



The Evangelist

SPRING | MAY 2021

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A MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS,
ALUMNI AND
BENEFACTORS,

It has been more than one year since COVID-19 affected our lives. Like the whole world, St. John's Seminary faced this experience with incertitude, fear, and confusion. During all this time, St. John's never stopped the formation of men dedicated to discerning the signs of the time and their purpose as future priests. I am very grateful to the administrative staff,

our faculty, and all who keep working so hard in this challenging year.

Being isolated from the rest of society by the end of the academic year, our seminarians and priests joined in solidarity with those suffering the loss of their beloved due to the pandemic. It was a fruitful time for prayer and deep reflection on the mission to priestly life. The new academic year began with a series of adaptations based on the course of pandemic and the guidelines of the civil authorities.

In the efforts for a solution to the challenges of the pandemic, we learned that because of the uncertainty of politics and sciences, our society has experienced a loss of economic and spiritual hope. While now we are optimistic that people have begun to receive the vaccine for the Coronavirus, this optimism cannot be founded only on a programmatic vision of human efforts without faith in God. In fact, this type of worldly faith is above all a crisis of Christian hope.

It is well known that modern secular hope is based on scientific faith as a key to future salvation through technology. However, a hope that purely satisfies technological need never comes to an end and so it lacks fulfillment. Philosophical and theological theories that have proposed this idea as a reason for



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hope have ended in disappointment. Illustrative is the story of the Babel tower as the paradigm in which we live. We intend to arrive at the plenitude through technique, but we destine ourselves to be tireless stonemasons. In other words, we live the myth of Sisyphus condemned to work without end. In this way, hope is a blind optimism that loses the connection between human perfection and the history of salvation.

Without a doubt, we live in a confusing time regarding the meaning of the ultimate end. All seems to be coherent without the truth about God, the world, and humanity. Thus, we move from blind optimism to pessimism and despair without hope in God. Reduction of the truth to a mere scientific reason moves to the loss of faith and, as consequence, hope – the engine of history- stops.

Therefore, it is important to increase our hope in God and to offer others the reason for this relationship which is the reason we are to live: love. We believe that God is Love because God is relationship. This form of faith orients us towards the Biblical foundation of hope. Only through the Sacred Scriptures, we can find the salvific dimension of history for which we wait.

As we continue facing our challenges during this year, please join me in giving thanks to God for

the blessings we have received, and through the intercession of St. Joseph, a model for seminarians and priests, may we grow in holiness and perseverance.

Sincerely,



Very Rev. Marco A. Durazo
Rector / President

*For more information about St. John's Seminary,
The Evangelist, or to learn about ways you can
financially support St. John's mission, please visit:*

www.stjohnsem.edu/contact-us-development



ST. JOSEPH AS OUR MODEL

By Rev. Gustavo Castillo

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has given us a holy year to reflect on the fatherhood of St. Joseph. It is a timely and welcomed gift. At a time when many families are challenged by the conditions of our secular society, we can all turn to this faithful husband and father to learn valuable lessons of love and fidelity.

A Helpful Book

Last year someone gifted me a copy of Fr. Donald Calloway's "Consecration to St Joseph." The gift came on time to do the consecration on March 19th along with Fr. Eugenio Cardenas, MSps, our Associate Spiritual Director, and several other seminarians. It was an enriching experience as we read through those pages for 33 days and gathered once a week over lunch to discuss the insights received. We all agreed

with the author that St. Joseph has not received the attention that he deserves in our Church; although he has been declared the universal patron, that only happened 150 years ago and many Catholics still do not have a devotion to him, the one who was so devoted to caring for Our Lady and God's only Son.

There is a good chance that may change. Fr. Calloway's book has been in high demand this year, and I understand that its Spanish translation was entirely sold out in Catholic bookstores. Here at St. John's Seminary, another group of seminarians is currently preparing themselves for their consecration reading through the pages of this work. I will not spoil the ending of the book for those who have not read it, but I will say that I enjoyed the artwork commissioned for its publication and the insights we learned about the hidden life of

and humble life, as well as their utmost confidence in God's providence, is a mirror we can all benefit from if we reflect and emulate those virtues in our own lives.

Model for Seminarians

As a seminarian, I remember thinking about how St. Joseph, as a chaste and celibate man, could be a model for me as well. Fr. Don Calloway made it a point to show us a youthful Joseph in all of the paintings commissioned for his book to highlight the sacrifice and consecration that our holy universal patron embraced when he was consented to marry a Virgin who had a most wonderful mission. The traditional images of an old foster father holding the Baby Jesus do not inspire young men to be ready for a similar undertaking. The book helped me to reaffirm my devotion to St. Joseph and to pray for the young aspirants whom we are welcoming to our seminary community today in response to God's invitation to love with an undivided and pure heart.

Healing the “Father-Wound”

Much has been written about the “father-wound” that many people suffer from in our world nowadays. We know it is real given the many broken homes who have suffered the sadness of experiencing a divorce or the single moms who have done their best to raise healthy and loving children despite that paternal absence. Here too, we can turn to St. Joseph to see how a “foster father” can indeed provide the wholeness that is necessary for children to grow feeling loved and protected. So long as there is a father figure in the family in the person of a grandfather,

children also have a chance to be nurtured in a loving environment where God and the family are the center of one’s life and source of future assurance.

Model for Workers

St. Joseph is one of the few saints who have two different feast days: March 19th, when he is honored as the Husband of Mary, and May 1st, as the Patron of Workers. Though as Americans we can boast of being hard-working and productive individuals, as Catholic Americans we can all do better as workers of the Gospel. There is a reason why our Pope has been emphasizing evangelization since the beginning of his pontificate. The new *ratio* for seminaries published in 2016 calls for “Missionary Disciples,” another term for zealous preachers of the Good News who are in tune with the desires and longings of the Good Shepherd. At an age where many young people are seduced by video games and other passive activities, we turn to St. Joseph to pray for a renewed zeal in our Church and our seminary. Indeed, “the harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few.”

May St. Joseph and our seminary patron intercede for us to produce faithful evangelists, missionary disciples in love with the Truth and with the desire to bring all our brothers and sisters to heaven!

On Saturday, May 1st, 2021 on the Feast day of St. Joseph the Worker, Fr. Donald Calloway led the consecration of the state of California to St.

Joseph, an event that took place at St. John the Baptist Church in Costa Mesa, California.

Rev. Gustavo Castillo is the Director of Spiritual Formation at St. John’s Seminary in Camarillo, CA..

MINISTRY DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

SHARING CHRIST THROUGH A DISTANCE

MINISTRY LETTERS *by Anthony Huynh*



During the fall 2020 semester, I was assigned to prison ministry for field education. Due to the pandemic, I was unable to visit in person, so my supervisor and I agreed that I would write letters to inmates, only one of whom responded (we'll call him "Henry") and continued to respond. Henry, I was told, never had any visitors throughout his prison sentence, so my writing to him was uplifting and a Godsend.

A reflection I read from the Stations of the Cross at the Vatican this past year, which were written and read by people who were incarcerated or had some relationship with prisoners, was the basis for my approach to this ministry: "Prison continues to bury individuals alive; theirs are stories that no one wants to hear any longer. Each time, Christ says to me again:

'Keep going, don't stop. Take them in your arms again.'"

To me, it was an opportunity to allow Henry to share his story: his life in prison, his faith, and God's work in all of it. Another way I saw this was the images of consolation with Mary and Veronica, falling and getting back up from the weight of the cross again and again as Jesus experienced in the Stations of the Cross. As a social work student, I remember my professors always reinforcing the "strengths perspective": to put the strengths, capabilities, and resources at the heart of helping them overcome adversity and seeing the fullness of their dignity as God's children meant for greatness. As Henry shared his experiences in prison, I saw that despite being behind bars, he had a strong will and an altruistic heart; he acknowledged the hardships of not receiving the same respect or courtesy ►

FOR I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE
ME FOOD, I WAS THIRSTY AND YOU
GAVE ME DRINK, A STRANGER AND
YOU WELCOMED ME, NAKED AND YOU
CLOTHED ME, ILL AND YOU CARED FOR
ME, **IN PRISON AND YOU VISITED ME.**

MATTHEW 25: 35-36

► in return from his inmates who he helps as an A.D.A. worker, a job for which he applied to help his fellow inmates who were disabled because he knew he could help them.

Despite the lack of access to the sacraments, God's presence was very much alive in the consolation Henry felt knowing he was loved by God and that, as he mentioned in every letter to me, men are discerning the priesthood to serve the Church and God. Like St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Henry did little things with great love within the small confines of where he lived. In our correspondence, I shared my own experiences as a seminarian and Pope Francis' Wednesday Audiences and Angelus addresses with Henry which I found edifying for both of us, especially since Pope Francis, during those past months, was giving his ongoing catechesis on prayer.

Earlier this spring semester, on the 3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time, we heard Jesus, in the Gospel,

telling his disciples that they will become "fishers of men" (Mk 1:17). While a fisherman must be patient if fish do not come, he must go out and seek the fish, searching the entire body of water. I think this Gospel resonated with my field ministry; I had to go out of my way, time, and prayer to find, converse, and get to know Henry so that we may come to know Christ more profoundly and for me to understand how opportunities for discipleship, even in little ways, are always available if we make ourselves open to receiving and giving just as our heavenly Father does.

*Anthony Huynh (Theology II)
is from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Please keep him in your prayers.*

MINISTRY DURING RESTRICTIONS *by Sister Mary Leanne Hubbard, SND*



Field Education, that is, the ministry further afield than St. John's Seminary campus, during a pandemic has been an exercise in ingenuity. Traditionally, students are placed in convalescent homes, jails, schools, outreach programs, among other ministries once a week for three hours. In March of 2020, after only having been in their placements for six weeks, all these ministries shut down to outsiders, as did the seminary. The rest of the spring semester they continued as best they could to practice ministry even as they were reeling from the isolation and the unknowns of the pandemic. To finish out their ministerial practice, they contacted people in their lives who were likely shut-in or isolated during the pandemic restrictions. It was clear in their discussions in class that this outreach was hard, but also mutually nourishing.

During the pandemic, remote ministry was limited to mostly Catholic schools, religious education at parishes or Division of Juvenile Justice, or parish bible studies. Many supervisors were still trying to work out the kinks regarding technology, particularly bandwidth. Seminarians would try the Zoom links or share resources with a class but there were glitches on one or both ends; they found themselves sitting in their rooms alone without the ability to connect even though they had prepared a lesson or activity. As zealous seminarians, they often felt stymied and useless or

fatigued from the hours looking at a screen instead of being with people they wanted to accompany and serve. During these periods of unexpected "downtime," they were encouraged to research more about their placements or the kind of ministry or to spend time in prayer for the people they were supposed to be with.

In doing theological reflection on these frustrating episodes, seminarians grew in compassion for the millions of students and teachers who were unable to connect because of poverty or lack of infrastructure, for instance. What does it mean to be a seminarian in these field assignments? How is that different from being a volunteer? What does "ministry" mean when one cannot "do" anything that feels meaningful? The "ministry of presence" has never been so removed from the people they were trying to "serve." Amid tremendous uncertainty and difficulty, however, the few supervisors who stayed with us not only witnessed their passion for and dedication to ministry during the pandemic but spent quality time to help the seminarians have meaningful encounters as well.

*Sr. Mary Leanne Hubbard, SND
is the Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education. She is also the Associate Professor of Pastoral Studies.*



The Rich History & OF SERVICE AND FAITH



Don. Juan E. Camarillo, 1867-1936

Ground breaks, August 1938

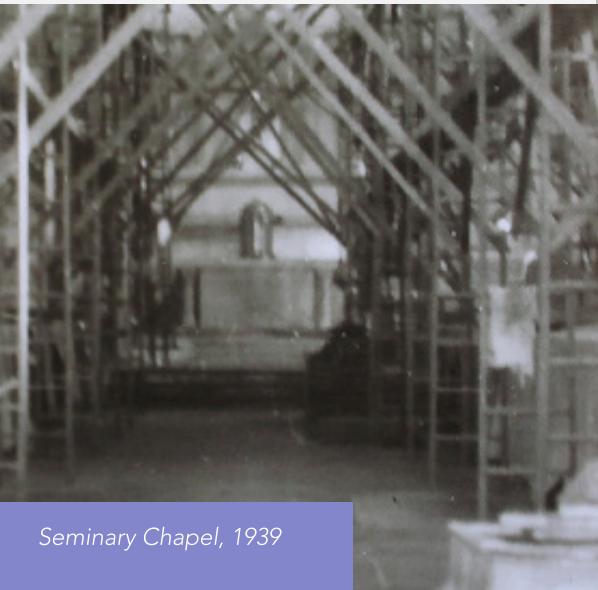
Most Rev. John J. Cantwell, D.D. (see in the image above left of the title), Archbishop of Los Angeles, after announcing a successful, concerted campaign for the funds on January 14, 1938, proposed the building of St. John's Seminary. In August of that same year, the ground was broken.



Seminary Entrance , 1938 | www.stjohnsem.edu/history

Chapel, September 12, 1939

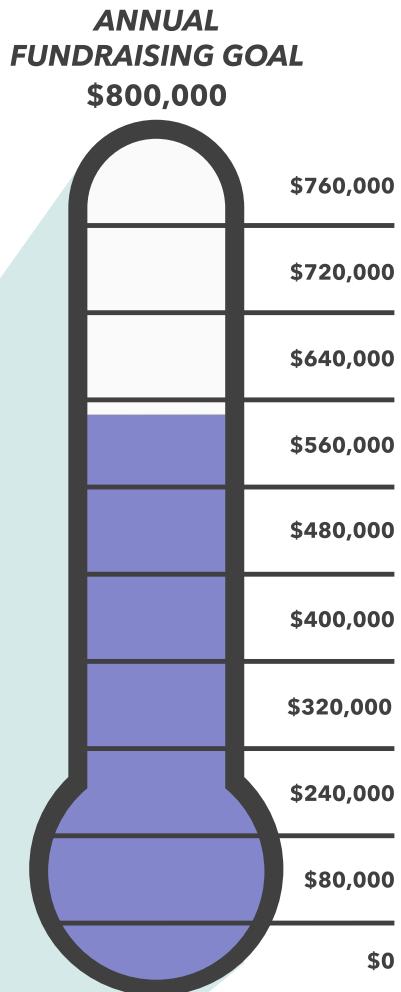
On September 12, 1939, under the leadership of its first Rector, Reverend William P. Barr, C.M., and ten faculty members, St. John's Seminary opened its doors to seventy candidates for the priesthood. The development of the grounds expanded swiftly. The chapel was solemnly consecrated by Archbishop Cantwell on October 8, 1939, although artistic additions continued to be made during ensuing years.



Seminary Chapel, 1939

& Our Hopeful Future

OF GROWTH AND MISSION



PRESERVING THE FUTURE

In July of 2020, St. John's Seminary began the construction of the Maintenance Facility Building. This facility maintains the infrastructure and spaces to keep it in great condition for staff, faculty, seminarians, and resident priests.



Construction of the Maintenance Facility Building

FY 2020-2021 Through 3rd Quarter Fundraising Results

General Donations:	\$79,537
2020 Gala:	\$394,260
2020 Christmas Appeal:	\$96,620
2021 Easter Appeal:	\$40,834
TOTAL:	\$611,251

Please help us fund:

The Restoration of
St. John's Seminary
Chapel Project

Approx. Cost: \$200,000

The Crucifix
Plaza Project

Approx. Cost: \$200,000

Thank you for your generous support!

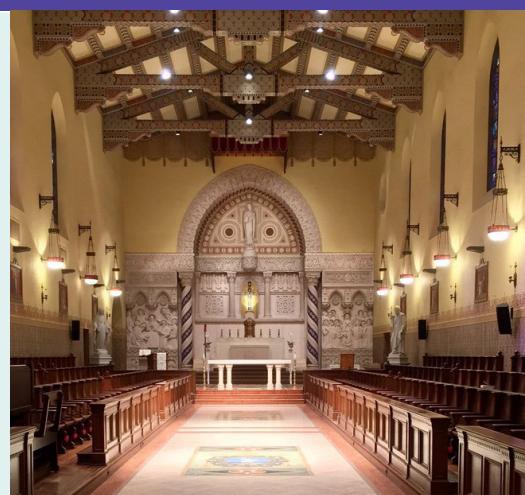
To make a financial gift please visit: www.stjohnsem.edu/general-donation



SACRED SPACES

In 2020, the old college crucifix was relocated to the lower fields near the entrance of St. John's Seminary. Ongoing plans for a landscape are currently in progress.

The Chapel, the spiritual heart of St. John's campus and the center of seminary life, began construction in 1938, about 83 years ago and (we are currently in the) process of raising funds for restoration.



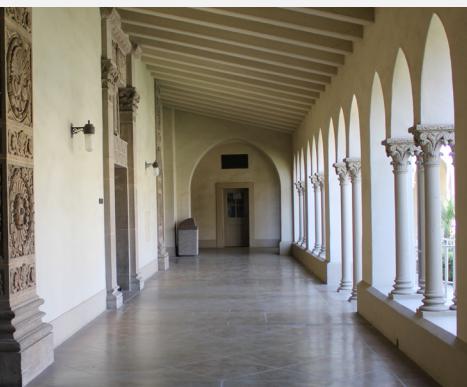
Relocation of the College Crucifix

St. John's Seminary Chapel

Covid Chronicles

THE SEMINARIANS' EXPERIENCES OF 2020

For nearly two years, the seminarians at St. John's Seminary have had a very unique formation and educational experience. With such unique experiences, new life lessons and opportunities for personal and spiritual growth inevitably occur.



CONTRACTING “THE ‘RONA”

by Dcn. Cesar Guardado-Marin

“Please, isolate yourself from people and animals in your

home,” the instructions read. There was no way back and no way out. I had fallen into what seemed to be “the disgrace” of contracting “the ‘Rona.” I had now

You have tested positive for COVID-19

become a prisoner of the virus and would remain locked away in my personal Tower of London at St. John’s for a total of 16 days. While the feeling of shame of having tested positive for the virus overwhelmed me, more disturbing was the thought that I could have unknowingly infected others. “Now what?” All I could do was humbly

accept my reality and call all those with whom I had had close contact. “Lord, why?” Though what began as a demoralizing reality, it soon becomes a spiritually transforming journey of growing in obedience, patience, and charity by offering my confinement and prayers for those suffering in the world.

Dcn. Cesar Guardado-Marin (Theology IV) is studying for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and will be ordained a priest in June 2021. Please keep him in your prayers.

QUARANTINE IN A SEMINARY

by Dcn. Matthew Miguel

When I tested positive for COVID-19 my world turned upside down. I was asked to be in quarantine for two weeks in my room. I received all the symptoms from headaches, fevers, coughs, shortness of breath, no sense of taste and smell. I experienced anxiety, stress, fears, doubts, worries, and helplessness not being able to be in control of the situation. What made it worse was that my diaconate ordination was postponed twice due to the pandemic.

Being separated from the community was not easy, but I received only love and charity from family, friends, and members of the seminary community. Brothers were generous enough to go out and buy my medicine, bring my meals every day, leave Holy Communion at my door, and bring the Blessed Sacrament outside my window for Adoration. Because of the community, I received peace, healing, and comfort; and for that I am forever grateful.



Dcn. Matthew Miguel (Theology IV) is studying for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and will be ordained a priest in June 2021. Please keep him in your prayers.



SHARING IN SIMPLE WAYS

by Christian Morquecho

St. John's during quarantine days made for some adventures. As we became self-enclosed in our community, certain foods became hard to come by. Coffee and donuts became the growing

concern of me and my brother seminarians. I can still remember one morning while making myself a cup of coffee, the smell of coffee in the hallway brought some neighbors to my door. This became something of a tradition, and there was a joy that came in sharing a cup of coffee in the morning with others. The other growing concern was the need for donuts, especially Sunday mornings. Leaving campus was allowed only for essential reasons: donuts were borderline essential, but cultivating a spirit of obedience meant no Sunday morning donut runs. However, one of the deacons at the time was both skilled enough and kind enough to make homemade donuts. As Deacon made donuts that Sunday morning, the smell drew many to the student kitchen. I still

remember eating the warm donuts with different guys who wandered in, drawn by the smell of fresh baked goods. In moments like this at St. John's, community seemed to come alive in a way I hadn't encountered before. Sharing donuts and coffee with others became a chance for fellowship, simply by sitting and enjoying coffee and donuts together.

*Christian Morquecho
(Theology I) is from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.
Please keep him in your prayers.*

A VILLAGE CUT OFF FROM THE WORLD

by Dcn. Michael Masteller

Our experience at St John's seminary of lockdown could be compared to a village that was suddenly cut off from the world. Not being able to leave, we had to turn to our community for food, entertainment, fraternity, and support.

In many ways, our communal life flourished during this time. By limiting our access to the outer world, we became more intentional in living our life here at the seminary. After every dinner, the refectory would remain full

of chatter and laughter as many lingered a bit longer after their meal. We rediscovered the beauty of our campus, and when one went on an evening stroll, they would run into several others who had the same idea. Everything became more immediate - instead of going to Starbucks for a coffee, we would visit our neighbor who would brew us a cup; instead of running off to the store to buy something we needed, we borrowed and lent items to each other. It seemed as if the "less" access we had to the

world, the "more" access we had to each other as brothers and friends.

*Dcn. Michael Masteller
(Theology IV) is studying for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and will be ordained a priest in June 2021. Please keep him in your prayers.*

A Bishop of San Bernardo in Chile asked Pope Francis, "What would you say to a young person who at this moment feels a vocation to the priesthood or religious life?"

The Pope's answer was simple, "that he allows himself to be gazed at by Jesus. Jesus is the one who calls, not the priest, nor the bishop or the Pope. It is Jesus who gazes at him with

love, who shows him the people, who shows him the needs of the people of God and says, 'if you wish, come help.'"

For more information about vocations at St. John's Seminary, please visit www.stjohnsem.edu/vocations-page

Science and Religion

IN THE TIME OF COVID

by Dr. Alan Vincelette, Associate Professor of Philosophy

St. John's Seminary was one of forty-two seminaries selected to receive a Science for Seminaries grant from the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) during the time frame of 2014-2021. This project was established to assist seminaries in integrating science into their core curricula, providing seminary students and faculty familiarity with the scientific method and achievements, and preparing future faith leaders to engage their congregants in dialogues regarding science and technology and perceived conflicts with faith.

In terms of its Science for Seminaries grant initiatives, I, Fr. Luke Dysinger, Dr. Kevin Brennan, Fr. John O'Brien, Janice Daurio, Jennifer Rosato, Michael Grace, and other faculty members attended workshops on science and religion hosted by St. John's Seminary and the American Association for the Advancement of Science and participated in giving lectures on related topics in their classes. St. John's Seminary also acquired a microscope and telescope for use in classes on the philosophy of nature and history of theology, held lectures on astronomy and psychology, all culminating in a conference on space and extraterrestrials in the Catholic imagination in the spring semester of 2020. This conference brought together astronomers, physicists, philosophers, theologians, and science fiction authors to discuss how the cosmos was viewed in the medieval era and by contemporary Catholic science fiction authors; what we currently know about the possibility of life outside of our solar system; and how the existence of intelligent life elsewhere in the universe would impact theology. Alas due to Covid restrictions most of the talks had to be given via Zoom and less interchange took place between seminarians, faculty, and scientists than hoped for. That said the fruit of these labors were plentiful and they have been collected and published in the volume *Extraterrestrials in the Catholic Imagination*, ed. Jennifer Rosato and Alan Vincelette (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge

Scholars Publishing, 2021) as a resource for future seminarians, church leaders, and indeed for anyone interested in how Christians past and present have conceived of issues involving the cosmos and alien life forms. Somewhat surprisingly and in contrast with authors such as Stephen Hawking, rather than holding that the discovery of extraterrestrials would threaten the existence or faith of human beings, the contributors to this volume argued that aliens, if they exist, should be welcomed and dialogued with and evangelized as fellow creatures of God.

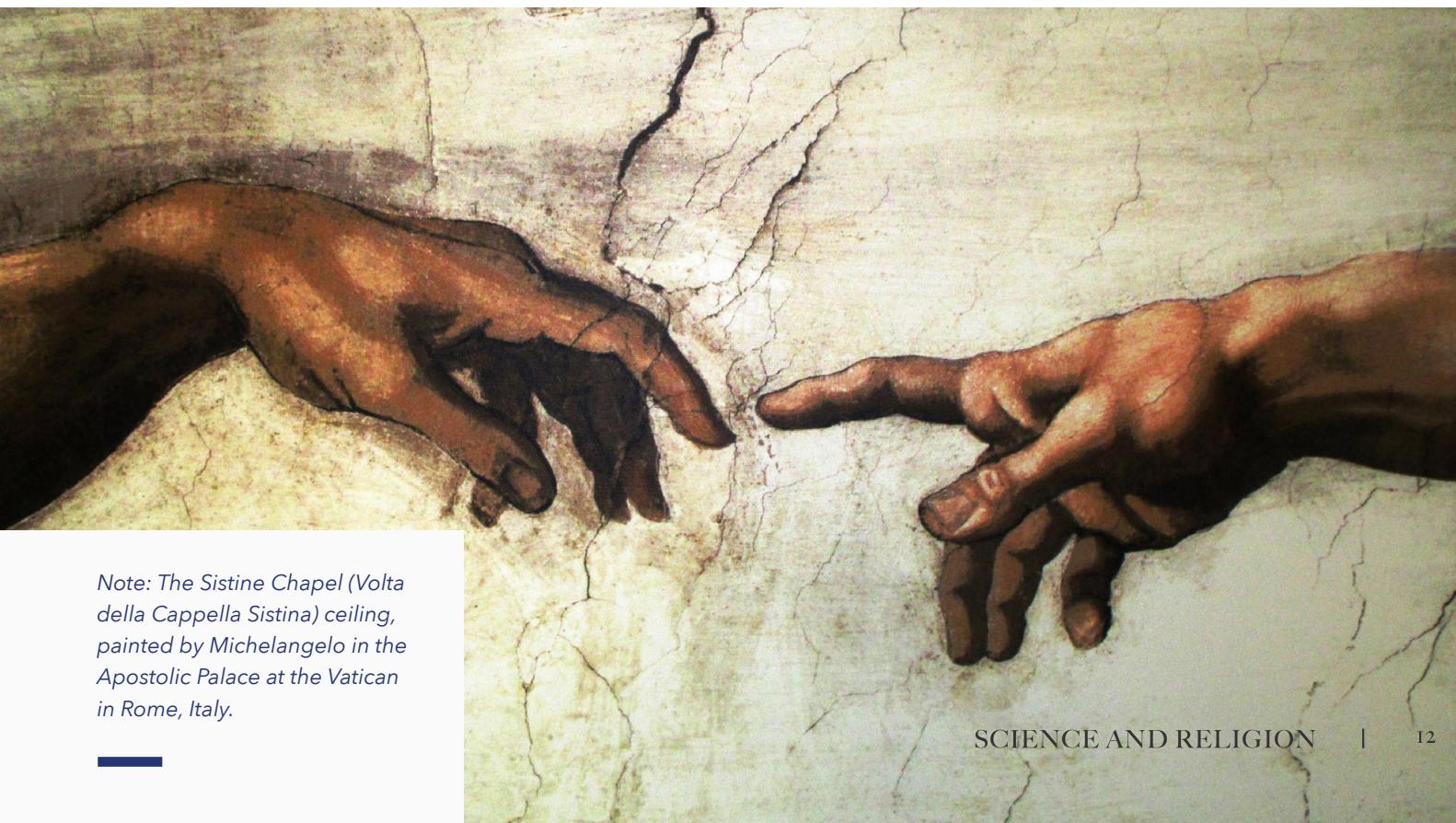
This grant was a chance for me personally to journey back to my days of pursuing science and to once again engage in scholarship in the sciences, such as a study of fossil horse footprints currently under review. I grew up in a household where my father, recently named one of the top fifty contributors to geoscience over the past century (AAPG Geolegends Series), took me out on field trips and encouraged my joining science clubs and science fairs. Rather than being attracted to rocks, however, I was fascinated by the beauty of living things which I saw as revelatory of divine beauty. Hence I pursued studies and research in genetics and paleontology, winding up with a Master's degree in biology, teaching biology at Chaffey College, and working with several eminent scientists along the way including Joel Cracraft, David Reznick, Bob Reynolds, and Michael Woodburne at the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of California, Riverside, and San Bernardino County Museum. I eventually switched to the field of philosophy that I currently teach at St. John's Seminary but that is another story.

Just as my life has gone through phases so too has the view of the relation of science and religion. When I first got into science many of my professors and some classmates saw religion as the enemy and as incompatible with science. This was the view of science and religion at war as exemplified in Andrew Dickson White's book *A History of the Warfare of Science with* ►

► Theology in Christendom (New York: Macmillan, 1896). Such a view, of course, has found modern defenders in the so-called New Atheists led by the biologist Richard Dawkins. By the time I graduated, however, and began teaching biology most of my fellow professors were not hostile towards religion but saw religion and science as functioning in different domains. This view is well-expressed by the paleontologist Stephen J. Gould in his book *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002) and the writings of the geneticist Francis Collins, one of the key contributors to the Human Genome Project. More recently, however, a third viewpoint has come to prominence which not only sees faith and reason as not at odds but stresses the benefits of religion to science. Here you find many scientists and theists arguing that faith helps show science its blind spots and encourages scientists to work to discover the truth rather than being led by their biases or quest for recognition. It is all too easy to want to magnify one's accomplishments or fight tooth and nail to defend a view one accepts or to take an arrogant attitude that one has solved the riddles of nature. In this regard, faith can assist science by encouraging scientists to avoid wishful thinking, remain humble, be willing to challenge their implicit presuppositions and be dogged in the pursuit of truth. Such a view appears in the work of Thomas Fowler, *Science, Faith, and*

Scientists (Washington: Xavier Zubiri Foundation, 2020).

I for one certainly find the latter view closest to my own. For both faith and reason, science and theology can work together to better understand this magnificent world we find ourselves living in and enlighten our call to pursue truth and virtue to end up as co-heirs of the kingdom in heaven. It is my belief then that the Science for Seminaries grant has renewed interest in the sciences at St. John's Seminary and brought all of us closer in touch with the spiritual reality behind it all. At least that is my hope, and to quote the words of the physicist Robert Andrews Millikan who worked nearby at Cal Tech: "If the beauty, the meaning and the purposes of this life as revealed by both science and religion are all a dream, then let me dream on forever!" (*Science and Religion*, Pasadena: California Institute of Technology, 1920, 20). These words, however, though perhaps not the sentiments regarding the harmony of faith and science, are unlikely to grace the scientific establishments at Cal Tech in the future. For this past year, all of the buildings named in honor of Millikan were rechristened due to his association with the eugenics movement, but that too is another story, one involving positions far from my own, but at the same time emblematic of the need for a proper faith and philosophy to enlighten reason and science and not just the other way around.



Note: The Sistine Chapel (Volta della Cappella Sistina) ceiling, painted by Michelangelo in the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican in Rome, Italy.

NEW FACES

Each year a new group of seminarians enters the seminary and new experiences develop. Here are their perspectives of 2020.

A Covid Vocation by Andrew Laubacher



I was a touring musician and evangelist before entering seminary here at St. John's. I was traveling full

time around the world sharing the Gospel through song and preaching the good news with a deep conviction that Jesus is God and our Catholic faith is one of the greatest gifts we can receive in this life. In February of 2020, before the world shut down I was in Jerusalem leading worship on a pilgrimage. As I woke up early one morning on the sea of Galilee, I saw three men mending their nets in a boat by the shore and felt a deep call to be a fisher of men. I saw Jesus calling these

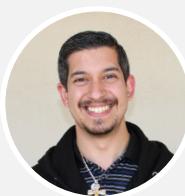
men and saw myself in the boat with the disciples. ...I also saw my calendar: it was completely booked with events and conferences for the upcoming year. The call would have to wait. I had no way to enter the seminary.

Then, as Covid-19 began to spread, one by one all my events were canceled, so I flew home to California to pray and wait out the virus. All of a sudden all I had was time to pray and reflect on what God was calling me to. It was a wrestling match every day. I experienced a great conviction at Easter as Bishop Barron preached online during his homily and my heart was inflamed with a desire to serve the church as a priest of Jesus Christ. Now my schedule was wide open and as the

destruction and death of the virus continued, I felt that I needed to give my life fully to Jesus so I can serve others and bring the Gospel to the world through my vocation to the priesthood. The pandemic allowed me to get off the road to pray and discover that I needed to discern a call to the priesthood. It has been a wild year to be in seminary, but I have had a great peace that this is where I am supposed to be, and I can see how God is always able and willing to bring good out of the greatest evil and suffering.

Andrew Laubacher (Pre-Theology II) from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

From Texas to California by Luis Rodarte



It's been a difficult transition to come into the seminary during the pandemic. I came from one

place where you knew everyone, and now you know some faces and maybe you can attach a name to a face (or half a face behind a mask) if you're lucky. But I know I haven't had the full experience.

That being said, I have enjoyed the balance in seminary life here at St. John's. Academics

are not exalted at the expense of the other pillars, like human and spiritual formation. Because of this balance, I have had the chance to focus on other areas as well: my prayer life and my health, for example.

I have also been impressed by how the rector is to the seminarians. Fr. Marco wants to get to know the seminarians, their story, their lives, how they're doing, and what the seminary could do better. I was surprised my first day when it was the rector

himself who came to greet us and offered to help us unload. He is a person who makes you feel at home, and I can say that for the first time at this seminary I feel at home. St. John's has become a second home. When I go away, I look forward to coming back. I feel that I have a place here.

For the first time this year, St. John's Seminary has seminarians from the Diocese of El Paso, Texas. Luis Rodarte (Theology III) is in his 2nd year of discernment.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PRIESTS CELEBRATING THEIR SILVER JUBILEE

We give thanks to the Lord for the gift of our priests as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of their ordination to the priesthood. We join with the rest of the members of the body of Christ in honoring our Alumni, priests serving the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and all priests throughout the world in this special celebration.

† Heavenly Father, we come before you with gratitude for the silver jubilee of our priests whom you have chosen for your works. Please continue to support them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit so that they may continue to preach the Gospel with holy zeal and continue to lead the Church with wisdom, strength, and courage. May their example of long and faithful service be an inspiration to other priests, our seminarians, those consecrated to the religious life, and all the faithful. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

ORDINATION DATES FOR 2021

Each year, men who have studied at St. John's Seminary are ordained priests in various locations throughout the United States.

Please pray for the upcoming 2021 ordinations.

We thank you for your enduring

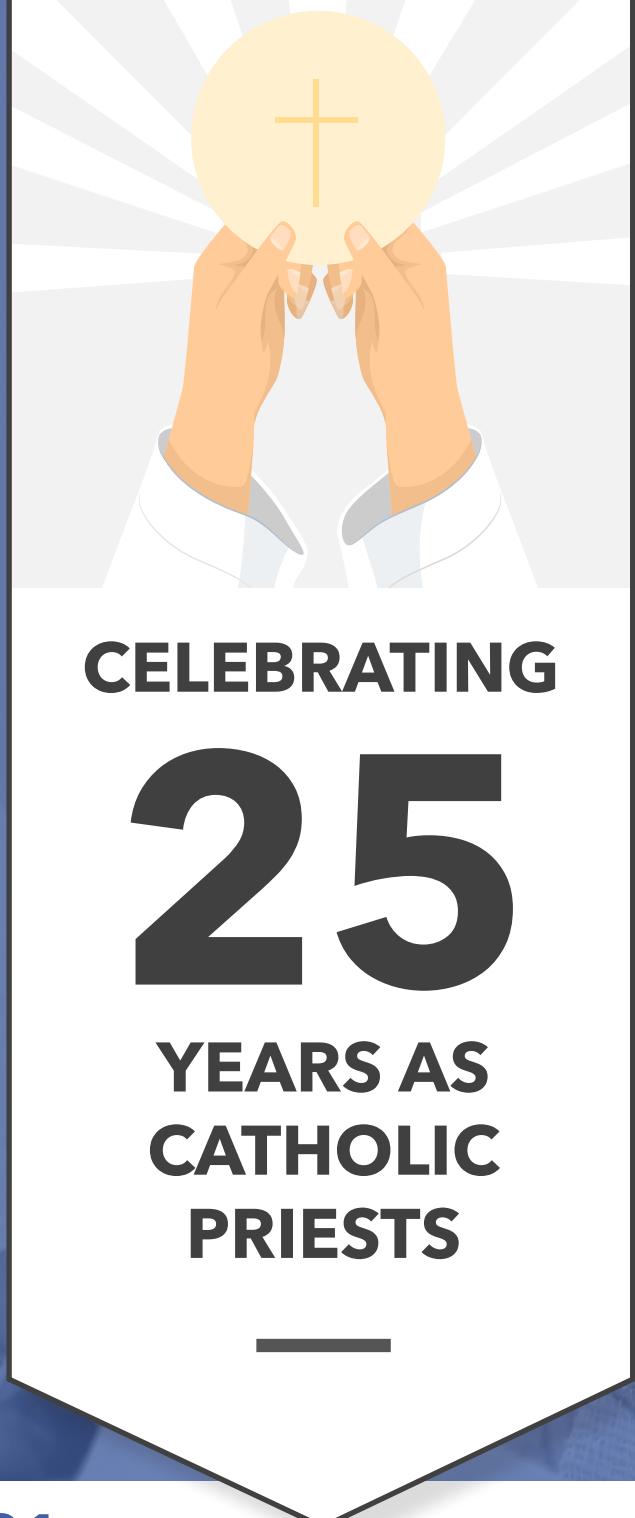
Transitional Diaconate Ordination

Archdiocese of LA | May 29, 2021
Diocese of El Paso | April 9, 2021
Diocese of Fresno | June 19, 2021
Diocese of Monterey | May 29, 2021

Priesthood Ordination

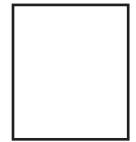
Archdiocese of LA | June 5, 2021
Diocese of Fresno | May 29, 2021
Diocese of Orange | June 12, 2021
Diocese of Monterey | June 19, 2021
Diocese of San Bernardino | May 29, 2021
The Congregation of Jesus and Mary (Eudists) | June 19, 2021

I will appoint for you shepherds after my own heart... (Jer. 3:15)





St. John's Seminary in California
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Camarillo, CA 93012



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<<street>>
<<city>>, <<state>> <<zip>>

For more information about The Evangelist, please contact us at:

Tel: (805) 482-2755 Ext. 1105 | **Email:** TheEvangelist@stjohnsem.edu | **Website:** www.stjohnsem.edu

ARCHBISHOP JOSÉ H. GOMEZ
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO SAVE THE DATE FOR THE

St. John's Seminary
2021 Annual Gala

HONORING DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AND DEDICATED CATHOLIC LEADERS

Saturday, September 18th, 2021

6:00 PM

Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels

Cocktails and al fresco dining on the plaza



For more information, contact
gala@stjohnsem.edu

or call (805) 482-2755 ext. 1105

Invitations to be mailed mid-July.