



# Bishop Simon Bruté *FOCUS*

March 2023

## "That in all things God may be glorified!"

**Fr. Joe Moriarty, Rector**

Taken from the Rule of Saint Benedict, the motto "That in all things God may be glorified!" was meant to help keep monks and sisters engaged in worldly tasks, like teaching, and maintaining a faithful spirit of *Ora et Labora* (prayer and work). Since the founding of St. Meinrad Archabbey, Benedictine monks have supported many dioceses in educating men for the priesthood, as well as preparing faithful lay leaders for the church.

Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary has been blessed with the assistance of Benedictine monks who have served in various capacities on our staff. We were honored to be served by the late Fr. Justin Duvall, OSB, who served on our staff as Vice Rector for many years. Currently, we are blessed to be served by Fr. Jonathan Fassero, OSB. Fr. Jonathan holds the distinction of being the longest serving staff member of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary. Beginning his work as a part-time spiritual director under Fr. Bob Robeson, the founding rector of the seminary, in 2009.



To be sure, the seminary is proud of the work we do in preparing men for the priesthood as this is indeed our mission, however, we realize God also calls men to other vocations and various ministries throughout the church. We invite you to reflect with us in this issue on the impact of these men, both priests and committed laymen serving our church, and thus proclaiming by their lives and service that, "in all things, God be glorified!" ✠



# That is where God is

*Fr. Dan Bedel '10*

*Director of Spiritual Formation*

“Whatever you are doing, that which makes you feel most alive; that is where God is.” This quote from St. Ignatius of Loyola basically sums up my experience being the Director of Spiritual Formation at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary. Every day, I have the incredible opportunity to sit down with our seminarians for one-on-one spiritual direction; inquiring about their prayer, diving deeper into their relationship with God, and actively helping them discern God’s will for them. And I feel so blessed, because to engage in this type of ministry is exactly why I became a priest in the first place; to aid another on their spiritual journey. It is the thing that gives me life. And it is where I see God most clearly.

And when you find something that gives you life and makes God manifest, you naturally want to learn as much about it as possible; to hone your skill and perfect your craft. This past summer, I drove to Omaha, NE to do exactly that. Creighton University hosts a program geared to train spiritual directors that is esteemed around the world. Students from the United States, Vietnam, the Philippines, Ghana, Mexico, New Zealand, and various other nations attend clas-

ses at Creighton to better their ability to provide spiritual direction to their religious communities, seminaries, or parishes. The certificate program involves 18 graduate credits (six classes) spread out over three summers.

This past summer, I learned about the nuts and bolts of spiritual direction meetings themselves and how to best guide the directee to see God working in their life and what He might be trying to say to them. Another class I took this past summer was on Ignatian spirituality, specifically about St. Ignatius’ Discernment of Spirits; listening to the inner movements of the Holy Spirit and determining God’s will, not only in the major decisions of life, but even in the passing moments of everyday life. In March 2023, I will fly to Spain to walk in the footsteps of St. Ignatius and take a class on his teachings about prayer. And I look forward to returning to Creighton both this summer and in 2024 to continue growing in the art of spiritual direction.

This is what I’m currently doing to help improve the formation our seminarians receive at Bruté. It is the thing that gives me life. And I continue to witness God’s hands molding our seminarians into the men He created them to be. ✠



*Fr. Dan Bedel meets with a seminarian for spiritual direction.*

# Spiritual Direction with Fr. Jonathan Fassero helps seminarians see God working in their lives



**Ellen Sanders**  
*Catholic Philanthropic Advisor  
for Bishop Simon Bruté College  
Seminary*



“Think of all the young men who were sitting in this chair, feeling the same way you are now, young men who have become holy men of God and are living out their vocations as priests, husbands, and fathers.” This is how Fr. Jonathan Fassero, OSB, introduces young men to the spiritual direction they receive while attending Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary.

Fr. Jonathan is the longest serving priest at Bruté. In 2009, then St. Meinrad Archabbot Justin DuVall, OSB, asked Fr. Jonathan if he would like to serve as a spiritual director at Bruté. Initially Fr. Jonathan hesitated, citing the long drive from St. Meinrad to Indianapolis. But Archabbot DuVall convinced Fr. Jonathan there was a need for an additional spiritual director at Bruté, so Fr. Jonathan became part of the team of priests who work with the seminarians on their spiritual growth.

“The more things change, the more they stay the same,” says Fr. Jonathan describing the young men he works with at Bruté. “The men choose to attend college seminary because they have a desire to serve the Lord. They are often inspired by a parish priest or another person they admire and have had an experience that brings them closer to Jesus, so they want to make a difference. They are

aware of the missteps of the church and want to set things right. They arrive with a desire to become good, holy priests.” he adds.

Fr. Jonathan enhances his work as a spiritual director by applying his own experience as a directee and by attending gatherings like the Federation of Spiritual Directors where he meets with other spiritual directors to discuss topics that impact seminarians. He uses that continuing education when he meets with the young men every two weeks. He encourages them to approach spiritual direction as a lifelong practice instead of viewing it just as a seminary requirement. “In spiritual direction, the seminarians share their experiences in prayer and also identify the challenges they are facing and have to confront. What is helping their spiritual life and what road-blocks are they encountering? Then I ask them how they see God working in those challenges including the brokenness of family life, Fr. Jonathan explains “Part of my responsibility is to help them see progress, to help them look back and celebrate moments of growth.” By serving as a spiritual director, Fr. Jonathan believes he too has been changed for the better.



*Fr. Jonathan Fassero, OSB*

For Fr. Jonathan, spiritual direction is all about hope. “In our broken world and fragmented society, there are still people who are on the journey to seek God, who transcends the narrow confines of this world, he says “These college seminarians are seeking Jesus, like the Magi, and through spiritual direction we help them never to lose sight of the star.” ✕

# Alumni find calling working for the Church



*Eric Gehlhausen*

My name is Eric Gehlhausen and I attended Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary from 2014 to 2018. Since leaving the seminary, I have often been asked, “Why didn’t you continue in seminary to become a priest?” or “wasn’t going to college seminary a waste of time if you didn’t become a priest?” It took me a

while before I could answer those questions; however, after much prayer and discernment, I realized that my answer was simply that God was no longer calling me to be in seminary. It isn’t an answer many people want or expect. However, one must be willing to listen and trust in God’s calling no matter what it entails. In my case, I discovered that God was leading me to another vocation, the vocation of marriage and teaching.

After I graduated from Marian University, I began teaching in Catholic schools. I was blessed to begin teaching at St. Pius X Catholic School in Indianapolis. After two years, I decided that I was going to move to Minnesota, where I have been teaching ever since. I teach 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students religion and social studies. I met my wife, Sheyenne, shortly after graduating from Marian and we got married in 2022. The time I was blessed with in seminary at Bruté has made me a better teacher, husband, and, most importantly, a man of God. I learned what it meant to have a prayer life, how to live by the virtues, and the importance of the sacraments. ✠



*Nick Rivelli*

My name is Nick Rivelli. I was a seminarian at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary from 2018-2020. After a year of theological study at Saint Meinrad, I discerned to take a step back from seminary formation. Currently, I

am excited to be serving as the Associate Director of Young Adult and College Campus Ministry at the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

My biggest takeaway, and the biggest area of continuity for me from my time at Bruté to my current role, is the importance of community rooted in Jesus. Bruté is a vibrant “Catholic fraternity” in the true sense of the word. My brothers and I laughed together, studied together, shared life with one another, and constantly held one another in prayer. From my first day at seminary, I was struck by the ordinariness of life there. While we engaged in a rigorous prayer schedule, we also had Sunday night movie gatherings, played basketball, and cooked meals together, to name a few of our social activities.

I am convinced that all communities, including our local young adult community, could learn much from imitating seminary life. Living closely together as Catholics provides us with opportunities to grow in friendship, to grow closer to Jesus, and to bear His light to the world through our collective example. While I’m no longer in priestly formation, I praise and thank God for my time there, and for allowing me the opportunity to share what I learned with others my age – namely, the beauty of friendship rooted in the desire to lead one another to Jesus.

If you or a young adult you know is interested in this kind of community, please come to one of our events to get connected! You can find out more information by checking out [indycatholic.org](http://indycatholic.org). God bless you! ✠



My name is Mark Vojas and I graduated from Bruté in 2019. I am currently serving as the Pastoral Associate at Ss. Peter & Paul Parish and School in Collinsville, IL where I have been leading the youth programs.

My four years at Bruté blessed me in many ways. One of the greatest gifts from this time was how I came to understand the importance of self-knowledge in order to give of myself to others. This concept has helped me to better use the gifts God has given me to serve his people today.

Everyone needs God. Period. Now more than ever, the need for God in the world is abundantly clear. And in saying this, I speak from the particular experience of working in youth ministry. The young Church is in desperate need of attention, energy, and a listening presence. In order to provide this to them, I have to know my own needs and how to fill them in a healthy way. We were always reminded at Bruté that we can't pour from an empty cup. If we're not taking care of ourselves spiritually, emotionally, and physically, we won't have anything to offer to those who come to us in their need.

When I think of the way I was ministered to at Bruté, I try to imitate that when ministering to my students now. I was never judged or made to feel stupid even when I felt like I should have been. I was always listened to, gently guided, and loved. I certainly don't do this perfectly as nobody can, but I often stop and thank God that I had such wonderful examples at Bruté. I pray that the seeds God planted in me at Bruté will continue to bear fruit to whatever work the Lord calls me. ✠



*Mark Vojas*



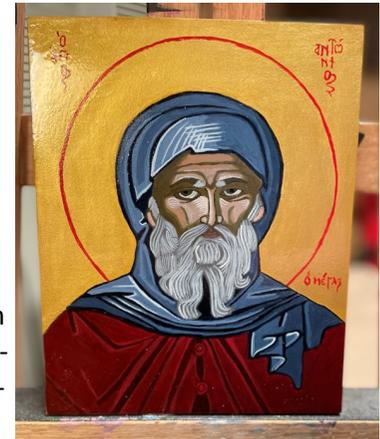
# Seminarian uses Iconography to grow faith

**Aidan Smith' 26**

**Archdiocese of Indianapolis**



My passion and love for iconography began about five years ago when the youth minister at my home parish of St. Bartholomew in Columbus, IN started to learn how to create icons on his own. He learned through online courses and was able to figure out the basic principles and style to make some nice amateur works. That was my first introduction to iconography and since then a profound love of the art form has flourished within me.



In the Byzantine Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, iconography is an extremely important part of their worship. Their worship spaces are completely covered with icons and the sacramental nature of icons is extremely complicated. They believe the person depicted in the icon to be present in it, and because of this, icons have much stricter rules and templates than most forms

of art in the western church. Icons are not just some image someone comes up with and paints, but it's meant to be an image of the person in their heavenly form. This is why there's no clear directional light source and it seems that the icon is just illuminated from all around or even within the person itself.

The history of iconography dates back to the early church and is one of the oldest forms of art present within the faith. Some events called iconoclasm have occurred where people destroy icons believing them to be idolatry. The iconographer themselves were highly trained both in the art itself and spiritually. It was almost treated as its own vocation in which one would dedicate their life to writing icons (In the Orthodox Christian tradition, icons are said to be written, not painted). Even though I love iconography and have been learning how to create icons for years now, I do not call myself a true iconographer because I lack the formal training and spiritual richness that a true iconographer needs to have. Once I have more formal training, I would be proud to call myself a true iconographer.

I made my first icon in 2021 and was walked through it by my youth minister step by step. It was a simple image of Mary, just her head and shoulders, that I made as a Christmas gift for my mother. I have never been the most artistically talented person, but I found the style of iconography easy to understand and almost intuitive in a way that was a real blessing. After about a month and a half of work, I completed that first icon and was pleasantly surprised at how it ended up looking. I could tell at the time that I might be able to be good at this art form if I just gave it some effort and practice. I started my next icon soon after, and the improvement from my first to my second was astounding. My second icon was of Saint Anthony the Great, a very prominent Saint in the Eastern Church, and one of the early desert fathers. Like my first one, it was a gift to someone else. In fact, to this day I have not yet made an icon for myself.

Since coming to Bruté, my schedule has been jam-packed with formation and classes, and so last semester I only was able to complete one icon over the entire semester. I plan to try to pour a little more time into iconography because I realized that I lost a good amount of the skill I had developed by taking so much time between working on them. One way I plan to help with this is by running an icon workshop for my fellow seminarians that want to learn about iconography. Together we will all use the same image of Mary that I used for my first icon, and maybe I can see how much my skills have grown since then. I have also cultivated a small collection of books on iconography. The books are not just about how to write icons but the theological and spiritual aspects of it so I can more greatly implement it into my prayer life. I still have quite a lot to learn and wish to be formally trained by an actual iconographer one day. While here at Bruté I plan on practicing what I currently know and maybe even learning some new techniques to help me cultivate a deeper relationship with Jesus and the saints through this beautiful artistic medium. ✕



# Kindle the light of Christ



**Crystal Platteter**  
**Bishop Simon Bruté**  
**College Seminary**  
**Advisory Board member**

I was asked to write about my journey, the journey that led me to supporting Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary. This request made me think.

As a Catholic, I grew up learning about my faith at Mass and parish activities. Our family was active in parish ministries, and we raised four children, all who were blessed to attend Catholic school. Since we live in southern Indiana and were familiar with St. Meinrad Seminary, many of our family's "Sunday trips" were to experience the beauty and peace of that holy place.

In November 1979, I made a Cursillo weekend in Indianapolis. That weekend was my first step on this journey. On the weekend, we were encouraged to find a spiritual director. I learned that sometimes God uses a whisper (or a heavenly 2x4) to speak to us. My journey to helping Bruté started with a whisper. While serving on other Cursillo weekends, I met Fr. Joe Moriarty.

In 2006, the Southern Indiana town of French Lick was completely restored to its former beauty. Our Lady of the Springs Parish has the sweetest little chapel there. It sits magnificently on a hill overlooking the city. Fr. Joe was sacramental minister of the parish at that time. We went to Mass there and upon returning home, I sent him a note asking if he would be my spiritual director. A few weeks later he said yes. We met frequently in French Lick. When he was later assigned to Bruté, I knew I would continue to follow him for spiritual direction.

Donating to Bruté came to me naturally. Why? By helping those young men, I feel like I am walking on the right road to eventually meet my Father in heaven. I'm currently serving on the seminary's

Advisory Board and love being a part of the behind-the-scenes operation of Bruté.

In 2022, I went on a pilgrimage to Israel with 10 of those young seminarians. Getting to know them by name and listening to their witnesses to our faith is humbling. You can never doubt the strength and future of our beloved church after you spend time with those amazing young men.

Here was my reflection for today, taken from Mother Teresa. *"Jesus wants us to give of ourselves every moment. You have been taught by those who have given their whole life to Christ. By their teaching and personal example, they have kindled the light of Christ in your lives. Time has come for you to likewise kindle the same light of Christ in the lives of those around you."*

Supporting Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary is a good place to start. We have four awesome grandsons today. Two of them have begun serving at Mass. I want the church to be there for them. ✠



*Crystal walks with seminarian Nick Kompar during trip to the Holy Land.*

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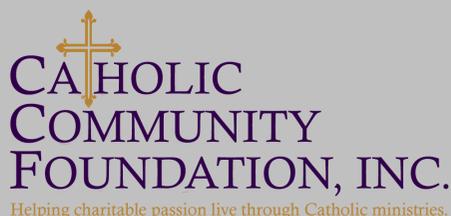
## A bequest helps you leave a Catholic legacy

When you look back at the end of your life, what would your faith story say about you? If your answer includes your value of stewardship, then consider what your last gift to the Church should say about your faith life. How might you leave a “Catholic” legacy?

A bequest in your will can make a statement of who you were and what you valued throughout your lifetime. It can also bear witness to your loved ones, and the community at large, your generosity and the need to give back a small portion of that which God has blessed you.

A bequest can benefit your favorite Catholic parish, school, or the ministry you hold dear (or any of their endowment funds at the Catholic Community Foundation).

To learn more about leaving a Catholic legacy through a bequest, contact the Catholic Community Foundation (CCF) at 317-236-1482 or [ccf@archindy.org](mailto:ccf@archindy.org).

  
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