

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE | THE NATIONAL SEMINARY OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

the Crossroads

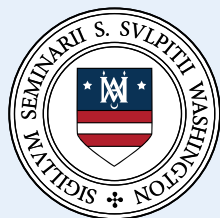
The Alumni Magazine for Theological College | Summer 2021



TRIBUTE TO
FATHER CHRIS

GRADUATE
VOICES

EASTER TRIDUUM
AT TC



The *Crossroads* is published three times a year by the Office of Institutional Advancement of Theological College. It is distributed via nonprofit mail to alumni, bishops, vocation directors, and friends of TC.

Rector
Rev. Dominic Ciriaco, P.S.S.

Media & Promotions Manager
Suzanne Tanzi

Contributing Writers
Jason Allan • Rev. Chris Arockiaraj, P.S.S.
Scott Bahrke • Ryan Braam • James Buttner • Mitchell Carson • Vincent Castaldi • Rev. Dominic Ciriaco, P.S.S.
Justin Damask • Andrew Heidelbaugh
Auguste Horner • Michael Kieler
Luke Kirk • Thomas Lawrence • Brett Metzler • Justin Motes • Mary Nauman
Sean Neville • Patrick O'Brien • Jakob Pohlman • Dylan Prentice • Jacob Romero • David Schmidt • Seth Seaman
André Sicard • Charles Silvas • Sean Skahen • Wesbee Victor

Graphic Designer
Rebecca Sum

Photography
Benjamin Albanese • Vincent Castaldi
Dave Scavone • Suzanne Tanzi

Theological College
401 Michigan Ave., N.E.
Washington, DC 20017
202-756-4914
theologicalcollege.org
theologicalcollege.catholic.edu

Theological College participates in the mission and responsibility of the bishops to provide for the people of God wise and holy priests close to the heart of Christ and consumed in his work of salvation. In affiliation with The Catholic University of America, Theological College assists seminarians in the task of vocational discernment and in the preparation for priestly life and ministry at the diocesan level, particularly as experienced in the United States.



18

EASTER TRIDUUM 2021

For the first time in 17 years, Theological College celebrated the Triduum together as a community.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER CHRIS

Father Chris Arockiaraj's silver jubilee was recognized by an event imbued with joy and gratitude.



03



10

THE 2021 MILESTONE

Five deacons and five Basselin scholars reflect upon their formation experiences on the occasion of their graduations in May.

CREATIVE INITIATIVES

The past semester was marked by seminarians sharing their time and talents in offerings such as the annual art show, an incense workshop, and extemporaneous preaching opportunities.



20

02 \ FROM THE RECTOR

03 \ COMMUNITY NEWS

Fr. Chris Arockiaraj:
Celebrating 25 Years
Institution of Ministries
Alumni Day 2021

09 \ SULPICIAN SPOTLIGHT

10 \ FEATURE: GRADUATE WITNESSES

Theologian Reflections
Basselin Memoirs

15 \ SEMINARY LIFE

Dimensions of Formation
Easter Triduum at TC
Seminarian Initiatives
Student Government
Pastoral Year Experiences

27 \ HEALTHY LIVING FOR PRIESTS

29 \ FACULTY AND STAFF

32 \ ALUMNI

Distinguished Alumnus:
Rev. Gino Rossi
Class Notes
In Memoriam

Facing Page: An Easter fire was prepared in the 4th St. courtyard for the Vigil candle lighting.

Seminary Formation and the Expectation of Pentecost

Rev. Dominic Ciriaco, P.S.S.
Rector



The Pentecost account that is found in the Acts of the Apostles was a favorite image for Father Jean-Jacques Olier. As the Spirit descended upon the disciples and empowered them with many spiritual gifts, they went out from the Upper Room to preach Christ Jesus and baptize and thus begin the foundations of the Church. In the same way, Father Olier saw Pentecost as an image for ordination day, that pivotal moment when the bishop lays hands on the deacon and he is consecrated his priest, configured to Christ to be another Christ and to go out from the cathedral and preach, baptize, bring the Eucharist to others, and contribute to the building up of the Church. It was Father Olier’s vision that all of his seminaries would have some representation of the Pentecost scene to remind the seminarians and inspire them in their formation to work toward the goal of ordination day, when priestly ministry begins. Here at Theological College, we are reminded of this concept in our chapel with the beautiful Pentecost panels behind our altar. When we gather for prayer and worship, this image of the Spirit sending the disciples out gives us the incentive to do the same

and reminds seminarians of the final goal of seminary formation. Pope Francis reminds us in his document, *Ratio Fundamentalis*, “Priestly formation is a journey of transformation that renews the heart and mind of the person, so that he can ‘discern what is of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect’ (*Rom* 12:2). Indeed, the gradual inner growth along the journey of formation should principally be aimed at making the future priest a man of discernment, able to read the reality of human life in the light of the Spirit. In this way he will be able to choose, decide, and act according to the will of God” (p. 24). Our seminary years transform our hearts and minds to that of Jesus Christ. As Father Olier wrote, “Priests and pastors should have a very high degree of patience because, in Jesus Christ and with Jesus Christ, they are both priest and victim for the sins of the world... they should be entirely consumed in him through love.” During the months of late Spring, our deacons were ordained priests in their respective dioceses. Many of us will recall our own ordination day and celebrate anniversaries of service to the Church. Many of the stories here in this issue of *The Crossroads* echo the call of service to the Church as priest. They remind us of the importance of seminary training and highlight the Spirit at work in our lives and in the life of the Church. The Pentecost event lives on for each of us and we are reminded of this at every ordination to the priesthood, as Father Olier points out to us in his writings and vision for seminary training.

Let us pray for our newly ordained priests, that they may have the strength and courage to boldly proclaim Jesus Christ to the world in these challenging times. Please be assured of our prayers for you here at Theological College and please pray for us. We very much appreciate your support and interest in our seminary formation program.

Our Lady Seat of Wisdom, pray for us!

May God be praised,

Rev. Domine Ciriaco, P.S.S.

COMMUNITY NEWS



Father Ciriaco presented Father Chris with a portrait of Sulpician founder Father Jean-Jacques Olier, commissioned for the celebration from Father Peter Wm. Gray, P.S.S.

Celebrating 25 Years

Charles Silvas
Third Theology, Diocese of Corpus Christi

On April 12, the faculty and seminarians gathered with Father Chris Arockiaraj to celebrate his 25th anniversary of priesthood ordination. This silver jubilee recognition was blessed by the presence of Father Arockiaraj’s brother and sister-in-law, several Sulpician priests, friends from the USCCB and the Apostolic Nunciature, and friends from the Indian American Catholic Association (IACA) and the Capital Area Tamil Catholic Association (CATCA). The evening began with the celebration of the Eucharist and was followed by a festive meal. In his homily, Father Chris reflected that his priesthood is reminiscent of the Rhône River, originating in the Swiss Alps and emptying at the French coast into the Mediterranean Sea, serving the many needs of the people across 505 miles. In deep gratitude for his 25 years as a priest, Father Arockiaraj personally undertook the responsibility of raising more than \$10,000 for St. Anthony’s Major Seminary. St. Anthony’s is a U.S. Sulpician Province mission seminary in the village of Kachebere in Malawi, one of the poorest countries in Africa and in the world. Crucial to the life of the seminary is the “Water for Life” initiative, whose goal is to resurrect St. Anthony’s dormant farm by establishing

10 water-retention ponds, each costing \$1,000. The ponds will enrich the farmland to produce a fruitful crop to sell in the local community. In turn, this will support several seminary programs and help feed hundreds of seminarians and several staff. At the conclusion of the evening, Mr. Agnelo Gonsalves presented a donation on behalf of IACA for \$5,001.00. Likewise, on behalf of CATCA, Mr. Edison Sakthivel announced that they were able to raise an additional \$5,514.10. With these substantial contributions, St. Anthony’s will be able to thrive in its mission to form priests in the Sulpician tradition, after the heart of the Good Shepherd. This is one way in which Father Chris Arockiaraj’s priestly ministry, like the Rhône River, continues to bear fruit, reaching outwards from its Source.

Meet Father Chris

You are celebrating your 25th anniversary of priesthood. What does this milestone mean to you?

I have a sense of gratitude, accomplishment, and humility. I am grateful because God has blessed me in many ways these past 25 years with fidelity to him while serving his people in diverse ministries. I have worked in hospitals, parishes, campus ministries, prisons, and seminaries. I have also been given, by my diocese and by the Sulpicians, various opportunities to serve people in other countries — India, Germany, and France. Here in America, I served for years on the West Coast and now, of course, here on the East Coast. Out of the 25 years of ministry, I have spent about 18 years working in seminary formation for nearly 500 priests who are now serving on the East Coast, West Coast, and India, and some are missionaries in Africa and Europe. I feel a great sense of accomplishment as well as gratitude for the support of the formation faculties with whom I have served — formation work is always teamwork. Thinking about my anniversary also brings a sense of humility because I am an unworthy servant and God has blessed me with talents and opportunities to serve people in so many interesting and fruitful ministries. I try to be a good role model to the seminarians, who are going to be future priests. Many men enter seminary because they were inspired by the example of their pastor and they desired to become like him. Sometimes vocations stem from reading the lives of the saints or Scripture, but most vocations stem from inviting and motivating role models. In seminary formation, I, too, want to be a good example and mentor for the seminarians.

Your academic resumé is very impressive. You have a Ph.L., M.S., S.T.B., and two doctorates — a D. Min. with a concentration in pastoral counseling and a Ph.D. in pastoral psychology. How has this rich education contributed to your ministry?

My psychology, spirituality, and theology degrees are my special contributions to the seminary that I integrate into formation work and use to help seminarians in their growth and discernment. Human formation is very important because it is the foundation of the other three dimensions – spiritual, academic, and pastoral. As Karl Rahner explains, “grace builds on nature.” The humanity of the priest is the instrument by which people will encounter Christ. At ordination, God bestows his grace in abundance on every ordinand. But that grace is working differently in each person because of their unique human nature. For me, my academic background can contribute to my work in seminary formation as I help the seminarians to grow in self-awareness and to understand their own human nature. This is what is meant by “human formation.” My studies — past and present — contribute to my teaching, spiritual direction, and formation advising.

When did you first start thinking about priesthood? What is your vocation story?

I was influenced by my parents and my maternal grandfather, who worked as a DRE and as a sacristan. In India, the role of sacristan is a full-time job in a parish. My mother and father, both of whom just passed away, and my whole family were always very devoted and strong Catholics. They went to daily Mass and were involved in different organizations like the Legion of Mary and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. They love the Church and its priests and possess a deep spirituality. Prayer has always been a part of their lives. In the morning, we would get up and say the family rosary. Prayer was not reserved for Sunday morning Mass alone but was a daily sustenance. Our family life was centered on prayer. This is the environment in which I was born and raised. Their faithfulness and fidelity to God and the Church really inspired me and touched me.

I discovered a desire for the priesthood in the eighth grade when I was an altar server and was involved in different parish ministries. I met many model priests as an altar server. I became very close to them as I learned about their holy lives, and I wanted to imitate them. I joined the minor seminary after tenth grade.

You were ordained a priest in 1995. What was your ordination day like?

That was an incredible day! I still consider that the best day of my life. I was ordained on April 18 for the Diocese of Madras, India. The day was filled with a lot of excitement, and a lot of nervousness because I would be the center of attention, but also a lot of prayer. When I am nervous, I just trust in God. I say, “God, you are in charge.” So, I spent a lot of time in prayer that morning, because the Mass was in the evening, during which one other priest and I would be ordained. When the evening came, there were about 6,000 people who came for my ordination, which was held on the school grounds, with at least 200 priests concelebrating. I was deeply prayerful throughout the Mass, totally giving myself, my heart, and my mind to God. I could feel God’s touch and God’s presence when the bishop poured the oil on my palms and laid his hands on my head, and all the priests sang a hymn to the Holy Spirit. It was powerfully moving and very uplifting. I felt filled with the Holy Spirit. I will never forget that day.

In preparation for the event, my mom and my uncle designed my vestment, which I still treasure. My mom also designed the embroidery for the pillow that I used to lay down upon and pray the Litany of the Saints. I am the first priest in my family, and they were all eagerly awaiting this day — this is why so many people came. I had served at different parishes all over the diocese, and this also accounts for the number of attendees. After the ordination, we served dinner to the 6,000 people. I went to bed around 1:30 a.m.! The next day I offered my first Mass at 8:00 a.m. at my home parish. That was also an exciting moment. All my priest friends concelebrated. It was a beautiful two days and a precious life experience.

How did you hear about the Sulpicians and come to join them?

I joined the Sulpicians in 2009. My desire to become a Sulpician started 20 years ago when I was in France, where the Society of Saint Sulpice was founded. I was in Toulouse completing my licentiate in philosophy. The Sulpicians ran a seminary there, and the local cardinal was a Sulpician. At that time, I was touched by the French School of Spirituality, St. Vincent de Paul, Father Olier, and the Oratorians. I was attracted to the Sulpician charism and the methodology of formation and how the Sulpician faculty come together as a unified group of priests running the seminary with the same pedagogical model. I had already worked in a diocesan seminary, similar to any diocesan seminary, but there



Father Chris at his 25th anniversary celebration with donors and friends from the IACA and CATCA who contributed to funding the 10 reservoirs to be built at St. Anthony's Seminary in Malawi.

was no particular pedagogy, model, or methodology. In other seminaries, I found that things change as the rector or the bishop changes, sometimes resulting in a lack of unity.

So I was inspired by the Sulpician method, which is the first and probably best seminary formation model, even up to today. Though we too are all diocesan priests, we are unified by a special charism and we adhere to a pedagogy of “education in community,” “formation happens in community,” while living with the seminarians. The community is lived not only between faculty and the seminarians and seminarians amongst each other but also among the Sulpician fathers. We are all “on the same page,” committed to the same mission, under the same founder. This uniformity is unique to the Sulpician dynamism.

Based on your 25 years as a priest, what advice do you have for seminarians and newly ordained priests?

I appreciate and admire seminarians for being in seminary during this very challenging time. Coming from widely varying paths of life, they have made a lot of sacrifices. Being a seminarian in the twenty-first century is not easy unless God is there, unless there is really a vocation. God is the one who calls someone to a vocation. I also admire their faith and passion to spread the Good News to build the Kingdom of God. Half of the battle is over. They have a deep love for Christ — they love and have sacrificed.

My advice is to be patient and remain open to Christ, the Holy Spirit, the formation advisor, the spiritual director, and the entire formation program. With docility, let God talk. God is the center. It is not my ordination. It is not my Church. It is God’s people, God’s diocese, God’s work, God’s vocation. I belong to God, just like Mary, “the handmaid of the Lord.” God has started the process and he will complete it. We don’t have to tell God what to do or try to speed up the process. Seminarians, enjoy your life

of discernment and formation before becoming a priest. This is a wonderful time which you can spend in much prayer and reflection. You can take advantage of many opportunities to develop your pastoral skills and intellectual skills. It is the best time of your life. Getting an “A” is not the end goal; what is important is that you enjoy the time used fruitfully while learning theology for the people of God, to whom you will minister. Do it for Christ.

I also want to suggest vigilance and self-care in the time immediately after ordination. I have done a lot of work and research with newly ordained priests, which is another component of the Sulpician method and charism. We are fostering the formation of seminarians, but also the continuing education of priests. The first five years after ordination are very important. In the seminary, everything is structured and given. When transitioning into a new world with far less structure, your support system is very important. First, it is good to have a guide — a pastor or priest in your diocese to whom you can report, like a mentor. Second, it is necessary to have a spiritual director. Third, you should have a support group with fellow priests with whom you meet once a week or once a month. Fourth, your prayer life must be strong. It is important to pray a daily holy hour, to be faithful to praying the breviary, to prepare well for Mass and the sacraments, and to be available to the people. Once you love the people you will love the ministry. Love the people; in turn, they will love their priest. Fifth, have a good relationship with your bishop. Seminarians are friendly with their bishops and they have good conversations with them, but when they are ordained, they often feel like they should distance themselves. It should not be like this. Continue to have that cordial relationship and share with him openly if you have concerns or problems. Ultimately, the bishop is the father of the diocese. Be yourself, be available, and love every one of every age. And remember: always trust in God; it’s God’s work that you do. [For more on this topic from Fr. Chris, see p. 27] ■

— C.S.



TC's lectors, above, and acolytes, facing page, with Father Dominic Ciriaco and Bishop Mario Dorsonville.

Acolyte and Lector Reflections Institution of Ministries

On February 22, 2021, 14 Lectors and 11 Acolytes were recognized in the Institution of Ministries ceremony at Theological College, with Bishop Mario Dorsonville, auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Washington, presiding. TC seminarians who received the ministry of lector on Feb. 22 were: Andrew Clark (Richmond), Justin Damask (Charleston), Jacob Daniell (Ft. Worth), Joseph Heisey (Washington, DC), Auguste Horner (Rockville Centre), Paul Kucharski (New York), Isaac McCracken (Ft. Worth), Kenneth Nauert Jr. (Louisville), Jonathan Pham (Rockville Centre), Dylan Prentice (Washington, DC), Daniel Roberts (Pittsburgh), Nathaniel Roberts (Washington, DC), André Sicard (Salt Lake City), Michael Villavicencio (Washington, DC), Lam Vo (Portland), and Stephen Wong (Washington, DC). The TC seminarians who received the ministry of acolyte were: David Birkdale (New York), Vincent Castaldi (New York), Benjamin Grothouse (Ft. Worth), Daniel Kushner (Pittsburgh), William Mobley (Dallas), Justin Motes (St. Augustine), Patrick O'Brien (Rockville Centre), Jacob Romero (Santa Fe), and Vincent Vu (Washington, DC). Here, some of them reflect on the profound meaning of these experiences. ■

The Ministry of Lector



I have always felt a calling to the priesthood, even while working and studying in my home country of Vietnam. In 2019, God led me to the Diocese of Portland, Maine, where I was officially accepted as a seminarian. Shortly after, I was sent to Theological College to study for the priesthood.

This year, I received the ministry of lector. Those instituted to the ministry of lector are asked to participate in the prophetic ministry and proclamation of the Good News and to do so in a respectful way that is reflective

of the gift of Baptism and of the Church. From my perspective, it also serves as a sign that God continues to call me to the vocation of the priesthood.

Although I am still learning English, I believe that the opportunity to read God's Word during the celebration of the Eucharist is a priceless gift because it is God's way of inviting me to experience the richness and vitality that is offered through his Word. Aware of this fact, I need to prepare and practice the ministry of lector faithfully and carefully, so that the strength of the Word of the Lord can continue to permeate my heart and the hearts of others.

Lam Vo
(1-PT, Portland, Maine)



Since entering the seminary, I have grown greatly in my relationship with the Word of God through *Lectio Divina*, the Liturgy of the Hours, and the Mass. The institution of lector was a milestone in that process of growth, since it commissioned me to take that deeper love for Scripture to others in sincere and prayerful proclamation of the Word at Mass. I felt well prepared by our three sessions with Mrs. Hart. As a specialist, she assessed each man's voice, speech, and ability to communicate the ideas in the readings, and she gave us individualized help to address any vocal and communicative difficulties or challenges, especially related to complex texts. Once I had been instituted, I felt that I was able to read at Mass with a new sense of mission.

Auguste Horner
(1-PT, Rockville Centre)

The Ministry of Acolyte



As I am instituted into the ministry of acolyte, it is becoming more real for me that I am only a few years away from being ordained a priest. This is something both exciting and nerve-racking for me. As I reflect on

this ministry, it reminds me of my years before seminary, particularly during my time of serious discernment. Altar serving was so instrumental in my vocation, because it deepened my understanding of our faith through serving at the very place where Christ becomes present in the Eucharist. I pray that this new ministry will deepen my faith and that I will inspire others as well by serving in a reverent and worthy manner.

Jacob Romero
(2-T, Santa Fe)



I was very much looking forward to being instituted as an acolyte on February 22, 2021. After having been instituted as a lector last academic year, becoming an acolyte this academic year is another welcomed milestone on the journey to Holy Orders. I am excited about walking this path and having a more explicit liturgical role through serving at Mass and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. I am grateful for having another opportunity in my seminary formation to experience the Mass through a new role. I believe that being an acolyte will deepen my grace-filled encounter with the Lord.

Vincent Castaldi
(2-T, New York)





TC alumni from the Diocese of Portland, Maine, with their bishop, from left: Rev. David Raymond (2003); Rev. Daniel P. Greenleaf (1995); Msgr. Paul F. Stefanko (1976); Rev. Frank J. Murray (1981); Bishop Robert P. Deeley (Basselin B.A., 1968); Rev. Gregory P. Dube (2007).

Alumni Day 2021

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

1:45 p.m.

Welcome and Seminary Update

Viéban Hall, Theological College

Rev. Dominic Ciriaco, P.S.S., Rector

2 p.m.

Annual Alumni Lecture

Viéban Hall, Theological College

**Monsignor Stephen Rossetti, D. Min., Ph.D.,
Class of 1984**

"Priestly Wellness and Happiness
in a Time of Crisis"

3 p.m.

Break

3:15–3:45 p.m.

Discussion and Q & A

5:15 p.m.

Alumni Day Mass

*Basilica of the National Shrine of the
Immaculate Conception*

**Principal Celebrant and Homilist: Daniel
Cardinal DiNardo**

*Any priest-alumnus who wishes to
concelebrate should bring an alb.*

6:15 p.m.

Reception with TC Community

Olier Hall, Theological College

7 p.m.

Alumni Recognition and Award Dinner

Refectory, Theological College

Alumnus Lifetime Service Award Recipient:

Daniel Cardinal DiNardo

Registrations

*To register for the annual Alumni Day reunion,
and/or for sponsorship opportunities, go to
theologicalcollege.org and click on the "Alumni"
tab, or register by mail, returning the completed
form found in the brochure you received in the
spring. If you have any questions or need
assistance, contact Mary Nauman at
202-756-4905 or Nauman@cua.edu.*

**Congratulations to all our
alumni celebrating ordination
anniversaries in 2021!**

SULPICIAN SPOTLIGHT

Saint Jean Baptiste de la Salle and Saint Louis de Montfort

Rev. Dominic Ciriaco, P.S.S.

Rector

In the Sulpician tradition, there are three students of Saint Sulpice who have been beatified and canonized by the Church. Blessed Michael McGivney is the most recent saint beatified by Pope Francis last year and was featured in the previous issue of *The Crossroads* magazine (p. 8). The other two lived closer to the time of Sulpician founder, Rev. Jean-Jacques Olier, and their feast days are celebrated on the Sulpician liturgical calendar: Saint Jean Baptiste de la Salle (below) and Saint Louis de Montfort (right). Both have made enormous contributions to the spiritual life of the Church and are key figures in the French School of Spirituality.

Saint Jean Baptiste de la Salle (1651-1719) entered the Seminary of Saint Sulpice in 1670 and in his time there learned the importance of pastoral care in the catechetical movement. This was something he would apply to his life's ministry as he founded the Institute of Brothers of the Christian Schools whose mission was to give children a Christian education. The De La Salle Christian Brothers, as they are called today, have contributed for more than 300 years to the building up of Catholic education and schools throughout the world. "It is no longer I who live, but Jesus who lives in me" (*Gal 2:20*), a key Pauline theme that runs through



the French School of Spirituality, was evidenced in the life and spirit of La Salle. His reliance on the Holy Spirit allowed him to accomplish his work with great success. La Salle was a pioneer in teacher training and has been declared the patron saint of teachers.

Saint Louis de Montfort (1673-1718) entered the Seminary of Saint Sulpice in Paris in 1693 with the help of a generous benefactor. He was ordained in 1700 and his first Mass was offered at the altar to Our Lady in the Church of Saint Sulpice in Paris. De Montfort became an itinerate preacher, conducting missions throughout France. He founded the Missionaries of the Company of Mary who continue his work today and are known as the Montfort Missionaries. He also founded an order of sisters, the Daughters of Wisdom. St. Louis is known for his great love and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and is author of the spiritual classic, *True Devotion to Mary*. His main precept throughout the book, "To Jesus, through Mary," is an indication of the impact the French School of Spirituality had on his spiritual life. De Montfort's book continues to influence many today and it was a favorite read of Saint John Paul II.

As we celebrate ordinations during these summer months, these two great Sulpician-trained saints remind us that when the priest is open to the spirit at work in his life, he can accomplish great things in his ministry. The lessons and example of the Sulpician seminary made their mark on La Salle and De Montfort, and will continue to do so for the countless priests trained in the Sulpician tradition today. ■



Feature GRADUATE WITNESSES

Theological College's 2021 Deacon and Basselin Scholar Graduates

Theologian Reflections

Rev. Mr. Jason Allan
Diocese of Fort Worth

In my final semester of seminary, I have been reflecting on my nine years preparing for the priesthood. My time at Theological College has been especially formative for me. Under the direction of the Sulpicians, I have had opportunities to study, pray, and engage in pastoral ministry, which have contributed to my understanding of what it means to serve the people of God as a priest and prepared me to do so effectively.

During my discernment to enter the seminary and continuing throughout my time as a seminarian, I have often reflected on what I think God expects from his priests and whether I can fulfill that obligation. Theological College and its faculty have helped me recognize that God does not expect me to fit some mold of what a priest should be based on external qualities. Instead, I have come to see how the love of God and his Church is the most essential characteristic of a good priest. A priest is then expected to share that love with those in his parish and help them manifest that love in their own lives through the sacraments, prayer, and acts of charity. While in formation at Theological College, I have been blessed to dive deeper into that divine love while being given opportunities in pastoral assignments to practice sharing it with others.

Rev. Mr. Michael Kieler
Diocese of St. Augustine

Two biblical images come to mind when I consider my time at TC. The first image, one which initially inspired me to consider the priesthood, is from *Luke* 4:18: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor” (cf. *Is* 61:1). Priests are called to have a special solidarity with the poor as the privileged recipients of Christ’s message of salvation (cf. *Optatam totius*, no. 8-9). This image reminds me of the TC faculty who have modeled Gospel poverty for me in their commitment to seminary formation. In what they leave behind for this purpose, the Sulpician charism resembles Christ’s invitation to “go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven” (*Matt* 19:21). By devoting all their energies to this mission, they have given me an example of abandonment to God’s will in his service.

The second image — also biblical — was given to me when I first began my time at TC. They told us that our time in seminary was like the Apostles’ time in the Upper Room between the Ascension and Pentecost. The analogy made perfect sense to me: being removed from the world for a time, and “under the auspices of Mary,” the Apostles are prepared to “receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon [them]” (*Acts* 1:8). Certainly, the ten days in the Upper Room were not all sunshine and bliss. It must have been cramped up there, and sometimes they might have felt the urge to go out and get started with their mission. However, Jesus knew what he was doing. Likewise, he has given me this time in seminary to be best prepared for a new coming of the Holy Spirit, God willing, in

my priestly ordination. I am immensely grateful to the faculty, staff, and benefactors of TC for their cooperation with the Lord in making this possible.

Rev. Mr. Thomas Lawrence
Diocese of Richmond

Vulnerability, docility, and agency are the signposts-made-fruits with which TC has gifted me. When I started in 2015, I would have told anyone willing to listen that vulnerability was negative, while docility and agency were opposed to each other. After philosophy’s distinctions, theology’s depths, and formation’s “pruning,” I find myself reflecting and leaning on the proper definitions of these terms.

As a slighter older vocation, entering seminary formation at 35, I have been very thankful for TC’s formation environment which emphasizes the projected reality of diocesan priestly life, where no faculty member will be around your parish in 5, 10, or 50 years checking up on you to see if you set goals for yourself, prayed your office, or continued your education. You are indeed now and later the “primary agent of your own formation.” TC provides an environment where you have room to fail to live up to the ideal, but you have a relatively safe environment in which to find your way back and be bolstered with support. TC gives men the latitude to have a very individualized formation plan, while building a lattice work to help that plan develop.

Through the Pastoral Formation Program, I’ve had to open up and thoroughly process service and ministry environments in a way divergent and deeper than I ever had to in previous academic, civic, or parish capacities. As a



The Deacon Class of 2021, from left: Michael Kieler, Thomas Lawrence, Jason Allan, Brett Metzler, and Wesbee Victor.

result, it has been easier to glance inside myself more readily and grow for the service of others and Holy Mother Church in ways I would have never expected.

It has been through all the things that did not go according to hopes, expectations, and comfort-levels — those very things which have been the most formative here — that I was led to understand how to properly listen to what the Lord was teaching me through the good ... and especially the bad. It has been monumentally important in this journey to find a method to discern where and when I was my own roadblock rather than some external force or initiative working against me. Through deep and frequent conversations in spiritual direction and formation advising, TC has taught me how to more and more step aside and allow the face of Jesus to show forth.

Rev. Mr. Brett Metzler
Diocese of Fort Worth

My time spent at Theological College has been one of pastoral and spiritual growth, but most especially a time of training in the life of joy. Theological College has given me the gift of finding joy even amidst the rigors of academic life, and the daily crosses and hardships encountered in seminary life. Throughout my four years, I have seen only kindness and joy in the faculty which in turn permeated throughout the community. Seminary formation is a difficult time of testing — emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually. But the real test is whether or not we can learn to carry these crosses with Christ, with others, and with joy. Theological College has been a true formative experience, most especially in this area.

As I approach ordination, I can do so with confidence, strength, and gratitude, not only because of the formation I received here, but precisely because of the relationships that I have formed here. Theological College has been a place of brotherhood. I am blessed to have had the experience of growing closer to Christ with my fellow seminarians. I am also blessed to know the genuine care and concern of the faculty for me and my vocation. It has been by far the most encouraging aspect of my time here to know that my formation and spiritual advisors pray for me, care for me, and deeply desire my good as a Christian brother, and soon, a priest of Jesus of Christ.

Rev. Mr. Wesbee Victor
Archdiocese of New York

Words cannot express how grateful and blessed I am for the opportunity to spend four years of formation at Theological College and The Catholic University of America. With the help of my formators and spiritual director, I developed and gained a profound relationship with Christ so much so that the process affirmed a ministry and dedication of my life to Christ.

My formation at TC helped me to develop a spirit within which I can make my ministry centered on Jesus, rather than myself. The faculty’s assistance and mentorship cultivated within me a deeper understanding as one who is called to minister to God’s people, by putting the mission of the Church and its people first, as Jesus did. I can now approach my ministry with the understanding that what I am called to do is bigger than myself.

My formation at TC and Catholic University helped me to live by the principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi* — (the law of what is prayed is the law of what is believed, and the law of what is believed is the law of what is lived). This principle will be the standard by which I will try to live my priesthood. Throughout my formation, I learned to appreciate that the best way that I can preach the Gospel is by leading by example.

I will be forever grateful to the Sulpicians for their accompaniment in the course of my formation. Their model and process of formation helped me to grow in maturity, wisdom, humility, and responsibility. They helped to develop the understanding that the Liturgy of the Church is a prophetic witness to the faith. Moreover, as one who is called to minister in the Church through my actions and encounters, I want to be an *alter Christus* for others.

Basselin Memoirs

Mitchell Carson
Diocese of Cleveland

Thesis

The Necessary and Necessarily Limited Role of Perception in Aristotle’s Account of Human Knowing

Director

Jonathan Buttaci, Ph.D.

Over my three years in the Basselin Program, I have often had to discern which of the unpleasant things that I was feeling were from God, stretches pulling me beyond myself and deeper into the mystery of the Christian life, and which were tears, breaking down my body and soul to leave me less fit for eventual ministry to the people of God. Looking back now over this span of years that, on the one hand, seems to have been my life forever and, on the other, seems to have begun only yesterday, I see that most of whatever unpleasantness I underwent was in fact stretching me and pulling me out of myself in ways that I did not expect. Especially in my studies, I have been challenged to think in new ways and with a new focus, and I can see now that this effort has not been without its fruit.

It would be very misleading, however, to suggest that my experience as a Basselin was nothing but drudgery with glimmers of progress at the end. For example, my time at St. Joseph Parish on Capitol Hill has been a wonderful catechetical experience, and it was a delight to meet some of the people of God here in D.C. I am especially grateful to the pastor there, Father Bill Gurnee, and all the other wonderful people to whom and with whom I have

had the privilege of ministering.

And, of course, my time at Theological College has been filled with wonderful memories that I will hold dear for years to come, and with incredible people whom I am honored to call my friends. The faculty as well has been very helpful in forming my heart after that of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, and I am grateful for the work that they have done to make my time at Theological College a formative one. It has been a great joy to me to have spent these last three years with all these people.

Justin Damask
Diocese of Charleston

Thesis

A Phenomenology of Presenting the Self as if in a Virtual World

Director

Michele Averchi, Ph.D.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen once said, “It does make a tremendous difference what we believe, for we act on our beliefs. If our beliefs are right, our deeds will be right.” I am grateful for The Catholic University of America School of Philosophy faculty who have enabled me to consistently drink deeply from our rich Catholic intellectual tradition. Epistemology with Dr. White, Ethics with Dr. Vorwerk, Metaphysics with Monsignor Wippel, Dr. Doolan, and Fido, Functions of Philosophy in Theology with Monsignor Sokolowski, Medieval Philosophy with Dr. Hoffman, Contemporary Philosophy with Dr. Averchi, Natural Right and Natural Law with Dr. Lewis are among the many great classes with great teachers. I look up to all of these incredible Christian philosophers as examples of how to think and live well. By their examples, I have learned to wonder about and marvel at aspects of the world, both natural and spiritual, that



The Basselin Class of 2021, from left: Mitchell Carson, Justin Damask, Nicholas Waldron, Sean Neville, and Luke Kirk.

I never had nor ever would have noticed without them. I am especially grateful to Dr. Averchi for directing my thesis. I had no idea how much I was asking of him when I first requested that he consider taking me on as a directee. I appreciate his belief in my abilities, and I will be forever grateful to Catholic University’s School of Philosophy for helping me to order my beliefs.

“*Ecce quam bonum et quam iucundum habitare fratres in unum*” — “Gracious the sight, and full of comfort, when brethren dwell united” (Ps 132). I owe a huge debt to my brother Basselins. My first and second year, the third Basselins were great friends and mentors to me. All three years, my Basselin class has been a huge support academically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Throughout trips to Paris, Barcelona, and Georgetown, for late night steak and eggs, time spent with my classmates has been the biggest blessing of the Basselin Scholars Program.

Many thanks also to the Theological College community. Every year, I have found in this community men to look up to as fathers, men who inspire me as brothers, men who push me to be excellent, and men with whom I hope to remain lifelong friends.

Luke Kirk
Diocese of Lafayette

Thesis

Aquinas and Ulrich on Being as Gift

Director

Gregory T. Doolan, Ph.D.

During my first visit to Theological College, I was struck by two constant images: the engraving of “AM” (*Auspice Maria*) and the statue of *Maria, Sedes Sapientiae*. From the glass doors immediately inside the front doors, to the chapel doors, to the passage to the Reservation Chapel, the AM symbol has been a persistent reminder to me that I, alongside all my seminarian brothers, am “in the caring support of Mary.” At moments of great exuberance in spending time with my fellow Basselins, in ministry at St. Ambrose Parish, and in discovering new insights about God and man in philosophy, Mary has been with me to say, “Do whatever he tells you.” When experiencing the crosses that come with the rigors of the Basselin Program, Mary has stood by me in silent support. Above all, the caring support of Mary throughout the priestly formation process has led me to further mold my heart and mind into that of her Son, whose heart and mind she knows so deeply.

I am equally grateful for the statue of *Maria, Sedes Sapientiae* — Mary, Seat of Wisdom — within Theological College. From the main chapel to each dorm room, the statue of Mary, Seat of Wisdom, is almost always before one’s eyes. She tenderly holds Jesus, and treasures each moment with him, the Logos, in her heart.

I have been incredibly nurtured by the spectacular education given by the professors of the Catholic University School of Philosophy and the Pontifical John Paul II Institute, particularly Dr. D.C. Schindler and Dr. Gregory T. Doolan, who have enabled me to gratefully perceive the gift of Christ the Logos, myself, and all created things. May God grant Theodore Basselin perpetual light and peace for his generosity, which has given the gift of this grace-filled program for me to grow closer to Christ and my brother seminarians in the caring support of his Mother Mary, the Seat of Wisdom.

O Jesus, living in Mary, come and live in your servants, in the spirit of holiness, in the fullness of your power, in the perfection of your ways, in the truth of your virtues, in the communion of your mysteries. Rule over every adverse power, in your Spirit, for the glory of the Father. Amen. (Father Jean-Jacques Olier, P.S.S.)

Sean Neville
Diocese of Cleveland

Thesis
An Examination of the Skill Analogy in Intellectualist and Empiricist Theories of Virtue

Director
Angela Knobel, Ph.D.

In 2018, when I visited Theological College to interview for the Basselin Scholars Program, I remember sitting in the lounge trying to convince myself that TC guys were weird and that there was no possible way the Lord actually wanted me to do this program. Despite my best argumentative efforts, I was surprised at how normal and welcoming the seminarians were. The community that existed at Theological College reminded me of the one I had at my seminary in Cleveland, and this was a source of peace and comfort for me.

Still filled with some worry and doubts, I moved out eight months later to begin my time in the Basselin Program. Looking back now three years later, I am very grateful to the Lord for giving me that peace because TC has had an incredible impact on my formation. I have been humbled, affirmed, challenged, and loved over these past few years by the seminarians and faculty of TC. The Sulpician Fathers' approach to formation has impacted my outlook on seminary formation tremendously. Their trust in the seminarians has given me the space to grow in self-knowledge.

I am also incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to study philosophy at The Catholic University of America. The education I received has already helped me to become a better thinker, and I am excited to see the fruit it continues to bear in my life.

A proper recollection of my time in the Basselin Program would not be complete without recounting the many laughs I have shared over these past three years. The Basselin Program has given me an opportunity to meet guys from all over the country and to form solid friendships with a diverse group of men. I have been incredibly blessed by my brothers in the program, and I leave with many fond memories that are filled with joy.

Much gratitude must also be given to the faculty from the Diocese of Cleveland, specifically Father Mark Latcovich, for entrusting my priestly formation to TC for the past three years. I am grateful to Fathers Gerald McBrearity and Dominic Ciriaco, the two rectors presiding during my time at TC, for their support and care. Additionally, I am grateful to my formation advisor, Father Jim Froehlich, OFM Cap., and my spiritual directors, Fathers Bob McCreary and Jim McKearney, for their encouragement and guidance. Lastly and most importantly, I am grateful to Jesus for allowing my time at TC to be an experience of growth and closeness with Him.

Nicholas Waldron
Diocese of Rockville Centre

Thesis
Humor as a Nietzschean Anti-Ascetic

Director
Antón Barba-Kay, Ph.D.

My time in the Basselin College has been marked by great academic challenge and growth. My immersion in both an intensive philosophy track as well as a theologate formation program has been a source of great opportunity and freedom. To begin to express my gratitude for this experience, I must say that I am deeply

grateful for the generosity and support of Theodore Basselin years ago. Without his dedication to the future formation of priests, this opportunity would not have been afforded to me.

I am also grateful for the dedication and hard work of the faculty of the School of Philosophy here at The Catholic University of America. Their instruction and mentorship have allowed me to gain a profound experience of our deep Catholic philosophical tradition. I would also like to acknowledge the great blessing of the tremendous support of the faculty at Theological College. Their prayerful dedication to the formation of future priests has made clear the Lord's call to draw closer to his heart. In addition, I am truly thankful for the many friendships I have formed as a Basselin Scholar. The time I have spent alongside these fellow seminarians has fostered within me a deeper appreciation for the value of Catholic manhood.

Through my many positive experiences at Theological College, I can say that I will leave here with a greater understanding of what it means to say "yes" to the priesthood in the 21st century. I am confident that my time here has nurtured my attentiveness to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in my life. I move on from this seminary as a more mature, prayerful, and confident man than I was when I arrived, and for that I am incredibly grateful. I will forever remember my years in the Basselin College. ■



SEMINARY LIFE

THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF PRIESTLY FORMATION

Charles Silvas
Third Theology, Diocese of Corpus Christi

The Human Dimension

Human formation is "the necessary foundation" of priestly formation (*Program for Priestly Formation*, no. 75). As such, the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (RFIS) explains that "the seminarian is called upon to develop his personality, having Christ, the perfect man, as his model and source" (RFIS, no. 93). The *Program for Priestly Formation* (PPF) specifies that "human formation happens in a three-fold process of self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and self-gift" (PPF, no. 80). The qualities to be fostered in human formation are "freedom, openness, honesty and flexibility, joy and inner peace, generosity and justice, personal maturity, interpersonal skills, common sense, aptitude for ministry, and growth 'in moral sensibility and character'" (PPF, no. 85).



A seminarian's human formation is crucial, and it has been such a blessing to my life that Theological College understands the need for emphasis on this pillar, or dimension, of formation. We have formators from a variety of backgrounds who desire our growth as men of God; they want us to be joyful, holy, and relatable to the people we will one day serve, God willing! It is through human formation that we mature and become the best version of ourselves in our daily encounters and tasks. Theological College, through formation nights, conferences, and conversations — both one-on-one and in groups at meals and times of fellowship — has helped me to strive to be the best man that I can be, looking to Jesus as the model for perfect manhood. The variety found within the seminarian community of Theological College has been a rich gift to my formation. Living with men from 22 different dioceses, different cultures, walks of life, experiences, etc., has definitely been formative and is continually

presenting opportunities for growth, so I can better serve and love those around me.

Patrick O'Brien
(2-PreT, Diocese of Rockville Centre)



One of the reasons why I believe the dimension of human formation is important is because of the centrality of relationships in priestly ministry. In order for the priest to help spiritually form his people and lead them to a relationship with Jesus Christ, he needs to be able to connect with them on a human level and not just a spiritual level. This opens the door to reaching them on a spiritual level. Those relationships allow for connections and trust to be born, enabling people to open up more of their hearts to the priest. In the eyes of his people, the priest should be seen as "another Christ," so it is key that he be formed so that he models Christ in his humanity. In being able to connect with people on a human level in this way, it helps his people develop a deeper relationship with our incarnate Lord, who is both God and Man.

David Schmidt
(3-T, Diocese of Pittsburgh)

The Spiritual Dimension

The *Program for Priestly Formation* notes that "the basic principle of spiritual formation is [...] to live in intimate and unceasing union with God the Father through his Son, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit" (PPF, no. 107). It goes on to highlight that "the spirituality that belongs to those who are priests or preparing for priesthood is at one and the same time Trinitarian, Christological, pneumatological, and ecclesial. It is a spirituality of communion rooted in the mystery of the Triune God and lived out in practical ways in the mystery of ecclesial communion" (PPF, no. 108).



The purpose of the spiritual pillar is to form a spiritual and real union with God through the community of the Church. Through the Spirit, God comes to us and ignites our heart and soul in faith and love. But we too must be willing to go to him; after all, the spiritual journey is that of relationship and communion. Just as the spirit gives us life, we too are called to give life to the Church by reflecting and sharing that same Spirit upward to God and outward to our brothers and sisters. Theological College has given me many opportunities to grow in this way and understand spirituality as a gift. One of these ways is through the music ministry – “He who sings, prays twice.” I have been able to share my talent as a gift to the community during the Liturgy to lift our souls to God in worship. The time I put into music ministry is not only for me, but for the benefit of all who desire to worship and give thanks to God. The goal is to form a self-giving and unifying community that forms the members of Theological College as true disciples of Christ.

Michael Villavicencio
(Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1-T)



The spiritual dimension of formation is of the utmost importance to me. Without a seminarian’s life being grounded in a personal relationship with the Triune God in and through the Church, he will not be sustained in his vocation to priesthood. In my own formation, prayer has been a significant way for me to encounter God and grow in my relationship with him. Through prayer, I have discerned how God is laboring for my good and for the good of others, how he reveals his loving presence and plan for our lives. Participating in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, is an explicit invitation for us to become conscious of the Triune God. He desires to grace us and welcomes us to magnanimously serve, praise, and reverence him with our lives as seminarians and, God willing, one day as holy and good priests. Spirituality is the lifeblood of priesthood and solid spiritual formation prepares a man to be a missionary disciple who follows the Lord generously.

Vincent Castaldi
(2-T, Archdiocese of New York)

The Intellectual Dimension

The *Program for Priestly Formation* explains that “the first task of intellectual formation is to acquire a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ” (PPF, no. 137). It goes on to explain that “the doctrinal, educational, catechetical, and apologetical aspects of a candidate’s training are to prepare the seminarian to be a faithful, loyal, and authentic teacher of the Gospel” (PPF, no. 139). In a similar way, the *Ratio Fundamental Institutionis Sacerdotalis* emphasizes that “the organic and serious study of philosophy and theology is the most suitable means of acquiring that *forma mentis* that enables one to address the questions and challenges that are encountered in the exercise of the sacred ministry, and to interpret them in the light of faith” (RFIS, no. 118).



My intellectual formation at TC has been greatly blessed by its partnership with the School of Theology and Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America. My studies at Catholic University have truly helped me to cultivate a mind and heart that remain in communion with the Church and her teachings. Our present context leaves many people asking fundamental questions about life and society; for this reason, it is so important that priests are able to engage all those who seek the truth sincerely. I believe my formation has given me the precision and tools necessary to engage others pastorally so as to help guide them toward the truth.

Ryan Braam
(3-T, Archdiocese of Washington)



As the *Program for Priestly Formation* says, I have always found it to be true that our intellectual formation in seminary must be rooted in a relationship with Christ. Since union with his priesthood is the goal of our formation, nothing we do in seminary makes sense apart from him. If our study of philosophy and theology does not deepen this union, it is a waste of time. Jesus is the truth that we seek in these subjects. Throughout my time in priestly formation, Christ has repeatedly reminded me of this fact by revealing the beauty of his face in my studies, showing me that everything really does make sense from the Christian perspective. For example, Plato believed that the ultimate good is like a light that shines on all things and makes them comprehensible. This provides an interesting perspective on God, who reveals the truth to us through the Spirit. Encountering parallels to Christianity like this example, and even contradictions with its teachings, has enriched my search for Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life.

Andrew Heidelbaugh
(2-B, Diocese of Harrisburg)

For more on intellectual formation at TC, stay tuned for future coverage in this magazine!

The Pastoral Dimension

The *Ratio Fundamental Institutionis Sacerdotalis* conveys that the process of pastoral formation enables the seminarian “to demonstrate that same compassion, generosity, love for all, especially for the poor, and zeal for the Kingdom that characterized the public ministry of the Son of God. [Pastoral formation] helps the seminarian to acquire the inner freedom to live the apostolate as service, able to see the work of God in the hearts and lives of the people” (RFIS, no. 119). It goes on to highlight that therefore “the call to be pastors of the People of God requires a formation that makes future priests able to listen deeply to real situations

and capable of good judgement in making choices and decisions” (RFIS, no. 120).



This academic year, my classmates and I embarked on our Clinical Pastoral Education, i.e., hospital ministry, by volunteering at local area hospitals. I volunteered at Georgetown University Medical Hospital (and St. Joseph’s in Savannah while on break). The relationships that Theological College fosters with local area hospitals and with The Catholic University of America, where I receive my classroom pastoral education, maintain as their focus the building up of the seminarian’s character, spirituality, and personality for his intentional self-giving to the person in front of him. TC personally helped me, in the short span of two semesters, to grow substantially in my confidence and comfort in meeting people from all backgrounds wherever they are and addressing the situations that arise with pastoral and spiritual care. I have, on more than one occasion, found myself at the intersection between the inner workings of the Holy Spirit and the situations in which many of the faithful find themselves. It remains a humbling yet bold challenge that TC instills in us.

Justin Motes
(1-T, Diocese of St. Augustine)



Throughout my seminary formation, I have been assigned to many different pastoral ministry placements: parishes, a Catholic cemetery, an after-school program, a Catholic school, a nursing home, and, most recently, a local hospital in Washington, D.C. These ministry placements that TC offers, with the accompaniment of great mentors and supervisors, have been key for growth along the path of my own vocational journey. They have served over and over again as a reaffirming source of my own discernment toward priesthood. To serve the people of God, and having the privileged opportunity to see their joys, struggles, and hopes firsthand, has allowed me to mature as a better Christian and continues to help form me in my pastoral service as a witness to Jesus Christ.

André Sicard
(2-T, Diocese of Salt Lake City)



Celebrating the Triduum at Theological College

Jakob Pohlman
First Basselin, Diocese of Worcester

“Do you see the magnitude of the gift? O man, guard carefully the greatness of this gift! Do not allow yourself to live indifferently to it!” Taken from a homily of St. John Chrysostom on Easter Sunday, these words express only a small bit of the Church’s jubilation on Easter Sunday. The current classes of seminarians

Malediction

O Curséd Wood! By which first parents fell
From preternatural grace and cast us
From Garden, From Grace, From Love Into Hell;
And bitter gall of death suffer we must.
O Curséd Tree! ’round which, lithely curled, lied
Satan serpentine slithering, hissing—
Mother Heva, deceived, sorrowed and cried
For sons yet unborn, cursed with this tristing.
O Curséd Food! And noxious fruit laced with
Beguiling Sweetness of wisdom dread—
Foolish man who saw not created kith
And grasped beyond th’ image, d’vined earthen bed.
O Curséd Icarus! O faithless one,
Who grave and shroud irrep’rably has won.

— J.P.

were able to experience this joy and celebration of the liturgies of Holy Week and Easter Sunday here at Theological College. This was an historical event, one that has not occurred since 2003 because, during normal times, seminarians return to their home dioceses for these most sacred celebrations. Due to the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, it was decided that all seminarians should remain in Washington, D.C., for this time. And so, the entire house busied itself about the business of preparing for the sacred season.

The music ministry came out in full force during this time. The Schola sang marvelous pieces by famous composers such as Dan Schutte, Owen Alstott, and Johann Sebastian Bach. They had been carefully rehearsing in the preceeding weeks under the tutelage of the Director of Music, Father James McKearney. The music aided the community in entering into the time of prayer throughout Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. Father Leonardo Gajardo, the celebrant of the Easter Vigil, preached powerfully about the value of time, especially the time we spend in the celebration of sacred things. None of the liturgies felt rushed; all of them had a dignified pace which suited the great solemnity of the season.

Charles Silvas, a third theologian for the Diocese of Corpus Christi, remarked that “the entire Triduum had an incredibly retreat-like atmosphere. Although we all really wanted to be in a parish, our celebration here at the seminary let us enter into the season with a much more contemplative ambience than would have been possible in a parish setting.” The house was marked with a profound sense of solemnity and silence as everyone participated in the three days of the Passion of the Lord. Benjamin

Albanese, a first Basselin for the Diocese of Raleigh, said, “There was a sort of catharsis that came from being together during this sacred time.”

Our rector, Father Dominic Ciraioco, expressed his deep appreciation to all: “I want to thank the TC community for making this celebration of the Triduum so prayerful, reflective, and joyful. Everyone stepped up in some way to participate, with flower arranging, set-up, clean-up, presiding, serving, lecturing, MCing, singing, preparing the Easter fire, and so many details that added something special to this holy celebration.” This was, indeed, a truly unique and privileged moment of unity and togetherness for the TC community. May the Risen Lord bless us as we continue in this great gift of formation!

First theologian Dylan Prentice (Washington) leads the congregation in one of the many responsorial psalms in the Easter Liturgy.



The rector washes seminarians’ feet during the solemn Holy Thursday Mass.

Benediction

O Blesséd Wood! Whose praises all men sang!
O sweetest nails, O sweetest beams, O Hail
To sweetest weight which on the cross didst hang,
And sweetest blood, tincture for man’s travail!
O Blesséd Tree! On which our Savior hung!
Satan, crushed by precious seed of Virgin
Is pow’rless ’gainst the One on gibbet strung,
Who trusts tristing sons to mother as kin.
O Blesséd Food! Sainted bread from our God,
Which bread is flesh, foolishness to the proud,
But to humble belief ’tis life in God
From One in whose Virgin Birth angels bowed.
O Blesséd Christ! O Faithful One, by whose
Cross and Death hath redeemed us from death’s dues.

— J.P.

Seminarian Initiatives

An Evening with St. Joseph Fourth Annual Theological College Art Show

Scott Bahrke
Third Theologian, Diocese of Memphis

Spring is a great time of the year to be at Theological College. As the weather warms, we can shed the winter clothes and spend time outside enjoying the change of seasons, perhaps taking a long walk or playing Ultimate Frisbee on the lawn at Catholic University. We can also enjoy the beauty that surrounds us in Washington, D.C., this time of year, from the cherry blossoms on the Tidal Basin to the golden daffodils that line 4th Street and the dramatic purple blossoms on the saucer magnolia trees in our courtyard.

The artists at Theological College contributed their ode to beauty on Friday evening of the Solemnity of St. Joseph, March 19. After solemn Evening Prayer, our rector Father Ciriaco opened the show, titled, “The Dreams of St. Joseph,” with a blessing and an invitation to those present to enjoy over 30 works created by seminarians, faculty, alumni, and even a local friar. Religious art featured prominently in the collection, including an impressive icon in oil on wood, “St. Michael,” written by the rector himself. Seminarian Andrew Heidelbaugh offered an idyllic landscape of Acadia, Maine, in an oil on canvas painting, titled, “One Day Within Your Courts, O Lord.” The exceptional watercolor on paper by Father Andrew Szablewski, “Crabapples,” really caught our attention. To round things out, seminarians Jonathan Pham and Nicholas Waldron presented stunning photographs from their various adventures in travel.

We were also treated to musical selections by our talented seminarian musicians. Pianists André Sicard, Luke Kirk, Jack Kristensen, and Lam Vo entertained us with various compositions. Kristensen also accompanied vocalist Auguste Horner for Schumann’s “Mondnacht.” Heidelbaugh managed to capture all ears with his subtle but compelling vocal and guitar rendition of “You’ve Got a Friend in Me” from *Toy Story*, and Carlos de la Rosa concluded the evening playing jazz guitar. Father Ciriaco offered special thanks to organizers Andrew Heidelbaugh, Luke Kirk, and Jack Kristensen and to Father Melvin Blanchette, P.S.S., whose generosity made the event possible.



Luke Kirk (3-B, Lafayette), co-organizer of the evening, plays Bach’s “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” while the seminary community peruses the art exhibit. [See *theologicalcollege.org*’s March 25 news story to view the photo gallery!](#)

Holy Smokes! Incense Workshop

In April, Deacon Tom Lawrence (Richmond) offered a workshop on incense to the TC community. He presented over 50 types of incense while four groups of five people each experimented with the types (and were able to take some home). Tom provided four different sizes and types of thuribles for demonstration and experimentation. The groups used five methods for heating up incense and coals (electric burner, candle, oil lamp, thurible, and cupcake tin), learning about different heats and air flows. Tom explained his passion, “The center and genesis of all my experimentation is how to use incense without harming anyone. This can be achieved by using non-accelerant charcoal with quality natural frankincense (of various grades), optionally in conjunction with other natural resins. Wood, botanical, soil, and oil additives combined with the chemicals used to accelerate charcoal heating are the cause of most sensory and respiratory problems with incense usage. It also helps to line your thurible and frequently clean it. All incense used during the Liturgy is subordinated to worship, and while it should be additive, it shouldn’t be distracting.” Those in attendance benefited greatly from Deacon Tom’s generosity and wisdom.

Deacon Tom Lawrence presents different thuribles during his workshop.



Extemporaneous Preaching Fellowship

Seth Michael Seaman
Second Theology, Diocese of Richmond

Recently at Theological College, a number of students have, with the approval of the faculty, started the Extemporaneous Preaching Fellowship. This fellowship sprang up from two shared desires: first, an aspiration to grow in our abilities as preachers and second, a longing to cultivate within our hearts the ability to more readily perceive the prompting of the Holy Spirit. With these goals at the forefront of our minds, but also not wanting to overburden ourselves by developing prepared reflections on a regular basis, it was surmised that an extemporaneous, or impromptu, format would work best for our needs. For our purposes, extemporaneous preaching is simply preaching on a passage of Scripture without explicitly preparing beforehand. The process of our meetings is designed to help the members fulfill our aforementioned goals, have a fun time, and be an encouragement to one another.

At the beginning of every meeting, all of the members pray together and then cast lots to determine the order that everyone will be preaching in. Once the order has been established, we follow the lectionary for the upcoming Sunday to determine the passages everyone will be speaking from (and that have not been revealed beforehand). The first person takes the Gospel, the second the New Testament epistle, the third the Old Testament reading, and the fourth takes the psalm. If there are more than four of us, we will use the lectionary reading from the next year. When it is time for someone to preach, he is given a minute or two to silently read the passage and get his mind in order. He is then asked to stand before the group, open with a prayer, read the passage, preach, and, finally, close in prayer. The participant is given no more than eight minutes to do all of this (if a person preaches for only a minute, it is perfectly fine). After one is done preaching, the group gives a positive critique of the message that was delivered. The group is explicitly asked to note what was done well and what needs a bit of additional focus. Once the critique is done, the next person in the group begins the process. After everyone has had an opportunity to preach and receive positive feedback, we close in prayer.

While the seminary gives us opportunities to grow in our preaching abilities (there are two required preaching classes, and upperclassmen occasionally preach when we pray in community), the Extemporaneous Preaching Fellowship gives more occasions to preach and receive feedback. The impromptu nature also helps us to learn how to more readily depend on the Holy Spirit during



Seth Seaman, right, discusses preaching skills and inspirations with Michael Golla (2-T Corpus Christi) in the fifth-floor Chapel of the Three Teresas used by the group.

encounters in which we are unable to prepare beforehand. For instance, if you are in a store with a stranger who must be ministered to, you do not have time to prepare anything, but must speak in the moment. If possible, I know I would much rather communicate an inspired word from the Holy Spirit rather than simply conjuring up something from within my own limited “wisdom.” Through participating in this fellowship, I am growing in my ability to speak publicly, while also (perhaps more importantly) developing a capacity to hear the voice of the Spirit when under pressure. Although taking part in the Extemporaneous Preaching Fellowship can seem a bit intimidating at first, it has proven to be an effective and uplifting means of promoting growth in those who are willing to step outside of their comfort zone.

Basselins Visit Croghan, NY.

Luke Kirk (3-B, Lafayette), left, and Justin Damask (3-B, Charleston), representing their graduating cohort, visited the home, gravesite, and parish church of Theodore Basselin in March. An annual pilgrimage for the Basselin scholars, this year’s travelers had a privileged tour of the newly renovated mansion. Situated in the center of the small town of Croghan, N.Y., the Basselin mansion was built before the Civil War. The house was purchased in 2019 by Travis Proulx who has catalyzed a local effort to renovate the home and grounds for the entire community to enjoy. Travis is the nephew of Kenneth Proulx, who authored *The Life and Enterprise of Theodore B. Basselin*. (This informative biography has been gifted to TC’s Basselins over the course of many years.) ■





William Mobley (2-T, Dallas), left, organizer of the 2021 Iron Seminarian tournament, presents the victory plaque to this year's champion, Deacon Brett Metzler (Fort Worth).

Student Government

Community Life Committee Iron Seminarian Tournament

Dylan Prentice
First Theology, Archdiocese of Washington

Everyone is watching intently with bated breath, trying not to cause any major distractions. One seminarian steadies his pool cue, carefully eyeing his target pocket. He gently swings the pool cue back and forth until just the right moment. Crack! The target ball sinks confidently into the called pocket. And the surrounding crowd goes nuts!

Iron Seminarian at Theological College is an annual tournament of indoor games including darts, table tennis (ping-pong), and eight-ball pool. It is a great way for seminarians to grow closer in fraternity and Christian friendship through low-intensity activities that still encourage conversation and healthy competition. The final day of the tournament was a “house event” for everyone to watch the semifinal and final rounds, while enjoying food, drinks, music, and good company. As a spectator, I had a unique opportunity to see brother seminarians show some incredible skills at these games. Even more, I was able to witness the warm and charitable interactions between “opponents” during the matches. Congratulations, praise, and laughter were abounding, and Christ was rejoicing in our brotherly encounters.

For a seminarian to win the tournament and claim the title of

“Iron Seminarian,” he must accrue the most points by advancing as far as he can in each of the three divisions. The division titles go to the seminarian who wins in the final round of that division. The results of the 2021 Iron Seminarian tournament were not without excitement and variety: Deacon Brett Metzler of the Diocese of Fort Worth won the title of Iron Seminarian, as well as the division in darts; second Basselin Andrew Heidelbaugh (last year’s Iron Seminarian) of the Diocese of Harrisburg won the table tennis division; and first theologian Michael Villavicencio of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe won the eight-ball pool division.

In his first letter to the Thessalonians, St. Paul encourages vigilance of the local Christian community. He urges them to live as children of the light of Christ, to be alert, and to always strive for holiness. Our Iron Seminarian tournament allows us to do just that: to joyfully bond as brothers in Christ during a healthy competition of games that allow for just about anyone’s participation, so that on this journey of discernment, growth in holiness, and configuration to Christ, we may “encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed [we] do” (1 *Thess* 5:11).

Spring House Party

Jacob Romero
Second Theology, Archdiocese of Santa Fe

The Spring House Party this year was a wonderful experience for me as my first official Spring House party at TC (since it was cancelled last year). It offered good food, great entertainment, and fun conversation as we took a break from our very busy schedules right before entering into the final weeks of the school year. The theme was Jamaican, led by our own Steve Wong (1-T, Washington) who himself hails from that island. He did a great job working with our food service Sodexo, as well as bringing in two talented gentlemen who played the steel

Joseph Krug, left (1-B, Rockville Centre), steps up for the Spring House Party hot sauce challenge.



drums. The other highlight to the evening was the hot sauce competition between a few brave seminarians who tried different spicy sauces. I was amazed at the determination and stubbornness of the participants; the competition kept all of us on the edge of our seats as we waited to see who would tap out and go for their milk, signaling their withdrawal from the challenge.

This was a perfect occasion for the whole community to put aside their work and other duties to come together to relax, share a meal, and make memories with each other. A number of card players enjoyed the customary poker competition afterwards.

In addition, the Social Justice Committee took the opportunity to fundraise for the Missioners of Christ in Honduras, to make up for not being able to travel there this year as so many seminarians have in the past. All were happy to contribute to the cause and mission of those men who are serving our brothers and sisters in Honduras.

Social Justice Committee Charities Diaper Drive

Social Justice Committee Chairman, Justin Damask (3-B, Charleston), left, and Diaper Drive Chairman Anthony May at the conclusion of the annual Diaper Drive. Congratulations to the Third Theology victors of this annual competition on behalf of area families in need!

For more information, see dcdiaperbank.org.



A Simple House

Paul Kucharski
First Theology, Archdiocese of New York

The TC Social Justice Committee was so impressed with the work of A Simple House that it decided to offer financial support this semester from the Sulpician grant that was split with the Three Part Harmony Farm (see below). I was blessed to be assigned to A Simple House for my service-to-the-poor placement and was gratified that one of the missionaries at A Simple House accepted an invitation to speak to the TC community to share the experience of this apostolate. A Simple House is a group of Catholic missionaries who minister to the poor and homeless in southeast Washington, D.C. The missionaries live a communal life of simplicity and prayer. They seek to meet both the material and spiritual needs of those they serve and, to do so in a personal manner, they are committed to what they call “friendship evangelization.” As noted on the website, “We serve each person in the context of a unique friendship. Our missionaries help the poor carry their burdens and accompany them in their efforts to improve their lives and grow closer to Christ. Our work is an experiment in Christianity. We believe there is no official handbook or recipe for serving the poor.”

Because its missionaries are willing to establish long-term relationships with those whom they serve, A Simple House is better equipped to provide individual and long-term assistance than traditional programs for the poor, like shelters and soup kitchens. To cite but one example, the current missionaries are helping a young woman who has been accepted to a Midwest university for the Fall 2021 semester. She is from a family that the founder of A Simple House met 13 years ago and helped with basic necessities like food and clothing. This young woman will be the first in her family to leave D.C. and pursue higher education. We hope that this is the start of a long and fruitful relationship between Theological College and A Simple House.

For more information, see asimplehouse.org.

Three Part Harmony Farm

André Sicard
Second Theology, Diocese of Salt Lake City

During this year, the Social Justice Committee received a grant from the U.S. Province of Sulpicians to use the funds

SEMINARY LIFE

“in order to come to better knowledge of our neighbors” in accordance with solidarity as a fundamental principle. This consideration was taken from Principles 8 and 13 of the Province’s constitution which emphasize “fostering a sensitivity to the ways in which social structures can lead to injustice and oppression suffered by the poor and by racial and ethnic minorities in this country and other lands” (Principle 8). “Students are taught to approach questions from a social justice perspective by acquiring an understanding of and respect for other cultures and ethnic groups, by becoming familiar with the social dynamics of prejudice and its consequences and with the structural causes and effects of poverty and economic insecurity” (Principle 13).

As the committee discerned and discussed how these funds would be used, they decided on splitting up the funds for two groups, one of them being a local farm just down the street from Theological College called Three Part Harmony Farm. In a city like Washington, D.C., the last thing you would expect to find is a farm! Being right in our neighborhood, this farm was chosen

as a recipient because of their impactful role in “community supported agriculture” within Washington, D.C. Its owner and main farmer, Gail Taylor, has been advocating and working for urban farming, emphasizing the importance for communities to have access to locally grown foods. She is also raising awareness about the large disparity between white farmers and farmers who are people of color. Through Gail’s leadership, since 2012, Three Part Harmony Farm has been growing fresh foods for the community.

Due to COVID-19, seminarians from Theological College and members of the Social Justice Committee were not able to tour or visit the farm. However, the Social Justice Committee is hoping to be able to do so in the Fall and possibly invite Gail Taylor to speak on her food advocacy within our area. Thanks to the grant from the U.S. Province of the Sulpicians, the Social Justice Committee was able to learn more about our neighbors, the struggles faced due to the lack of fresh foods available, and the vital work Three Part Harmony Farm is doing in Northeast Washington.

For more information, see threepartharmonyfarm.org. ■



James Buttner runs the water-balloon gauntlet at the conclusion of the of the week-long "Totus Tuus" summer camp at Holy Cross.

Pastoral Year Experiences

Holy Cross Parish, DeWitt, N.Y.

James Buttner
Diocese of Syracuse

At first glance it may not have appeared to be the ideal situation for a pastoral year assignment. I began with “check-in” at the entrance of the church for Mass, and this was both a blessing and a challenge. On the one hand, I was able to learn a lot of parishioners’ names very quickly, which was something I had been apprehensive about! On the other hand, I was often the one to receive “feedback” when someone was feeling particularly frustrated or discouraged about masks, etc.

At times I, too, have sometimes let myself become discouraged. Certainly, there are always opportunities to do so, pandemic or not. But my time at the parish and in the diocese was more honestly characterized by joy — joy in the midst of challenges, joy in surprise blessings, joy in community. I found a profound richness in the relationships I formed with many of the individuals that make up the Church, particularly in solidarity as we navigated the obstacles placed by the pandemic each day in our homes, parishes, and schools. Most of all, I encountered Christ in the very parishioners that I was striving to serve. I discovered that, while this vocation is about sharing Christ’s love, it is often fed by receiving that very love of Jesus from so many others. What a life!

What I found out here “in the pews” is that Christ is present and active in his Church, and the Holy Spirit is not constrained by

declining demographics or global pandemics. Rather, his power is made perfect in weakness, and his mercies are new every morning. And I think of those moving words of the prophet Habakkuk from Friday morning prayer: “Though the fig tree blossom not nor fruit be on the vines . . . yet will I rejoice in the Lord.”

Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Potomac, Md.

Sean Skahen
Archdiocese of Washington

This past year, I have been at a parish called Our Lady of Mercy in Potomac, Md., on a pastoral year. I have really enjoyed my time here and have met so many wonderful families and individuals. It has been a welcome change of pace from the academic setting of the typical formation year, and I am thankful that I have been able to focus on something more pastoral. I have enjoyed being involved in the many different ministries of the parish. Much of my time this year has been spent preparing people for sacraments, bringing Communion to the homebound, teaching religion in the school, and assisting with funeral Masses.

The pastoral year has been beneficial for me in many ways. It has offered a closer look at the life of the parish priest, providing a clearer image of what my life as a priest would entail. Living at a parish has given me a better understanding of the responsibilities of the priest and the role that he has in the community. I have learned how important it is for priests to preach the truth and to



In May, Sean Skahen, far right, joins other seminarians (including TC's Deacon Tom Lawrence, far left) in assisting at the Confirmation Mass celebrated by Bishop Bill Byrne of the Diocese of Springfield. The bishop is the former pastor of Our Lady of Mercy in Potomac, Md., where the Confirmation took place.

practice what they preach. I have also learned a great deal from the parishioners, who inspire me with their faith and generosity. Having grown up in Massachusetts, I am still learning about the Archdiocese of Washington and its many parishes. This year, I have become much more familiar with its priests and the ways in which it operates. This greater familiarity has been incredibly helpful for my discernment.

I am thankful to the Theological College for the pastoral year program and to Our Lady of Mercy Parish for allowing me to grow and be formed over the course of this year. It will certainly be difficult to say goodbye after spending so much time here! ■

Our Cardinal

On March 11, the Archdiocese of Washington's Cardinal Wilton Gregory celebrated Mass for the TC community, meeting with his own seminarian cohort for an intimate dinner after the Mass.



HEALTHY LIVING FOR PRIESTS

Transitioning from Seminary into Parish Ministry

Rev. Chris Arockiaraj, P.S.S., M.S., S.T.B., Ph.L., Ph.D., D. Min.
Vice-Rector and Coordinator of Pastoral Formation

After six years of seminary formation, Deacon John was ordained a priest in May. His long-time holy dream was fulfilled, and he enthusiastically began ministering in his diocese. His first two months passed swiftly and gloriously. He then gradually slipped into a period of mixed and sometimes conflicting feelings, from dryness to excitement; from lethargic loneliness to high-energy productivity...

This case study may apply to many newly ordained priests in some ways at different times. Among many other reasons leading to such a scenario, the following are some key ones to consider.

THREE COMMON STRESSORS FOR NEWLY ORDAINED PRIESTS:¹

1. Overwork and over-responsibility
“Many young priests feel overwhelmed, and they are inadequately supervised. Their tasks require several specific skills in which many believe themselves deficient, which they identified as administration, management, finances, staff relationships, and conflict resolution.”² The various statistical studies continue to reaffirm that the newly ordained priest replaces almost three priests who retire from an active ministry, die, or leave priesthood. In other words, 35 of the newly ordained priests take the place of 100 priests who give up an active ministry every year.³ Transition into parish life as a newly ordained priest could be much more

challenging than that of any new graduate who takes up a new job with a specific responsibility, as the young priest needs to juggle different responsibilities and diverse roles in a parish. A newly ordained priest is expected to know everything under the pastoral, liturgical, theological, and administrative umbrellas.

- 2. Rectory/community living or living arrangement**
Empirical studies show that newly ordained priests who had good first assignments maintained higher morale; better relationships with other priests, bishops, and superiors, and a more favorable attitude toward rectory living.⁴ The research suggests that unless a new priest is assigned to a suitable parish with a suitable co-pastor/mentor, he may find his transition stressful.
- 3. Diocesan structure that excludes the newly ordained in communication and decision-making**

PASTORAL CARE TIPS FOR THE NEWLY ORDAINED:

- 1. Continue your four dimensions (spiritual, human, intellectual, pastoral) of formation in some creative ways:**
- Embrace self-formation. Continue to practice the fruitful methods, habits, and routine that you developed in the seminary.
 - Prioritize your spiritual dimension. As you are now incardinated into your diocese, reflect on the meaning of the theology of incardination and the idea of *Unum Presbyterium*, one priesthood in union with your bishop, and strive for a Christ-centered life in ministry.

^[1] Dean R Hoge, *The First Five Years of the Priesthood* (Liturgical Press, 2002), p 6.

^[2] *Ibid.*

^[3] Richard A. Schoenherr and Lawrence A. Young, *Full Pews and Empty Altars* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), p. 4.

^[4] Eugene F. Hemrick and Dean R. Hoge, “A Survey of Priests Ordained Five to Nine Years,” Seminary Dept. of the National Catholic Education Association (Washington, D.C., 1991).

HEALTHY LIVING FOR PRIESTS

- 2. Develop skills for active and reflective listening. Try to listen to the wisdom of experienced pastors, mentors, spiritual director, vicar, laity, clergy, and bishop.
- 3. Be proactive. Don't always wait for your pastor, but initiate a friendly dialogue to express your ideas, opinion, plans, pastoral engagement, and more. Develop a cordial and pastoral relationship with your pastor and bishop.
- 4. Be inclusive and collaborative. Be open to teamwork and collaboration with others by recognizing their gifts and talents. "Priests have been placed in the midst of the laity so that they may lead them all to the unity of charity... Theirs is the task, then, of bringing about agreement among divergent outlooks in such a way that nobody may feel a stranger in the Christian community."⁵
- 5. Develop skills for time management and keep boundaries at various levels. Learn to say "no" to maintain realistic expectations and reachable goals. ■

⁵Vatican II, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, no. 26.

Newly ordained Fr. Michael Kieler with his TC formator, Vice-Rector Fr. Chris Arockiaraj, and St. Augustine's Bishop Felipe Estévez.



SAVE THE DATE

8th Annual Sedes Cup Golf Classic and Luncheon



MONDAY

10.25.21

Turf Valley Resort, Ellicott City, Md.

Registration and breakfast: 7:30 a.m.
Shotgun start: 9 a.m.

To register, go to theologicalcollege.org under the "Events" tab, or contact coordinator Mary Nauman: 202-756-4905; nauman@cua.edu.

FACULTY AND STAFF

More on *A Guide to Formation Advising*

A Guide to Formation Advising for Seminarians/Seminary Faculty

by Deacon Edward J. McCormack
Catholic University Press (June 2020)

As was announced in *The Crossroads* in last summer's issue (on p. 28), Theological College's Coordinator of Intellectual Formation, Deacon Edward McCormack, is the author of the first publications on the ministry of seminary formation advising. Now, a year later, Catholic University Press relates that this timely dual-volume work has met with high praise. We offer here some of the commentaries that attest to its potential impact in providing detailed guidance to formation advising as a ministry of accompaniment, participation, and evaluation.

I take this opportunity to share my thoughts regarding Deacon Edward McCormack's *A Guide to Formation Advising*. There are two volumes, both of which I have read, and shared with our new rector of the Immaculate Conception House of Formation where the college and pre-theologians are trained.

I found Deacon McCormack's book to be very useful in organizing thoughts on how formation and direction can be given in our more complicated day and age. It is a practical guide. One of the volumes is to be used by seminarians themselves, so that they can understand how they are guided in formation. This is very useful, I believe, since often seminarians do not understand the process of formation nor their part in that formation. Formation is not a one-way-street, but rather a dialogue between formator and the one to be formed.

His Excellency Nicolas DiMarzio
Bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn

In the context of our annual formation faculty retreat, Deacon Ed McCormack's book on formation advising was the catalyst for an in-depth and insightful conversation at several sessions. His book is timely, comprehensive, and born of his own dedication to the

Deacon Ed McCormack meets with his advisee, Ryan Braam (3-T, Washington).



work of priestly formation. It will become a treasured companion and vital resource for those entrusted with this crucial ministry.

Monsignor Joseph Reilly
Rector/Dean, Immaculate Conception Seminary
School of Theology, Seton Hall University

I have read Deacon Edward McCormack's *A Guide to Formation Advising for Seminarians* and *A Guide to Formation Advising for Seminary Faculty*. I have found the volume for seminarians to be very practical and helpful. I shared it with my vocation director and he will be purchasing one for each new seminarian. It looks at the four dimensions of formation in a holistic, healthy, and reasonable way. The companion volume for seminary faculty was similarly helpful as it spells out the role and particular gifts needed for this vital ministry in priestly formation.

His Excellency John Stowe, OFM Conv.
Bishop of the Diocese of Lexington

Deacon McCormack provides a comprehensive overview of the formation process and provides valuable insights into each of the dimensions, stages, and processes critical to fruitful priestly formation. Well written and easy to comprehend.

Reverend Louis V. Iasiello, OFM
Executive Director, Josephinum Diaconate Institute, The
Pontifical College Josephinum

FACULTY AND STAFF

McCormack’s publications resonated so much with the work we do here and with the outlook of our director of human and spiritual formation. This book is geared toward diocesan seminaries run by religious (since it is largely based on the formation processes of the Sulpician order in a diocesan seminary). However, I find that it translated very well indeed to a religious seminary like ours. The book is brief and to the point and accurate in my experience on the key aspects of formation advising. The emphasis on listening and on paying attention to the unconscious world of the seminarian (and formator) without it becoming a psychology book is first class. The actual examples of evaluations at the end as well as the bibliography for further reading add an excellence to an already good book. In short, it is the best book I have read in this area, as many other books on this topic are either now too old or too unwieldy.

Rev. Simon Wayte, MGL
Lecturer at Catholic Theological College, University of Divinity, and the Dean of Studies at the Missionaries of God’s Love Seminary in Burwood, Australia

Deacon Ed McCormack’s books on formation advising will be an invaluable resource for all those who have committed themselves to accompanying priesthood candidates as they discern their vocations. These books provide clear guidelines and clarify expectations for both the advisor and the seminarian, highlighting the fact that this important relationship is an "ecclesial relationship" guided and animated by the Holy Spirit. Given the challenges facing the Church and society at this moment in history, these books will assist every seminary to accompany those under their care so that every priesthood candidate will evidence the qualities and characteristics needed to be a parish priest; to be a caring, competent, and contemplative leader.

Rev. Gerald McBrearity, P.S.S.,
Former Rector, Theological College

For more on these publications, or to order, go to: cuapress.org. ■

SODEXO NEWS

Daily Prayer

Every day, the Sodexo staff congregates in front of the coffee machine in the refectory to join together in prayer. Manager Sunder Michael begins with reading a Bible verse to reflect upon and fuel their day – a verse that is also read in Spanish by one of the staff. After this, each person is given a chance to offer intentions, which they all pray for together. Sunder explains, “I want my staff to know that this is not just any workplace. Here, we care about each other and pray for each other. We are a family.”

A Fond Farewell after Two Decades of Service at TC

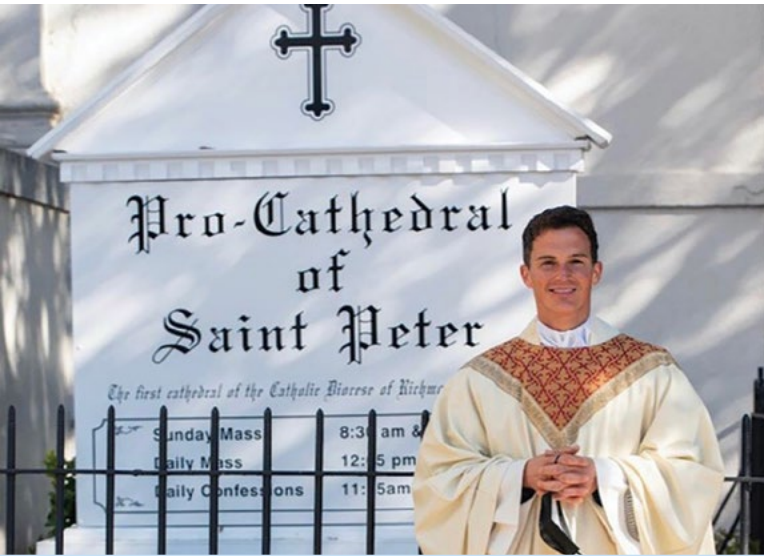
Kuaku Donker retired in May from his 27 years of service with Sodexo, after five years at the USCCB and 22 years at Theological College. He and his wife Grace have returned to their homeland, Ghana, long awaited by their daughter Regina, five grandchil-

dren, and one great granddaughter. Kuaku will not be in full retirement, however, as he is setting up a cottage industry, making fried chicken with equipment he acquired and had shipped from America. Our best wishes for a beautiful homecoming and successful culinary endeavor go with him! ■

Right: Kuako Donker graciously accepts congratulations and well wishes from Rector Ciriaco and the entire TC community.

Below: Sodexo manager Sunder Michael leading the daily prayer moment with his staff.





Distinguished Alumnus:

Rev. Gino Rossi

Father Gino Rossi, from TC's Class of 2013, is Pastor of St. Patrick, St. John, and St. Peter Catholic churches in and around Richmond. He also serves as chaplain of All Saints Catholic School in Richmond.

Father Rossi, you were one of two priests who were the first to venture into hospitals after the pandemic hit the Richmond Diocese. How did you get involved in this ministry?

There were a number of priests who were asked if they would be willing to serve in this way and I figured that, since I am relatively young and in decent health, I should make myself available for the work.

With all the precautionary requirements, was it difficult for you to actually enter hospital wards?

Ministry to COVID patients has been challenging because of the protocols and procedures set in place for visitations. The hospitals are great at providing PPE and whatever is needed to safely minister to the patients once access is granted, but the challenge often lies

in getting access to the patients. We have multiple hospitals in the city of Richmond, and not only does each hospital have its own protocols, but each floor of a hospital and even each nurse manager from shift to shift will have their own rules. Often we show up and are denied access or at least given the “run around” before we can see the patient.

What unique challenges have you faced?

In addition to the above-noted items, I think the biggest hurdle to get over is simply the concern with catching the virus. The first time you visit a patient, no matter how young or healthy you may be, there is always a little concern in your mind that you could catch the virus. Statistically, it is highly unlikely that I would be significantly affected should I become infected but, nevertheless, it is still a thought. And the patients we visit are usually dying and struggling to breathe which makes for a dramatic situation. Being around someone sick and in that situation forces one to have a good deal of trust in God.

How are your courage and hope fortified in engaging in such difficult situations as you find in the hospital?

I do not consider it particularly courageous to minister to COVID patients. Saint Damien of Molokai was courageous. Modern medicine has made it safe today to minister in these situations. In regards to hope, we always have hope. Even in the face of death, and even when someone loses the battle against the virus, they can ultimately have the victory in what Christ did for us on the Cross. Heaven is our hope.

What gifts did you receive from this accompaniment you offered to the patients?

Whenever we as priests visit someone and offer the sacraments to someone who is dying, we get the benefit of having God's grace flow through us, and that feels great. It also instantly changes our perspective and draws us out of any petty worries or concerns we may be facing at the time. This is a gift.

Can you describe any inspiring moments or interchanges you had there?

One thing I will note is the joy of the nurses and physicians who were working in the ER at VCU Hospital in Richmond. This was

sort of at the height of the pandemic which we are just coming through, when numbers were really going up, and I was surprised at how happy and lighthearted folks were working there. I suppose it was grace.

In TC's pastoral ministry program, did your year in hospital chaplaincy inform your work at all?

Pastoral ministry is definitely cumulative. That is to say, the more you do it the more you are able to do it with ease and grace. TC's pastoral ministry program as well as the pastoral work as a seminarian in parish assignments were great experiences.

What advice would you give to seminarians preparing for the priesthood who may feel drawn to (or intimidated by) hospital ministry?

Ministry to the sick and dying is a very significant part of the life of a diocesan priest. For those who are drawn to it, I would say it is a good sign that God may be calling you to be a priest. For those who are intimidated by it, I would say do not worry, in all difficult situations of priesthood God gives the grace... we just show up. ■

— Suzanne Tanzi

CLASS NOTES

60s

Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson, V.F., '68, of the Archdiocese of Washington, was named as administrator to Our Lady of Victory Parish, Washington, D.C., effective from Feb. 22, 2021 through July 7, 2021, and to Epiphany Parish, Washington, D.C., effective from March 15, 2021 through July 7, 2021, in addition to his duties as rector of the Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D.C.

70s

Rev. Franklyn M. McAfee, '71, originally of the Diocese of Richmond, is celebrating his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood in the Diocese of Arlington. Father McAfee, former director of the Notre Dame Institute in Alexandria, and pastor emeritus of St. John the Beloved in McLean, retired from active ministry in 2015 and lives in the Jeanne Jugan Residence in Washington, D.C.

Congratulations, Father McAfee, on this golden jubilee milestone!

80s

Rev. Mason Wiggins, B'80, of the Diocese of St. Augustine, has been transferred from his ministry as parochial vicar of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Palm Coast to serve as parochial vicar of Holy Family Catholic Church in Jacksonville.

Visiting alumnus Bishop Michael Olson, Basselin Class of 1989, Diocese of Fort Worth.



00s

Rev. Nathan March, '02, of the Diocese of Portland (Maine), has been transferred from his ministry as pastor of Holy Savior Parish (St. Athanasius and St. John Church, Rumford; Our Lady of the Snows Church, Bethel) to serve as pastor of St. Brendan the Navigator Parish (Our Lady of Good Hope Church, Camden; St. Bernard Church, Rockland; St. Francis of Assisi Church, Belfast; St. Mary of the Isles Churches on Islesboro, Vinalhaven and North Haven), effective July 30, 2021.

Rev. Gregory P. Dube, '07, of the Diocese of Portland (Maine) has been appointed director of the Diocese of Portland's Office of Vocations. This is in addition to his role as director of the diocese's Office of Seminarians, a position in which he has served since July of 2019. He is currently the rector of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Portland and pastor of the other Portland Peninsula & Island Parishes (Sacred Heart/St. Dominic Parish, Portland; St. Louis Parish,

Portland; St. Peter Parish, Portland; and St. Christopher Parish, Peaks Island). In addition to his parish duties, Father Dube currently serves as a member of the Priest Personnel Board. Father Dube's new ministry assignment will be effective July 30, 2021.

10s



Visiting alumnus Father Evan Ponton, Basselin Class of 2012, Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Rev. Michael Bissex, B'13, of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, was transferred in June of 2021 from his ministry as associate pastor of St. Patrick's in Huntington to pursue studies at the Casa Santa Maria and the Gregorian University in Rome to complete a licentiate and doctorate in Patristic Theology.

Rev. J. Jason Harris, '15, of the Archdiocese of Louisville, has been transferred from his ministry as pastor of St. Monica and St. Thomas Churches in Bardstown as well as his chaplaincy service at Bethlehem High School, to serve as pastor of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Louisville.

Rev. John Paul Trask, '15, of the Diocese of Rapid City, was named administrator of All Saints Church in Eagle Butte in July of 2020, located in the headquarters of

the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation. Additionally, Father Trask serves seven other churches located anywhere from 20 to 80 miles from Eagle Butte — all within the Reservation as well. These churches are: Immaculate Conception (Bridger), Sacred Heart (Dupree), Sacred Heart (Red Scaffold), St. Catherine (Promise), St. Joseph (Cherry Creek), St. Joseph (Ridgeview), and St. Theresa (White Horse).

Rev. Cody C. Ford, '16, of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, has been transferred from his ministry as associate pastor of St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Follansbee to serve as associate pastor of St. James the Greater Parish in Charlestown.

Rev. Charles C. Pavlick, Pre-T '16, ordained by Bishop Michael F. Burbidge on June 6, 2020, at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More for the Diocese of Arlington, is serving as parochial vicar and the director of youth ministry at St. Timothy Catholic Church in Chantilly.

Rev. M. Casey Sanders, '17, of the Archdiocese of Louisville, successfully completed his studies for the licentiate of



Visiting alumnus Father David Roman, Class of 2019, Diocese of Bridgeport (Conn.).

canon law degree (J.C.L.) at The Catholic University of America in May of 2021. Father Sanders has been assigned as parochial vicar of two parishes: Holy Trinity and Holy Name, both in Louisville, as well as to the tribunal. He will reside at Holy Trinity Parish.



Visiting alumnus Father Brendan Dawson, Class of 2019, Diocese of Pittsburgh

20s

Rev. Jason Allan, '21, was ordained by Bishop Michael F. Olson on May 22, 2021, for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

Rev. Michael Kieler, '21, was ordained by Bishop Felipe J. Estévez on May 15, 2021, for the Diocese of St. Augustine.

Rev. Thomas Lawrence, '21, was ordained by Bishop Barry C. Knestout on June 5, 2021, for the Diocese of Richmond.

Rev. Brett Metzler, '21, was ordained by Bishop Michael F. Olson on May 22, 2021, for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

Rev. Wesbee Victor, '21, was ordained by Cardinal Timothy Dolan on May 29, 2021, for the Archdiocese of New York. ■

In Memoriam

Rev. John F. Smolko, '57 (B '53), died on April 25, 2020, at the age of 89. Father Smolko was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Bridgeport by Bishop Lawrence J. Shehan on May 25, 1957, at St. Mary Parish in Bridgeport.

Father Smolko's fruitful priestly ministry, which spanned over six decades, began in service as an assistant priest at Our Lady of Grace Parish in Stratford. Then, in 1961, he was released to attend The Catholic University of America for further studies in philosophy at the Institut Catholique de Paris. After completing a two-year course of study, Father Smolko began his vocation as an educator when he served as an adjunct professor in the School of Theology and Religious Studies at Catholic University in 1963. He taught and lectured there until 2005. On January 5, 2006, Father Smolko retired from active ministry but he continued to assist on weekends at neighboring parishes in the area.

In April of 2017, Father Smolko was among the almost 60 retired priests and deacons from the Diocese of Bridgeport who were honored for their retirements at the First Annual Clergy Retirement Celebration Mass during which Bishop Frank J. Caggiano remarked: "They may be free from assignments, but they are still giving profoundly and generously. This is a remarkable, diverse and talented group of men who have shown a willingness to say 'yes' to Christ thousands of times each day. Their life is all about Christ."

A funeral Mass for Father Smolko was celebrated at Queen of the Clergy Priests Residence in Stamford on June 10, 2020, with interment at St. John Cemetery in Darien. Due to pandemic attendance constraints, a memorial Mass is scheduled to be celebrated with Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano presiding at a future date.



Rev. Paul R. Tobin, B '61, died on September 27, 2015, at the age of 77. Father Tobin studied for the priesthood at St. Gregory Seminary in Cincinnati, The Catholic University of America as a Basselin scholar, and at the Pontifical North American College in Rome where

he earned a licentiate in Sacred Theology. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Youngstown by Bishop Francis F. Reh on December 16, 1964, in Rome.

In his first assignment, Father Tobin served as assistant pastor of Holy Family Parish in Poland, Ohio, for one year before begin-

ning to teach at various Catholic high schools in the area. In 1972, he was named principal of St. John High School in Ashtabula, a post he held for the next nine years along with serving as the assistant superintendent of schools for Ashtabula County. His first assignment as pastor began in 1981 at Regina Coeli Parish in Alliance. He served there faithfully for 11 years until he was named pastor of Assumption Parish in Geneva in 1992. In addition to his ministry as pastor, Father Tobin served as dean of Stark County East and Ashtabula County, was active in the Knights of Columbus and the Cursillo movement, the Salvation Army, Food Pantry, and the Geneva Ministerial Association. He was honored as Citizen of the Year in 1999 by the Geneva Chamber of Commerce for all his charitable work.

Most Reverend George V. Murry, S.J., Bishop Emeritus of Youngstown, presided at the Mass of Christian burial for Father Tobin on October 3, 2015, at Christ the Good Shepherd Parish at St. Joseph the Provider Catholic Church in Campbell, with interment at Calvary Cemetery in Youngstown.



Rev. (Richard) James Dallen, '69, Class Representative, died on March 13, 2020, at the age of 76. Father Dallen was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Salina by Bishop Cyril Vogel on June 21, 1969, at the Notre Dame High School in Concordia.

In his first assignment, Father Dallen served as a parochial vicar at St. Andrew Parish in Abilene before beginning his doctoral studies at The Catholic University of America where, in 1973, he received his S.T.D. degree. He then began his life's vocation as an educator at Rosemont College in Rosemont, Pa., from 1975 to 1982. From 1982 until 2007, he taught at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., where, during his tenure, he served as chairman of the Religious Studies Department. Additionally, he served as a visiting professor at several academic institutions: LaSalle College in Philadelphia, Pa; Villanova University in Villanova, Pa; University of Notre Dame, in Notre Dame, Ind.; and the University of Portland, in Portland, Ore.

Father Dallen was a prolific author, writing 14 books during his academic career. His work on penance and reconciliation, titled *The Reconciling Community* (1986), is often used as a textbook and is still in print.

On the tribute page at the time of his death, a friend noted, “Jim was a born teacher. His wisdom, kindness, goodness, and friendship showed the world what the Face of God looks like. My dear friend showed me that I, too, must be the Face of God for others. Our world is a better place for his having been among us. Jim’s presence here is missed.”

Most Reverend Gerald Vincke, Bishop of Salina, presided at the Mass of Christian burial for Father Dallen on March 31, 2020, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Concordia with interment at St. Concordia Cemetery in Concordia.



Rev. John W. Cahill, ’73 (B ’69), died on November 15, 2017, at the age of 70. Father Cahill was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Covington by Bishop Richard H. Ackerman on May 5, 1973, at St. Juliana Church in Martin.

Father Cahill’s dedicated priestly ministry, which spanned over four decades, included service as a professor for many years at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights and at Thomas More College where he also served as chaplain; as director of the diocesan office of Peace and Justice for the Diocese of Covington from 1988 until 1994; as rector of the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington in 1999; and as founding pastor of Cristo Rey Parish in Florence in 2005. Additionally, Father Cahill worked toward immigration reform and was accredited by the Dept. of Homeland Security to provide legal assistance to immigrants. Special to his heart

were his chaplaincies at St. Anne Convent in Melbourne and St. Walburg Monastery in Villa Hills. Father Cahill retired from active ministry in 2013, taking up residence in Madonna Manor Cottages in Villa Hills.

Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, Bishop of Covington, presided at the Mass of Christian burial for Father Cahill on November 21, 2017, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington with interment at Davidsonville Memorial Gardens in Ivel. Memorial contributions may be made to the Congregation of Divine Providence, 2000 St. Anne Dr., Melbourne, KY 41059, or to St. Walburg Monastery, 2500 Amsterdam Rd., Villa Hills, KY 41017.



Rev. Michael W. Carrion, ’77, Class Representative, died suddenly on November 30, 2019, at the age of 68. Father Carrion was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Baltimore by Archbishop William D. Borders on May 28, 1977, at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland.

His early assignments included posts as associate pastor of Sacred Heart in Glyndon; Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Woodlawn; and St. Margaret in Bel Air. Father Carrion served as pastor of St. Clare in Essex from 1992 to 2000 and as pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Towson from 2000 until his death. Additionally, Father Carrion served as a metropolitan collegiate judge in the archdiocesan tribunal since 1993.

Father Carrion was particularly devoted to Catholic education. He enjoyed working with educators, parents, and students so that all could benefit from the same kind of excellent Catholic education he had received as a child. He also served as a chaplain on several cruise ships over the years. His favorite ministry, beyond Catholic education, was to minister one-on-one to those in the hospital or in nursing homes. He was also a member of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher.

Father Carrion, beloved priest and mentor, was described as “completely selfless” by his parishioners as well as fellow priests and seminarians alike. At the time of Father Carrion’s passing, Archbishop Lori wrote the following: “The death of Father Carrion is a tremendous loss for the Archdiocese and for the people of IHM parish and school, to whom he was so devoted,” Archbishop William E. Lori said. “His death is a terrible shock and a devastating loss. The impact of his priestly ministry will be felt in this Archdiocese for many years to come.”

Reverend Michael Carrion, Father Carrion’s brother, presided at the Mass of Christian burial on December 5, 2019, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Towson with interment at St. Louis Clarksville Church Cemetery in Clarksville. Memorial donations may be made to the Carrion/Flahavan endowment For Our Daily Bread, c/o Donna Bradley at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 8501 Loch Raven Blvd., Towson, MD 21286.



Rev. Douglas C. Hall, ’79, retired priest and U.S. Air Force chaplain, died on November 25, 2018, at the age of 68. While serving in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, Father Hall was inspired by the work of the chaplains there and entered the seminary when his tour of duty ended. He

was ordained for the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Omaha in 1979 by the late Archbishop Daniel E. Sheehan at St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha.

During his 28 years as a military chaplain, Father Hall served in the Middle East in 1992 during Operation Desert Storm. He also was head chaplain for Air Force basic training in San Antonio, head chaplain for Air Force F-22 fighter pilots in training, and chaplain to the U.S. military intelligence community in Alaska and Washington, D.C.

Additionally, Father Hall served as assistant pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Norfolk from 1979 to 1982. He served in Omaha as associate pastor of Christ the King Parish from 2011 to 2014 and St. Stephen the Martyr Parish from 2014 until his retirement in 2017.

“He cared so much for others ... and was committed to serving God’s people,” said Father David Reeson, pastor of St. Columbkille Parish in Papillion and retired Air Force chaplain. Even despite health challenges in retirement, Father Hall heard confessions at the Cloisters on the Platte Retreat Center and helped parishes with Masses when he could, Father Reeson said.

Another friend shared the following on Father Hall’s tribute page on May 2, 2020: “Dear Family, another belated condolence. Father Doug and I served together as Chaplains at Nellis AFB, NV, in the late 90s. Fr. Doug was brilliant and pastoral. In 2003, I served at Andrews AFB, and he across the river at Bolling AFB. Fr. Doug was a tremendous help to me personally as I shared my desire to separate from the USAF Chaplain Service in order to be received into the Catholic Church. It was a tremendous relief to be able to share this with a trusted colleague. More than that, Fr. Doug gave me very good counsel ... that helped my family in

the huge transition from active duty to civilian life. A few years later, Fr. Doug visited me at the Catholic parish where I worked after coming into the Church. Fr. Doug was an agent of grace in my life and in the lives of my children, who have grown up in the Catholic Church. ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’”

Most Reverend George Lucas, Archbishop of Omaha, presided at the Mass of Christian burial for Father Hall on December 1, 2018, at St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha, with interment with military honors by Offutt AFB Honor Guard at Calvary Cemetery in Omaha. Memorial donations may be made to St. Joan of Arc Church, 7501 Vinton St., Omaha, NE 68124.



Rev. Joseph F. Sica, ’81, died on March 31, 2020, at the age of 64. Father Sica was ordained to the priesthood for Diocese

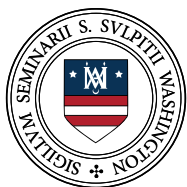
of Scranton on April 24, 1982, by Bishop J. Carroll McCormick, D.D., late Bishop of Scranton.

Father Sica’s dedicated priestly ministry of nearly 38 years was comprised of a variety of assignments, including serving as assistant pastor of six parishes throughout the diocese, director of religious formation at three area high schools, and as pastor of Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Tunkhannock and Holy Rosary Parish in Scranton. Additionally, Father Sica served faithfully as a chaplain at Mercy Hospital in both Wilkes-Barre and Scranton. His pastoral outreach to the sick and the suffering will be remembered for many years.

Father Sica was a prolific author, publishing many beloved books on the spiritual life, including Lenten reflections that have been read by people the world over. As noted by a parishioner on Father Sica’s tribute page, his life and works touched many lives: “Father Sica was one of the greatest people I knew. He always made you feel better. It is so sad to think he’s gone but his books and the great things he has done will continue to help many people.”

Due to the current health crisis, a private burial ceremony will be conducted by Bishop Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L., Bishop of Scranton, at a date convenient to the family. A public memorial Mass will be scheduled and announced at a future date. Contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 1300 Old Plank Rd., Mayfield, PA 18433. ■

The Theological College community prayerfully recognizes with gratitude the generous bequest of Rev. John F. Mattingly, P.S.S., ’48 (B ’45), who passed away on June 8, 2020 (see the Fall 2020 issue of *The Crossroads*, p. 30). Father Mattingly often acknowledged the lifelong impact of TC’s formation program on his ministry as a priest formed after the heart of Christ.



Theological College
401 Michigan Ave., N.E.
Washington, DC 20017

THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA 

Alumni Day 2021

SAVE
— the —
DATE

10.06.21

2 p.m.

Alumni Lecture

Monsignor Stephen Rossetti ('84)

5:15 p.m.

Alumni Mass

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo (B '72),
celebrant and recipient of the
Alumnus Lifetime Service Award

(See page 8, inside.)

