing to let God work through me.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** The Presentation is literally a mountain top experience for Joseph. The Temple is at the top of Mt. Zion as well as the summit of Jewish life, but even here, Joseph finds the suffering of the Cross in hearing of the future suffering which Jesus and Mary will endure and Jesus' rejection by the Jewish people. Everything in Joseph's life points to his son, Jesus, whose life culminates in His sacrifice of the Cross.

## KHUI SHING

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

**Major Seminary:** St. Meinrad—St. Meinrad, IN

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** My favorite memory at Bruté would be the time I spent with the community. Like playing soccer, basketball and other sports.

**Most important thing you learned at Bruté:** Most important things I learned at Bruté are friendship and faith.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** Be like St. Joseph who eagerly sought Jesus when He was lost.

## ISAAC SIEFKER

Archdiocese of Indianapolis

**Major Seminary:** St. Meinrad—St. Meinrad, IN

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** Playing airsoft together inside the walls.

**Most important thing you learned at Bruté:** How to read Latin.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** "St. Joseph is our father."

## MATT SMYSER

Diocese of Lexington

**Major Seminary:** St. Meinrad—St. Meinrad, IN

**Favorite memory of Bruté:** My junior year I caught a chipmunk in one of the senior's rooms. We absolutely turned the place upside down looking for the little guy and I heard more grown men scream like little girls than I would have ever thought possible.

**Most important thing you learned at Bruté:** Pursuit of Jesus and the Christian life does not come with milestones. It's not about checking off boxes and doing everything. It's about a relationship. There are hard times and good times, times of noise and times of silence. Times of growth and times of plateauing. It's always growing and there is no summit to reach.

**Reflection on St. Joseph:** Joseph is here to show us how to live under our new king.



# A place to call home

In these past four years here in the seminary, I have grown to consider Bruté as my home. When I first arrived, I had only met some of the seminarians a few times before and had just visited for a day. Bruté could rightly be considered a strange place for me coming from the comfort of my own house where I was homeschooled and grew up. That first year, I made good friends with many of the other seminarians as I adapted to community, school and living away from home for the first time. Four years later, I consider Bruté to be my home and my brother seminarians as my brothers in this house.

In a way, Bruté has become even more my home this year as I was selected to be the Facilities Guardian as my house job. This means that I am responsible for taking care of basic problems and emergencies with the building as they arise. This care for the building has made me feel even more at home as I have had the privilege of taking care of the house and ministering to my brothers through this simple work. I have appreciated this opportunity to minister to my brothers especially in this year. Due to COVID-19, our ministry oppor-

tunities have been limited and I have realized that this is a manner of ministering to Christ's Church, even if it is not what I imagine for ministry in the future, nor what I had imagined for ministry for this year.

This house job has also taught me about leadership, patience and persistence, as I have tried to fix a problem or have the problem fixed by Mike, our maintenance man. Communicating with my brother seminarians was critical as I learned earlier this past fall before the HVAC units were replaced and parts of the seminary did not have heat. These experiences as Facilities Guardian have helped me to grow in various ways and at the same time have helped me to appreciate and serve this community which I now call home.

**Benjamin Packer '21**  
*Archdiocese of Cincinnati*



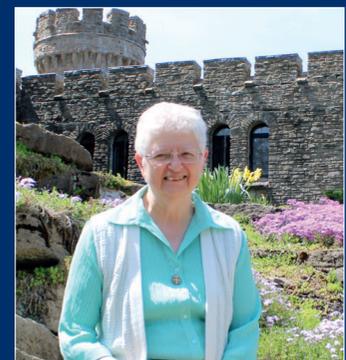
## Seminary announces staff changes

Sr. Sharon Kuhn, OSB, Administrative Coordinator at Bishop Bruté, has been called back to Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove to serve as the subprioress. We pray that God blesses Sr. Sharon and that He sends just the right person to serve as the new Administrative Coordinator.

Fr. Justin DuVall, OSB, has served as the Vice Rector at Bishop Simon Bruté for the past five years and has been called back to St. Meinrad to serve as the Novice and Junior Master beginning on June 1. Fr. Andy Syberg who has been serving as a formation dean will now serve as Vice Rector.



*Fr. Justin DuVall, OSB (left) and Msgr. Tony Volz (right)*



*Sr. Sharon Kuhn, OSB*

Msgr. Tony Volz has served as the Director of Spiritual Formation at Bruté for the past two years and is awaiting his next assignment. We are excited to welcome Fr. Daniel Bedel '10 as our next Director of Spiritual Formation. He will join the Bruté team on July 7, 2021.

Fr. Joe and the seminarians are so grateful to Sr. Sharon, Fr. Justin and Msgr. Tony for their spiritual wisdom and dedicated service to the seminary. ✠

# Eagle Scouts follow the model of St. Joseph the Worker

Fr. Joe worked with two Boy Scouts from Troop 202 in Carmel, Indiana, Mitchel Elshire and Colin Jackson, who chose to focus their Eagle Scout projects on needs at the seminary. An Eagle Scout project is one of the final steps for a Scout to earn the highest rank in Scouting and requires them to plan, develop and give leadership to others in a service project that benefits a religious institution, school or community.



Colin Jackson (seated next to Fr. Joe) and his volunteers built and delivered two large picnic tables in April 2021 so the seminarians can enjoy eating their meals or studying outdoors. Colin stated, "I've grown up in the Church my entire life and always wanted to give back. When I heard about a project at the seminary, I thought it was a great idea to give back that way."



Mitchel Elshire (third from the right) led his team of volunteers to build six benches for the firepit behind the seminary building which he delivered in December 2020 while the seminarians were remote learning. According to Fr. Joe, the seminarians have thoroughly enjoyed having such well-made places to sit for bonfires. ✂

## The BISHOP SIMON BRUTÉ Society

*Members of the Bishop Simon Bruté Society are recognized in the Fall Issue of The Bishop Simon Bruté Focus. Be sure to make your contribution before June 30, 2021 to be included in the next Honor Roll of Donors.*

*The Bishop Simon Bruté Society was established on the 10th anniversary of the founding of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary to honor people who generously support the seminary with financial contributions.*

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*Bishop Joseph Chartrand was Bishop of the Diocese of Indianapolis from 1918-1933.*

*Contact Director of Mission Advancement, Ellen Sanders (esanders@archindy.org, 317.236.1501) with questions or for help making your gift to support our seminarians.*

## DONATE ONLINE!

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[bishopsimonbrute.org/donate-to-the-seminary](https://bishopsimonbrute.org/donate-to-the-seminary)

## CONTACT US!

Interested in admissions information or a tour of the seminary?

Contact Vice Rector,  
Fr. Andy Syberg, at:  
[asyberg@archindy.org](mailto:asyberg@archindy.org)  
317.927.4100

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**BISHOP SIMON BRUTÉ**  
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Thank you to the groups that recently came to provide food and fellowship to the seminarians.

On Monday, April 19, nine members of the Notre Dame Law School St. Thomas More Society created a delicious taco bar which was a huge hit with the men at the seminary. Since this was the first group able to stay for dinner, the seminarians had their initial experience introducing themselves to visitors and were very impressive.

Then on Monday, April 26, 41 members of the Serra Club, (pictured above) who nurture religious vocations, descended on Bruté for their annual cookout. God provided a perfect spring day so the Serrans and the seminarians could enjoy dinner in the courtyard and the dining room. It was a joy to listen to the young men share their experiences in the seminary and discuss their summer plans.

*If you are part of an organization that would like to provide a dinner at the seminary, please email Fr. Joe: [jmoriarty@archindy.org](mailto:jmoriarty@archindy.org).*